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The Conceptualization of Guardianship in Iranian Intellectual History (1800–1989)

Reading Ibn ʿArabī's Theory of *Wilāya* in the *Shīʿa* World

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For my mother

ای برتر از خیال و قیاس و گمان و وهم

وز هر چه گفته اند و شنیدیم و خوانده ایم

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March 2019

Transliteration and Usage

I follow the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (IJMES) transliteration system for Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. I also naturalize other frequently used terms such as Sufi, Sufism, Ayatollah, Khomeini, Allah, imamate, Imamite, names of the cities, names of the *Imāms*, and name of the Prophet. As for the dates, except for the Julian or Georgian calendar, those dates referring to the solar Islamic calendar as it is used today in Iran are indicated clearly by *shamsī*, and lunar dates are marked by H (Hegira/*hijrī-yi qamarī*).

Contents

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Guardianship (*wilāya/walāya*) is a key concept in Islamic theology, jurisprudence, and mysticism. Etymologically, it is derived from the etymon of 'w l y', which means to place two things next to or close to each other, to the extent that there is no distance between them. 'W l y' therefore means closeness and affinity, whether spatial or spiritual. From the root, there engendered a number of derivatives, such as *walāya* (sainthood, affinity, and sanctity) *wilāya* (authority and dominion) and *mawlā* (master, protector, and patron). The Muslim scholar of *Qurʾānīc* exegesis and the Arabic language, al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī (d. 502 H/1108 or 1109), in his *al-Mufradāt fī Gharīb al-Qurʾān* (*Terminology of the Peculiar Qurʾānīc Terms*) emphasizes the significance of 'closeness and attachment' in applying the terms *wilāya/walāya* for something. He translates *walāya* as domination/victory (*nuṣra*), and *wilāya* as authority and incumbency (*taṣaddī-ya amr*), though he reminds us that both can be used interchangeably; referring to one reality, which is to exercise authority and domination over the other, and in the same way, the terms *walī/mawlā* can embrace affinity and authority both (al-Iṣfahānī 1413 H/1992, p. 885).

As one of the terms most frequently used in the *Qurʾān*, *walī* appears in different ways; as a noun, 124 times, and as a verb, 112 times. It is divided into two groups: positive/recommended and negative. By using the term in the first usage, the Lawgiver asks believers to be *walī* of each

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other, and by the latter, he warns them to reject the domination and authority of non-Muslims. Here *wilāya*, like a number of other *Qurʾānīc* terms such as *raḥma* (mercy), "is but an imitation on the part of man of the Divine *wilāya* itself" (Izutsu 1966, p. 19), has fundamental relationship to the nature of God Himself and therefore has basic dependence on Divine *wilāya*. In his discussion of the ethico-religious concepts of the *Qurʾān,* Toshihiko Izutsu divides ethical concepts of the Book into two categories of descriptive and evaluative. The author is not sure if *wilāya* can be regarded as an ethical term, but it is loaded with both descriptive and evaluative connotations and layers of meaning, and as such is a genuine descriptive word, though "invested with an evaluative aura which makes it more than mere description" (Izutsu, p. 21).

Following Izutsu, one can call *wilāya* a value-word (Ibid.), and since there is no equivalent of this concept in the pre-Islamic context, it should be regarded as a purely Islamic term serving the monotheistic nature of the faith, which is based on absolute submission to the will of God as well as the necessity of closeness and affinity to Him. Also, the egalitarian guardianship believers bounced ideas on each other, springing out of their friendship and affinity toward their brethren, so the context was gradually but steadily eclipsed and eventually replaced by another aspect of *wilāya,* which was more representative of its subjugating characteristic. This doctrine of *wilāya*, as Zarrīnkūb ascertains, became incorporated into early Sufi practice and theory, dramatically changed its nature, and facilitated the formation of the Sufi *ṭarīqahs* of later centuries (Zarrīnkūb 1383 *shamsī*, p. 73).

Murtiḍā Muṭaharī calls upon the positive *wilāya*, *walāy-i Ithbātī-ya Islāmī* (the Islamic positive *wilāya*), and divides it into two groups: general (*ʿāmm*) and specific (*khāṣṣ*). The former refers to the general *wilāya* that is possessed and exercised by every believer, and the latter belongs to the Prophet and his household. *Wilāyat al-khāṣṣah* uses different forms, such as *walāy-i muḥabbat* (the *wilāya* of love), *walāy-i* imamate (the *wilāya* of imamate), *walāy-i zaʿāmat* (the *wilāya* of leadership), and *walāy-i taṣarruf* (the *wilāya* of disposal) (Muṭaharī 1390 *shamsī*, pp. 13–17).

Al-Rāghib, whom I mentioned earlier, brings many verses in which *walī*, *wilāya*, *mawlā*, and other paronymous terms appear (al-Iṣfahānī 1413 H/1992, pp. 885–887). On the basis of the *Qurʾānīc* usages, God is the Protector (*walī*) of those who believe (2: 257, 7: 196, 3: 68, 47: 11, 66: 4) and has bestowed *wilāya* upon every believer (9: 71).[1] In addition to the Divine *wilāya* and the *wilāya* of believers over each other, the *Qurʾān*

acknowledges the *wilāya* of the Prophet and the *imāms*, which is bestowed upon them from God (5: 55, 4: 59, 9: 119),[2] in order to guide people to the righteous path.

In the *Qurʾān*, *awlīyā* have a number of features and are described as individuals who have no fear, nor do they grieve. Muḥammad Hossein Ḥusseynī Tehrānī gives his exegesis of verses sixty-two to sixty-four of the *sūrah* of *Yūnus* which state that "Behold! Truly the friends of God, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve, those who believe and reverent. For them are glad tidings in the life of this world and in the Hereafter" (Nasr 2015, p. 558). He maintains that since piety (*taqwā*) and fearing God come immediately after the description of *awlīyā*, the office of *wilāya* requires a strong faith (*īmān*), which is only achieved by doing good and avoiding bad. This type of *wilāya* is called *wilāyat al-ilāhīya* (Divine *wilāya*), in which the veil (*ḥijāb*) between the servant (*ʿabd*) and God is removed as a result of self-abnegation (Ḥusseynī Tehrānī, vol. 5, 1419 H, p. 37). According to him, the term *awlīyā* in these verses refers to those who have attained an exalted kind of faith as the result of their righteous deeds, purification of their hearts, strong piety, and remembering God (Ḥusseynī Tehrānī, vol. 5, 1419 H, pp. 37–39). *Wilāya* equates to blessing because *walī* is the resident of the world of unity (Ḥusseynī Tehrānī, vol. 5, 1419 H, pp. 40–41).

Along with the *Qurʾān*, *ḥadīth al-qudsī* is another source of authority for Muslim scholars, which specifies the features of *awlīyā*. According to the famous *ḥadīth* that relates "My friends are hidden under my mantle (*qibāb*, *ḥijāb*), no one knows them except for Me" (Hujwīrī n.d., p. 38),[3] the office of *wilāya* entails secrecy and latency—unlike that of imamate. Except for the *imāms* and the Prophet who are known to people, the holders of the office of *wilāya* remain hidden from people.[4] In interpreting this *ḥadīth*, Sufi Muslims have developed arguments regarding the attributes of *awlīyā*, such as the significance of *sirr* (inmost being), or *maqām al-sirr* for understanding the office of *wilāya*.[5] They argue that *awlīyā* are owners—or preservers or inheritors—of Divine *sirr*, and since the Deity desires to keep His secrets, He has chosen *awlīyā* to preserve them (Himmatī 1391 *shamsī*, pp. 6–9 & Pāzūkī 1379 *shamsī*, p. 81ff).[6]

The authority of the Prophet and his *Sunna*, including *ḥadīth*, makes the second pillar of Islam and is equal to that of the *Qurʾān;* a fact which is endorsed by the Book itself, though as Fazlur Rahman is certain, this authority "refers to the verbal and performative behaviour of the Prophet

outside the *Qurʾān*" (Rahman 1968, p. 52). What follows from this is that the Prophet's authority, "has been accepted willingly by all people without bickerings in certain quarters, [and] the *Qurʾān* would not have intervened" (Fazlur Rahman, p. 53). The logical consequence of this is that the Prophet's words and behavior have been an unchallenged authority, "outside the *Qurʾān* in giving judgments and moral and legal precepts" (Rahman, p. 53). As for the authority of sayings of *imāms,* as Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī (d. 1110 H/1698) is certain, the authenticity of the *akhbār* (lit. sayings, sing. *khabar*) of *imāms* is absolute and definite, because these figures are intermediaries of emanation from God to His people, and therefore, their *aḥādīth* embrace Divine knowledge, truths, and gnosis, which are emanated to people, even to other prophets and angels, through them. In their absence, Majlisī maintains, believers should recourse to their *akhbār* in order to receive emanation and blessing from Him (Majlisī n.d., vol. 1, p. 103).

Sayings of *imāms* on *wilāya/walāya* and imamate are scattered throughout the vast body of literature, which is called "*ḥadīth* compilations", covering the two genres of *kalāmī* (theological) and juridical writings. The most well-known of these are the four *ḥadīth* compilations which constitute the early Imamite doctrine, and in chronological order, includes *al-Kāfī* (*Uṣūl al-Kāfī*) by Muḥammad ibn Yaʿqūb al-Kulaynī (d. 328–9 H/939), *Man lā yaḥẓaruhu-l-Faqīh* (for One Who Does Not Have Accessibility to Jurist) by Abu Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn Bābawayh al-Qumī, commonly known as Ibn Bābawayh (Persianized form: ibn Bābūyi) or al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq (d. 381 H/991), *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām* (the Refinements of the Laws), and *al-Istibṣār* (to Ask for Insights), both by Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Ḥassan Ṭūsī (d. 460 H/1067). A number of scholars have drawn upon them to extract the components of the early Imamite doctrine, though the main Imamite sources, including *ḥadīth* compilations, are not limited to these four and include older texts as well. For example, the *kalāmī* text, *Baṣāʾir al-Darajāt fī ʿUlūm-i Āl-i Muḥammad wa Mā Khaṣṣahum ul-llāh Bihī* (Insights into the Degrees, on the Knowledge of the Family of Muḥammad and That with which Allah Endowed Them) by Al-Shaykh a-Ṣaffār al-Qumī (d. 290 H/902–903) is one of the oldest *Shīʿa ḥadīth* compilations, in which al-Qumī spreads around 1880 *ḥadīth* on different issues, including *wilāya* from *imāms.*

One can add to this tradition countless other texts such as *the Book of Sulaym ibn Qays* by Sulaym ibn Qays al-Hilālī al-ʿĀmirī (d. 70–76 H/689–695);[7] *Uṣūl a-Sita ʿAshar* (Sixteen Principles) by a number of

writers belonging to the third century of Hegira/ninth century; *The Ṣaḥīft al-Riḍā* (Book of *al-Riḍā*, also known as *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā*); which is a collection of 240 *ḥadīth* attributed to ʿAlī ibn Mūsa al-Riḍā (which is one of the first *ḥadīth* compilations and has been collected by Abu al-Ḥassan ʿAlī ibn Jaʿfar ʿArīdhī, the son of the sixth and the brother of the seventh *imām*), *A-Zuhd* (abstemiousness), and *Al-Muʾmin* (the Believer); both by Hossein ibn Saʿīd al-Kūfī al-Ahwāzī (second and third centuries of Hegira/ninth century); and the writings of the *Imāmī* theologian and transmitter (*muḥaddith*) Faḍl ibn Shādhān Neyshābūrī (d. 260 H/873). There exist more than twelve *ḥadīth* compilations transmitting *ḥadīth* from *imāms*, including their sayings on *wilāya,* and all of them are composed before *al-Kāfī* which belongs to the fourth century. These writings encompass the early *Imāmī* conceptualizations of *wilāya*. Some of them are not available today, but are documented in, and named by, later sources.[8]

In terms of the authenticity of the *Qurʾān* and the *ḥadīth*, they "constitute the only two authorities, absolute and complementary, to which the faithful should refer for all matters regarding their religion" (Amir-Moezzi 1994, p. 23). These compilations are not studied here, as scholars like Muhammad Ali Amir-Moezzi and Hassan Ansari have drawn upon them to extract the components of the early *Imāmī* doctrine. As Amir-Moezzi rightly maintains, "*Shīʿīsm* is centered on the notion of *walāya*/[*wilāya*]. *Shīʿas* refer to themselves as 'the people of *walāya* (*ahl al-walāya*), [and] the charisma of *imām*, the very nature of his Person, seems entirely focused on this concept" (Amir-Moezzi 2011, p. 231).[9]

In classical *Shīʿa* thought, *wilāya* is firmly tied to the imamate, and *imāms* are regarded as *walī*, *ḥujja*, and *quṭb*. *Wilāya* is also connected to the notion of the Divine Truth (*al-ḥaqq*), which is a double-faceted reality and refers to *imāms*; the fourteen luminous entities. *Wilāya* is the esoteric side of the Truth, or the mission of *imāms*, as the continuation of the prophetic mission which started with Adam. The mission is Divine knowledge (*ʿilm*) in general, and the true interpretation (*taʾwīl*) of the Holy Book in particular. So, *walī* is the only preserver of the meaning of the Book (Amir-Moezzi 1994, p. 29). In terms of *walī* as *ḥujja* (proof), there exists a belief that "the earth can never be without living Proof of God, or else it would be annihilated" (Ansari 1392, p. 139; Amir-Moezzi 1994, p. 43);[10] therefore, *walī*/the *Shīʿī imām*, has constituted a continuous, uninterrupted chain of proofs since the beginning of humanity, "a chain that guarantees universal salvation" (Amir-Moezzi 1994, p. 43). *Wilāya*,

as it is portrayed in these sources, is the important component of the early *Imāmīsm*, itself a "nonrational esoteric tradition … which prevailed up to the middle of the fourth/tenth century [and] it represents the pre '*kalāmīc*' and pre-philosophical phase of the doctrine" (Amir-Moezzi 1994, p. 28).

One can add more into it by listing features such as generosity, abstemiousness (*zuhd*), veracity (*ṣidq*), valor (*shujāʿa*), precedence in accepting Islam (*sābiqa*), and *ʿilm* (both religious and general knowledge) as the attributes of the legitimate leadership among *Shīʿas* (Afsaruddin 2002, pp. 80–112). Afsaruddin argues that the excellences (*faḍīlas*) that *Shīʿī* scholars held for their *imāms* were different from their Sunni counterparts; though both emphasized common attributes as well. *Shīʿas* mostly believed that "the possession of knowledge, in combination with other virtues" (Afsaruddin 2002, p. 113) superseded more 'physical' attributes, such as lineage, to the Prophet or maturity in accepting Islam. *ʿIlm* referred to a vast range of categories and embraced *taʾwīl* (the *Qurʾānīc* interpretation), knowledge of religious precepts and duties, issuing *fatwā*, legal decision-making, and relating traditions from the Prophet. Along with these definitions, *Shīʿī* authors emphasized "the esoteric and intuitive aspect of *ʿilm* which was granted to Ali [as well as to other *imāms*, as opposed to other Rashidun caliphs] as a special dispensation" (Afsaruddin 2002, p. 114ff).

The possession of esoteric and exoteric knowledge by *imāms* was an inseparable component of the doctrine of *wilāya*, and most paramount, by which they demanded fully professed submission and loyalty of "every human, animal, and inanimate object" in order to win salvation. Therefore, "belief in *walāya* demarcates the 'saved' from the 'unsaved' in all of Creation, making for a holistic worldview in which every living earthly being, non-living thing, and celestial being is subject to, and judged by, this cosmic setoriological imperative" (Afsaruddin 2002, p. 106). Afsaruddin rightly maintains that "religious knowledge invested in the *Shīʿī imām* is ontological", because it has "to exceed, even bypass that of the ordinary person's; thus it can only be obtained by special divine dispensation" (Afsaruddin 2002, p. 144).

The concept of light (*nūr/noor*), or primordial light, merits particular attention as well. The 'light of *wilāya*', which is drawn from Divine light, was created a few thousand years before the creation of the world and was stored in every *imām* (Amir-Moezzi 1994, p. 30ff). *Wilāya* is also a sacred pre-temporal covenant (*mīthāq/ʿahd*, innuendo of allegiance, loyalty),

which was taken in pre-eternity, when the pre-existent entities of the Fourteen Luminous entities were created "from the light of His glory", and their names derived from His own names (Amir-Moezzi 1994, p. 31ff). The term *al-mīthāq* is used more than twenty times in the *Qurʾān* and most probably means "an Alliance between God and humanity, and with the prophets in particular" (Amir-Moezzi 1994, p. 34).

Wilāya is the sacred mission of *imāms*, and the spiritual and temporal direction of the faithful. It is one of the pillars of the sacred, if not to say of Islam, and its acceptance and submission to it is a precondition for all the rest of the canonical obligations. Amir-Moezzi has listed a number of *aḥādīth* and sayings of *imāms* in which *walāya* is included separately as one of the five pillars of the Faith, after prayers, alms, fast, and pilgrimage to Mecca. Moreover, even the *shahāda* per se contains *walāya* and stands after unicity of God and the prophethood of the Prophet, which testifies to the fact that *walāya*, as the core of imamate, itself the heart of *nubuwwa*, is the indispensable complement to the mission of the Prophet; it is the *bāṭin* of the *ẓāhir* (Amir-Moezzi 2011, p. 241ff).

1.1 Wilāyat al-Takwīnīya

The idea of *wilāyat al-takwīnīya*, or the absolute right of the *walī/imām* to act upon the cosmos, has a long history in *Shīʿa* tradition. From the formation of *Shīʿīsm* in the early second century, and precisely from the time of the fifth *imām*, al-Baqir, there existed a number of companions who claimed the metaphysical attributes and powers for the *imāms*, and held extremist ideas on the knowledge of them, for instance, *imām*'s immortality, and attributing peculiar *karāmas* (miraculous grace/charismata) to them. Another extremist view regarding *imāms* has to do with the metaphysical status of the imamate in creating the cosmos and *imām*'s involvement in creation. *Ghullāt* (extremists) had reasons for their beliefs, such as their extreme love and devotion to *imāms*, their enmity and even hatred toward the household of the Prophet, and their intention of promoting promiscuity by removing the *sharīʿa* and introducing *imāms* as God. Ṣālihī Najafābādī maintains that these three factors make an 'ominous triangle' which has had a harmful effect on Islam over history (Ṣālihī Najafābādī 1385, pp. 77–78).

Regardless of the time of their appearance,[11] one can claim that *ghuluw* is almost as old as *Shīʿīsm*, and though appearing under different fronts, the core remains unchanged. *Ghullāt* held Divine attributes for *imāms*,

among them immortality and *imāms*' involvement in creation are most prominent. As mentioned above, *imām* al-Baqir had a number of companions, such as Mughayra-t-ibn Saʿīd, who himself had followers who fabricated false *aḥādīth* and incorporated them into the *ḥadīth* books of the companions of the *imām*. This method of fabricating *ḥadīth*, which apparently began with them, continued during *imām* al-Sadiq (d. 148 H/765) and reached its climax during *imām* al-Rida (d. 203 H/818). During the time of the sixth *imām* it took an organized form, to the extent that people such as Abū Khaṭṭāb formed a group that systematically created false *aḥādīth* and incorporated them into the *ḥadīth* books, sending them to different cities. The *imām* wasted no time in renouncing them, and in some cases even cursed them (Ṣālihī Najafābādī 1385, *passim*).

With regard to the relationship between the idea of *wilāyat al-takwīnīya* and *ghuluw*, *wilāyat al-takwīnīya* is the crystalized form of *ghuluw* which has made its way into the conceptualizations of *wilāya* from the School of Ibn ʿArabī onward, becoming an inseparable component. *Wilāya* therefore came to be understood relative to *wilāyat al-takwīnīya*, to the extent that other features of *wilāya*, such as *ʿilm*, piety, valor, spiritual abstinence, and repentance were overshadowed by it. The culmination of this trend is *Shaykhīsm* and the Schools of Tehran and Qum (which will be discussed in Chaps. 3 and 4, respectively), in which the fourteen luminary infallible figures are vested with supernatural attributes and are regarded as God's aids in creating the world.[12] One can relate this development to the "popularization of *Shīʿīsm*", which had been realized by Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī in the Safawid era, and "had secured the religious royalty of the masses" (Amir Arjomand 1984, p. 219) to hierocracy. The incorporation of *Shīʿīsm* into popular rituals, and the mob's interest in exotic images and miraculous attributes of *imāms*, should be understood from this perspective.

As the twentieth century drew near, the traditional criterion of *wilāya* became prominent again, particularly in the writings of *ʿAllāmah* Ṭabāṭabāʾī. His emphasis is on piety and asceticism, repentance, and spiritual conduct; hence, God-given attributes such as *wilāyat al-takwīnīya*—as an inseparable component of *wilāyat al-khāṣṣah*—is eclipsed. *Wilāyat Nāmih* (the Book of *Wilāya*) of Ṭabāṭabāʾī, which contains his conceptualization of *wilāya*, can be regarded as a return to the classic *ʿirfānī* tradition and is significant from this perspective. Khomeinism, another contemporary discourse on *wilāya*, allocates no room to *wilāyat al-takwīnīya*, because of the prevalence of jurisprudence over other discourses on one hand, and the politicization of *wilāya* on the other (which will be discussed in Chaps. 5 and 6).

Addressing early *Shīʿa* and Sunni sources, including *imāms' aḥādīth* (ironically those that have been used by Amir-Moezzi to prove the supernaturality of *imāms*), Hossein Modarressi develops arguments to invalidate the narratives of the *Ghullāt* and the idea of *wilāyat al-takwīnīya*. He also shows the reaction of contemporaries of the extremists: "the Imamite scholars and transmitters of *ḥadīth* in Qum … reacted very harshly to the Mufawwiḍa's expansionism" (Modarressi 1993, p. 34). They started their endeavor by exhorting people to declare "anyone who attributed any sign of super-humanity to the Prophet or to *imāms* as extremist and to expel such people from their town" (Modarressi 1993, P. 34). The people of Qum, in fact, did not differentiate between *ghuluw* and *tafwīḍ*[13] and believed anyone who attributed supernaturality to *imāms* to be heretics and nonbelievers (Modarressi 1993, pp. 35–36).

1.2 Discourse on Method

Discussing some trends in the history of ideas that facilitate exploration of the way in which the present study will be carried out, 'intellectual history', in recent years, has been studied from different perspectives by many scholars. Intellectual history in its new forms is engendered from trends such as the hermeneutic methods of German thinkers like Friedrich Schleiermacher and Wilhelm Dilthey; the new literary history of French critics such as Charles-Augustin Sainte-Beuve; the 'new history' of culture which was born in America; and the new historicism of the Italian philosopher, Benedetto Croce (Kramer 2004, p. 85).

There are other trends, such as analytic philosophy and post-modernism, that have helped to shape intellectual history. Kramer emphasizes the 'eclectic nature' of intellectual history, and argues that it is this "eclectic desire to understand, contextualize, and take seriously the truth claims of every philosophical or cultural tradition [that] has given intellectual historians their distinctive disciplinary identity" (Kramer 2004, p. 85). Thus, intellectual historians create a dialogue with ideas, cultures, and interpretations of human experience (Kramer 2004, p. 85).

Having said this, I will first discuss Quentin Skinner's approach in his book *Visions of Politics* and focus on factors such as the relationship between language and power, text and historical context, and structure and agency. I will also emphasize the significance of social conventions,

the mythology of perennial questions in the history of ideas, and the issues of author's intentions and motives. Then, building upon Mark Bevir's critiques on Skinner's conventionalism, which are reflected in his book *The Logic of the History of Ideas*, I will construct a methodology for this research.

1.2.1 Skinner's Conventionalism

In his book *Visions of Politics*, Skinner argues that if a historian of ideas wishes to understand any serious utterance, he needs "to grasp something over and above the sense and reference of the terms used to express it" (Skinner 2002, p. 104). A historian of ideas needs to find means to recover what the agent may have been doing in saying what he said, and therefore to understand what the agent may have meant by issuing an utterance with just that sense and reference (Skinner 2002, p. 140ff). The significance of language and the speech acts theory, which entailed the history of ideas, brought to his attention the connection of power and language.

In terms of the nexus between these two, Skinner maintains that concepts and beliefs do not have merely communicative power, but authoritative claim and emotional force as well. Besides, Skinner proposes that to uncover the meaning of the past, one should start with investigating the "texture of moral, social and political thinking as it was actually carried on in the past" (Skinner 2002, p. 6). The result would be a deep interconnection between philosophical arguments and claims to social power (Skinner 2002, p. 7). In terms of the relationship between structure and agency, Skinner gives priority to agency over structure in social explanation and believes that social agents are able to operate within social structures and shape their world (Skinner 2002, p. 7). Skinner criticizes common assumptions pursuing perennial themes, eternal questions, and universal agendas in the history of ideas and believes that these expectations have led "to a series of confusions and exegetical absurdities that have bedeviled the history of ideas for too long" (Skinner 2002, p. 58). Employing Skinner's terminology, he addresses some dangers, as well as "various kinds of historical absurdity" (Skinner 2002, p. 59), guiding a historian of ideas to look at historical texts to find "a given author's doctrines on all the mandatory themes" (Skinner 2002, p. 59). "The mythology of doctrines" (Skinner 2002, p. 59), along with "the mythology of coherence" (Skinner 2002, p. 67) and "the mythology of parochialism" (Skinner 2002, pp. 74–75), are three main mythologies that can distort a historian of ideas from interpreting past ideas.

Skinner's methodology is composed of three main components in reading and understanding historical texts. At the first step, after suggesting the primary steps a historian of ideas should tread to better grasp meaning and understanding, Skinner turns to his main elaboration on textualism and contextualism and examines their fundamental tenants. By rejecting the idea of the self-sufficiency of texts, he maintains that by choosing an appropriate method, a historian of ideas will not only be able to give an account of the meaning of what was said in the past, and of "what the writer in question may have meant by saying what was said" (Skinner 2002, p. 79)—which is the intention of authors—but also will pay due attention to the intentions and purposes of a text per se.

To summarize, a historian of ideas cannot be hopeful of reaching "a sense of the context of utterance" (Skinner 2002, p. 84) and be optimistic about solving the difficulty of past text; "for the context itself may be ambiguous. Rather, [he] shall have to study all the various contexts in which the words were used – all the functions they served, all the various things that could be done with them" (Skinner 2002, p. 84). He cannot be wishful in his search for the author's intention toward the understanding of a given idea, because these ideas and the terms in which they were expressed "are likely to have been used … with varying and incompatible intentions" (Skinner 2002, p. 84).

Skinner states that the appropriate focus should be on linguistic context(s), and all the facts about the social context of the given text[14] should be embodied "as a part of this linguistic enterprise" (Skinner 2002, p. 87). The priority of the linguistic context over the social context leads Skinner to claim that the latter should be treated "as the ultimate framework for helping to decide what conventionally recognizable meanings it might, in principle, have been possible for someone to have intended to communicate" (Skinner 2002, p. 87). Another important component of Skinner's approach is the term 'convention' and its role in the performance of actions in the relevant social contexts. Skinners suggests that in reading the history of ideas, a historian should turn his focus from individuals to a more holistic unit, social conventions, and with this, he ties 'understanding' to social conventions. Therefore, "grasping what is conventional" (Skinner 2002, p. 142) does not only mean that a performed action should be understood according to a convention, but rather "includes the wider notion of understanding the established assumptions and expectations of a given culture" (Skinner 2002, p. 142).

1.2.2 Post-analytic Philosophy and Bevir's Intentionalism

One of the main critics of Skinner's approach, particularly his idea of intention, is Mark Bevir, who has discussed in-depth intellectual history from a post-analytic perspective. Bevir defines the logic of the history of ideas as the concern with "the way historians of ideas reason about historical data, not with historical data itself" (Bevir 2004, p. 8). So, the logic provides historians with "a normative account of reasoning [appropriate to it], not a historical, sociological, or psychological one" (Bevir 2004, p. 8), or the "conceptual form and content of an ideal type of reasoning" (Bevir 2004, p. 9).

Like Skinner, Bevir's approach is inspired by Wittgenstein and the relationship between philosophy and language. On the significance of language, Bevir argues that forms of justifications and explanations involve the study of language rather than reality because language is a part of reality. In some cases, the study of language ensues even at the expense of other parts of reality (Bevir 2004, p. 11ff). Bevir explains that the work of philosophers in clarifying the meanings of words is, in principle, an effort to unpack the grammar of concepts (Bevir 2004, p. 14). By language, however, Bevir means "the concepts of ordinary language" (Bevir 2004, p. 16) than a specialized language; the latter is used in the natural sciences and not in philosophy (Bevir 2004, p. 16). Therefore, the logic of the history of ideas is "the understanding of the world expressed by a given set of concepts" (Bevir 2004, p. 26).

Bevir explains that the subject matter of the history of ideas is meaning, and therefore, interpretation. By 'meaning', he suggests a hermeneutic meaning, in contrast to semantic and linguistic meanings, which denotes being "understood in terms of truth conditions" (Bevir 2004, p. 27). Hermeneutic meaning leads a historian of ideas to intentionalism because "the hermeneutic meaning of an utterance derives from the intentions of the author in making it" (Bevir 2004, p. 27). Distinguishing between 'weak intentionalism' and 'strong intentionalism', Bevir explains that a historian of ideas should concern himself with the former, as it "allows for the unconscious and for changes of intent during the act of making an utterance" (Bevir 2004, p. 27), while the latter "regards intentions as conscious and prior to utterances" (Bevir 2004, p. 27). Bevir concludes that "weak intentions are individual viewpoints" (Bevir 2004, p. 27), and a historian of ideas studies works "in order to recover hermeneutic meanings understood as expressions of beliefs" (Bevir 2004, p. 28).

Rejecting contextualists like J. G. A. Pocock, conventionalists like Skinner, as well as atomic individualism of scholars associated with intentionalism, Bevir argues that human beings are able to act creatively in any given social context, while at the same time recognizing the significance of the social context, which necessarily influences what people see, believe, and say (Bevir 2004, p. 33). Therefore, intentionalism—which is based on individual beliefs as weak intentions or hermeneutic meaning—is compatible with the social context. In terms of his critiques on Skinner's conventionalism, Bevir rejects the central belief of conventionalism (along with Wittgenstein) that "the hermeneutic meaning of a given utterance comes from its conventional meaning" (Bevir 2004, p. 41). He calls this a "fallacy" (Bevir 2004, p. 46).

Bevir suggests that in order to establish a theory of meaning in the history of ideas, one should re-define 'hermeneutic meaning' through accepting change as a formative component of this kind of meaning. Thus, we have to abandon all "attempts to fix hermeneutic meanings by reference to any type of social meaning" (Bevir 2004, pp. 48–49). Hermeneutic meanings, Bevir argues, are both irreducible to social conventions and to semantic/linguistic meanings, which are abstract and social, and are "defined by what an author meant by a particular utterance on a particular occasion" (Bevir 2004, p. 50). Therefore, hermeneutic meanings—that only concern historians—derive from intentions (Bevir 2004, pp. 52–52). One of the key terms in Bevir's approach is 'the expressed beliefs', which are individual viewpoints or weak intentions, defined as "the meaning an utterance had for its author or a later reader, whether consciously or unconsciously" (Bevir 2004, p. 171). He maintains that if the task of the historian of ideas is "to study only the meaning of the action" (Bevir 2004, p. 135), then he needs to concern himself only with the beliefs it expresses (Bevir 2004, p. 135ff).

Bevir uses the term "webs of beliefs" (Bevir 2004, p. 190ff) to imply that "the objectivity of a belief depends on its relationship to various other beliefs, [because] there cannot be any self-supporting beliefs" (Bevir 2004, pp. 190–191). Webs of beliefs, which are "boundless, spherical networks, not hierarchical pyramids" (Bevir 2004, pp. 191), constitute networks of interconnected concepts with the concepts and the connections between them, being defined in part, by beliefs about external reality (Bevir 2004, p. 191ff). Bevir believes that we cannot say what constitutes webs of beliefs, but we know that there exists a reciprocal relationship between it and an inherited tradition, because "neither makes sense without the other" (Bevir 2004, p. 195).

An inherited tradition is a common heritage which already exists, and people adopt their webs of beliefs against it; therefore, individuals are capable of altering the traditions they inherit by changing the totality of the beliefs they hold (Bevir 2004, pp. 196–197). Here, Bevir emphasizes the possibility of agency and the ability of individuals to not only change an inherited tradition but also to migrate from this tradition to another (Bevir 2004, p. 197ff). The freedom of agents and their power to adopt this or that web of beliefs, as well as their capability to alter inherited tradition is one of the most fascinating aspects of Bevir's approach (Bevir 2004, p. 199ff).

In a nut shell, a tradition or social context is "a set of understandings someone acquires as an initial web of beliefs during a process of socialization" (Bevir 2004, p. 200), in the sense that we cannot conceive of anyone ever holding a belief separate from its tradition as a starting point, yet individuals do respond selectively to it (Bevir 2004, pp. 200–202). Along with Bevir's emphasis on the freedom of individuals to interact with tradition and respond to it selectively, another significant aspect of his approach is the idea of fluidity of tradition which stands against essentialists who "equate traditions with fixed essences to which they ascribe variations" (Bevir 2004, p. 202). Rejecting Foucault's notion of episteme and the governance of one single episteme in each epoch, Bevir holds "a plurality of traditions that [are] present at any given time" (Bevir 2004, p. 211) on one hand, and the power of choice that every historian has to define his traditions, on the other (Bevir 2004, p. 211).

Having said this, I will construct a methodology on the basis of Skinner's conventionalism and Bevir's critiques of it; particularly Bevir's individualism seems to be significant. His emphasis on the role of individuals in selecting a web of beliefs freely, migrating from one tradition to another, or the existence of a number of inherited traditions in every epoch, instead of one dominant episteme, will help us to observe how many different scholars from the eighteenth to the twentieth century have interacted with the intellectual traditions of their time, and stepped beyond them to develop arguments for the conceptualizations of *wilāya*. Therefore, from the work of Skinner and Bevir, we may identify the following main methodological points which will be deployed in this thesis: the importance of agency over structure, authoritative claim and emotional force of concepts and beliefs, evolution of themes over time, and the role of individuals in adopting their webs of beliefs against an inherited tradition and changing them to their liking.

1.3 Definition of Terms

I use the following terms:

*1.3.1 Theoretical Mysticism (*ʿ**irfān-i naẓarī***)*

"the type of speculative mysticism or theosophy associated with ibn ʿArabī as philosophized and systematized by his disciple Qūnawī and the later members of the ibn ʿArabī School" (Koushki 2012, p. 30),[15] such as the *ḥakīms* of the Schools of Isfahan, Tehran, and Qum. It also found some advocates among lettrist philosophers, including ibn Turkah Iṣfahānī (d. 830 H/1426).

1.3.2 The School of Isfahan (Isfahan School of Philosophy)

"a philosophical and mystical movement patronized by the court of Shah ʿAbbās I (r. 1588–1629), centered in the new Safawid capital of Isfahan, and initiated as part of the wider Safawid cultural renaissance associated with his reign" (Rizvi 2012, p. 1). The term was coined for the first time by contemporary scholars Henry Corbin (d. 1978) and Seyyed Hossein Nasr, and refers to a phase which is marked by the rise in "metaphysical speculation and mystical experience" (Rizvi 2012, p. 1) as opposed to the juristic hierocracy.

1.3.3 **Al-ḥikmat al-Mutaʿālīya** *(ḥikma)*

This refers to the doctrine and philosophy developed by Ṣadr a-Dīn Shīrāzī (Mullā Ṣadrā, d. 1045/1635–1636). In order to understand *ḥikma* (lit. wisdom) in the *Ṣadrīan* sense of the term, first we need to know the nature of philosophy in Islam. For Muslim philosophers, philosophy had relevance to practical life, and "was a practice and an art whose goal was wisdom" (Rizvi 2009, p. 34), and for Mullā Ṣadrā, it pursued the ultimate goal (*summum bonum*) and the highest good "of enlightened engagement (*maʿrifa*) and goodly action" (Rizvi 2009, p. 34). Therefore, for Ṣadrā as well as other medieval philosophers, philosophy was regarded as "a religious commitment that obscures the conceptual boundary between theory and practice" (Rizvi 2009, p. 34).

1.3.4 Khomeinism

By Khomeinism, I mean the dominant political culture of pre-revolutionary Iran which was 'built around a political and pragmatist reinterpretation of religious scripture that evolved into revolution, and is neither symbolic of a pre-modern movement nor a post-modern phenomenon'. Khomeinism is different from traditionalism as it departs from the *Shīʿa* tradition of political quietism in favor of an activist antagonistic ideology advocating socio-political change. Likewise, it is not fundamentalism, as fundamentalism was generated from American Protestantism. Although it criticizes modernity, it is a modern phenomenon, as Khomeini "insists on some absolute, a priori foundation as the basis of its ideology" (Mahdavi 2014, pp. 55–56).

1.3.5 The wilāya *Apparatus*

One of the key terms here is 'apparatus', to formulate ideas, theories, and doctrines of *wilāya* into a coherent framework and provide a better understanding of the conceptualizations of *wilāya*, as well as its historical functions.[16] The term 'apparatus' was used for the first time by Michel Foucault as a technical term in his strategy of thought. In an interview about his books, as well as his preference for new terms such as 'apparatuses' and 'disciplines', Foucault explains:

> With the notion of apparatus, I find myself in a difficulty which I haven't yet been properly able to get out of. I said that the apparatus is essentially of a strategic nature, which means assuming that it is a matter of a certain manipulation of relations of forces, either developing them in a particular direction, blocking them, stabilizing them, utilizing them, etc. The apparatus is thus always inscribed in a play of power, but it is also always linked to certain coordinates of knowledge which issue from it but, to an equal degree, condition it. This is what the apparatus consists in: strategies of relations of forces supporting, and supported by, types of knowledge. In seeking in *The Order of Things* to write a history of the *episteme*, I was still caught in an impasse. What I should like to do now is to try and show that what I call an apparatus is a much more general case of the episteme; or rather, that the episteme is a specifically discursive apparatus, whereas the apparatus in its general form is both discursive and non-discursive, its elements being much more heterogeneous (Foucault 1980, pp. 196–197).

The term 'apparatus' was frequently used by Foucault from the mid-1970s onward when he began to concern himself with what is called 'governmentality' or the 'government of men'. He never offered any complete definition of the term though, and instead, used the term 'positivite' or positivity, which is an etymological neighbor of dispositif, though he did not define this term either (Agamben 2009, p. 3). The Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben further elaborated on the term by referring to "a set of practices and mechanisms (both linguistic and nonlinguistic, juridical, technical and military) that aim to face an urgent need and to obtain an effect that is more or less immediate" (Agamben 2009, p. 8). What was important for Agamben was the role of the apparatus in the play of power, in the administration of body, of house, and of government, and more generally of management (Agamben 2009, pp. 8–10). Agamben expanded his definition, and called the apparatus:

> literally anything that has in some way the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behavior, opinions, or discourses of living beings. Not only, therefore, prisons, madhouses, the panopticon, schools, confession, factories, disciplines, juridical measures, and so forth (whose connection with power is in a certain sense evident), but also the pen, writing, literature, philosophy, agriculture, cigarettes, navigation, computers, cellular telephones, and – why not – language itself, which is perhaps the most ancient of apparatuses – one in which thousands and thousands of years ago a primate inadvertently let himself be captured, probably without realizing the consequences that he was about to face (Agamben 2009, p. 14).

For Agamben, there are two great classes, living beings (or substances) and apparatuses, and between them a third class, subjects. Subject is the one that results from the relation or "from the relentless fight between living beings and apparatuses" (Agamben, p. 14), though in some cases these two overlap, and it happens when the same individual, the same substance, can be the place of multiple processes of subjectification. So, as Agamben recapitulates, "the boundless growth of apparatuses in our time corresponds to the equally extreme proliferation in processes of subjectification" (Agamben 2009, p. 15).

In brief, apparatus is mentioned when different ways of power play are behind the scenes to administer, manage, control, and finally subjectify individuals. Addressing Agamben's conceptualization of apparatus, the

theories of *wilāya*, as will be observed, have been generated over the centuries to control and supervise minds, bodies, actions, and practices of individuals, and from this perspective, *wilāya* has been turned into a machine that demands obedience and forces individuals into becoming believers. Individuals, then, are both the agents of *wilāya* and at the same time the subject of this all-masculine apparatus that not only has an ontological nexus to Divinity but also executes power on behalf of Divinity. Therefore, any disobedience targets His dignity and grandeur. As a theory of hegemony and authority in *Shīʿa* Islam, the concept of *wilāya* has had few re-evaluations, but chief among them is Ayatollah Husayn ʿAlī Muntaẓirī (d. 2009), whose doctrine of *wilāya* is less authoritarian and hegemonic. Muntaẓirī's last doctrine of *wilāya* assigns more space to the people's voice and subjectivity, and hence, is closer to the *Qurʾānīc* spirit of the term, as well as to the intention of the Lawgiver. A critical study and analysis of his ideas will be the subject of Chap. 6 of this research.

The Introduction should be treated as the foundational chapter for further discussion on *wilāya* throughout this work. It has sought to discuss *wilāya* and its roots in Islamic sacred sources, including the *Qurʾān*, *ḥadīth* and statements of the *imāms*. Research on this term had an etymological aspect too, which was studied in the origin and historical development of *wilāya* as they were cited in the early *Shīʿa ḥadīth* compilations. With regard to its status in the *Qurʾān* and *ḥadīth*, it can be concluded that the pair *wilāya/walāya* is a well-versed term with a solid foundation in the early Islamic and *Shīʿa* tradition. It was observed that it is around the *wilāya* of *imāms*, as the only legitimate heirs of the Prophet, that the *Shīʿa* discourse of leadership and authority has been formed. Pertinent to this is the early *Shīʿa* conceptualization of *wilāya* through which the *Shīʿa* Community has come to identify itself, and through which, historically, it drew its boundaries. In the next chapter, the mystical conceptualization of *wilāya* in the School of Ibn ʿArabī will be studied. It will be shown how this term, by being located at the center of the *Akbarīan* apparatus, finds new dimensions and significantly changes forever the course of theorizing and conceptualizing this term in Islamic culture.

Notes

1. For all *Qurʾānīc* translations throughout this thesis I use Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Others (eds), *the Study Quran, a New Translation and Commentary*, 2015 (New York: HarperCollins Publishers).

2. This verse is famous as the '*wilāya* verse' and refers to Ali who endowed his ring to a beggar when he was praying. In this verse, the *wilāya* of the Prophet and of *Imāms* are not mentioned explicitly, though *Shīʿa* scholars have interpreted the term '*ṣādiqīn*' (the Truthful) as them. http://www.islamquest.net/fa/archive/question/fa1817#, last accessed January 6, 2017.
3. The above-mentioned *ḥadīth* is not mentioned in *Shīʿa* sources, and it is only Sunni mystical sources that have cited it.
4. Or ordinary believers who have reached the status of self-annihilation (*fanā*) and gained Divine attributes (*akhlāq a-llāh*).
5. The late Shahab Ahmed in his significant book *What is Islam? The Importance of Being Islamic* ties *sirr* to Divine Truth and maintains that *sirr* acts as a venue where "the most subtle and *meaningful* experiences of Divine Truth take place" (Ahmed 2016, p. 377), and it is for this reason that one of the names of a Sufi (and *walī*) is *qaddasa Allāhu sirrahu:* "May God Purify his secret!" (Ibid.). Ahmed emphasizes the nexus between *sirr* and Divine Truth, though instead of the latter, one can put the office of *wilāya*, as a bearer of this Truth, and the result remains the same. See:

   Shahab Ahmed, *What is Islam? The Importance of Being Islamic*, 2016 (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
6. Along with the importance of *sirr* in understanding the office of *wilāya*, Sufis have enumerated two other reasons for the secrecy of *awlīyā* under the Divine *ḥijāb*. The first one is *awlīyā*'s desire for obscurity (*khamūl*) and their dislike of being known or recognized by people. It is their insistence in keeping themselves hidden from people and choosing an obscure life that preserve them from being known and killed by them (Himmatī 1391, pp. 9–15). The third reason is that since the interest of the world and its survival depends on the existence of *awlīyā*, they must be unknown. The absence of *awlīyā* is equal to the destruction of the world (Himmatī, pp. 15–17).
7. The text is discussed by Robert Gleave in an article entitled 'Early Shiite hermeneutics and the dating of Kitāb Sulaym ibn Qays', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Volume 78, Issue 01, February 2015, pp. 83–103.
8. These sources include:

   Al-Rajāl and *Kitāb al-Maḥāsin*, both by Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ʿAbd ul-Raḥmān al-Barqī (d. 274–280 H/887–893), *A-Nawādir* by Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿĪsā ʿAshʿarī (d. 3rd H/9th), *Al-Ghārāt* by Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad al-Thaqafī al-Kūfī (d. 283 H/896), *Tafsīr ul-Ḥibarī* by Abū ʿAbdullāh Hossein ibn Ḥikam al-Ḥibarī al-Kūfī (d. 3rd H/9th), *Tafsīr-i Furāt al-Kūfī* by Furāt ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Furāt al-Kūfī (d. 4th H/10th), *Musnad al-Imām Mūsa ibn Jaʿfar* by Abī ʿImrān Mūsa ibn

Ibrāhīm al-Marwzī (d. second century H/8th), *Qurb ul-Isnād* by ʿAbdullāh ibn Jaʿfar Ḥimyarī (d. 2nd H/8th), *A-Tafsīr* (also known as Tafsīr-i Qumī) by ʿAlī ibn Ibrāhīm Qumī (d. 307 H/919), *Tarīkh-i Ahl ul-Bayt* by Ibn Abī Thalj al-Baghdādī (d. 310 H/922), and *Al-Imāma* and *Wa Tabṣira Min al-Ḥeyra* both by ʿAlī ibn Hossein Bābawayh al-Qūmī (d. 329 H/940). All of these *ḥadīth* compilations are written before the composition of *al-Kafī*.

In his discussion of the thematic and stylistic characteristics of al-Barqī's *Kitāb al-Maḥāsin* (the Book of Goog Qualities), Roy Vilozny shows how Barqī, one of the many other *Shīʿī* peers of his time, "brings to the fore some of the fundamental notions of the *Shīʿī* faith at this early stage of development" (Vilozny 2017, p. 21), and by 'constructing a worldview' helped to shape the *Shīʿī* identity. See:

Roy Vilozny, *Constructing a Worldview, Al-Barqī's Role in the Making of Early Shīʿī faith*, 2017 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers).

9. The significance of the doctrine of *wilāya*—as love-loyalty-submission—(Amir-Moezzi 2011, p. 453) caused almost all the early compilers of the *Shīʿa ḥadīth* not only to discredit 'the so-called *Uthmanian Qurʾānīc* vulgate' (Amir-Moezzi 2011, p. 231) as something falsified and censured, but also to set forth the idea that the much more voluminous and credited version of the *Qurʾān*, known as 'the *Qurʾān* of the *imāms*' (Amir-Moezzi 2011, p. 236), having been disclosed to the Prophet; concerning the *walāya* of the *imāms* is the truthful Book and provides "a literal *Qurʾānīc* basis for the political and theological doctrines of the imamate" (Amir-Moezzi 2011, p. 237).
10. Hassan Ansari has shown that how the idea of the necessity of *ḥujja* has been important in Twelver Imamite, and from the first half of the third century of Hegira, Imamite theologians such as Faḍl ibn Shādhān came to conceptualize the concept of *imām* and *ḥujja*. See:

    Hassan Ansari, Imamate, in online *Dāʾyratu-l-Maʿārif-i Buzurg-i Islāmī*, Vol 10, 1392 (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Dāʾyratu-l-Maʿārif-i Buzurg-i Islāmī), pp. 137–141. http://www.cgie.org.ir/fa/publication/entryview/4686, last accessed 5/1/17.
11. They were active during *Imām* al-Baqir (114 H/732) and were hidden among his companions.
12. As Lambton testifies, neither the term nor the concept of *ʿiṣmah* (infallibility, impeccability) "occurs in the *Qurʾān* or in canonical Sunni ḥadīth. They were apparently first used by the Imamiyyah, who from the beginning of the second/eight century, if not earlier, maintained that the *Imām* must be immune from sin" (Lambton 1989, p. 99). Given this, both the formation of the doctrine and its subsequent development owed to the attempt

of the *Shīʿas* "to establish the claims of the *Imāms* against the claims of the Sunni caliphs" (Ibid.). See:

Ann K. Lambton, *Political Theory and Practice*, in *Expectation of the Millennium: Shīʿism in History*, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Hamid Dabashi, Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr (eds), 1989 (New York: State University of New York Press), 93–114.

13. A sect within the *Ghullāt* that "abrogated the *sharīʿa* and did not consider themselves bound by religious obligations, including prayer" (Modarressi 1993, p. 35).
14. According to Skinner, the social context of a given text cannot independently lead a historian of ideas to the recovery of the intentions of author, but only to discovery of the author's past motivations, which is the linguistic context of a certain period of time, when a given text was composed.
15. Matthew Melvin Koushki, *The Quest for a Universal Science: The Occult Philosophy of Ṣāʾin al-Dīn Turka Iṣfahānī (1369–1432) and Intellectual Millenarianism in Early Timurid Iran*, Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, May 2012.
16. Apparatus, or 'dispositif' in French, was a vague concept in Foucault's later thought. He used it quite often, especially from the mid-1970s, when he began to concern himself with what he called 'governmentality' or the 'government of men'. Both Giorgio Agamben and Gilles Deleuze (1925–1995) used it and illuminated it in their writings. In his essay called 'What is an Apparatus?' (2009), Agamben tried to decode what Foucault meant by this technical term. See:

Giorgio Agamben, *What is an Apparatus?* translated into English by David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella, 2009 (Stanford: Stanford University Press).

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CHAPTER 2

Ibn ʿArabī and *Wilāya*

The subject matter of this chapter is the study and critical analysis of the conceptualizations of *wilāya*, the seal of *wilāya* (*khatm al-wilāya*, also known as the seal of the sainthood), *nubuwwa* (prophethood), *khilāfa* (vicegerency), and *al-insān al-kāmil* (the Perfect Man), in the writings of Ibn ʿArabī (d. 637 H/1240). The focus is on a number of his texts and treatises, such as *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* (Bezels of Wisdom), *ʿAnqāʾ Mughrib* (the Fabulous Gryphon), and *Risālat al-Anwār* (Treatise of the Lights) published in *Majmūʿa Rasāʾil* (Collected Treatises) and *Tajalīyāt ul-Ilāhīya* (Divine Theophanies). To this end, the present chapter starts with the biography, studies, journeys, and bibliography of Ibn ʿArabī, followed by his conceptualizations of the abovementioned terms. The purpose is to show how he was inspired by previous mystics and mystical traditions which would have been available in his time, what he added to the existing traditions, and what he left as his legacy for future generations.

All this is highly relevant to the overall content of this study, because it enables researchers to keep track of the conceptualization of the abovementioned terms, and particularly, the doctrines of *wilāya* and *khatm al-wilāya*, from the earliest mystics, such as *al-Ḥakīm* al-Tirmidhī in the third century up to the seventh century, when the Andalusian mystic made them the central concepts of his mysticism. By doing so, it places the researcher in a better position to answer the second question of this study: "whether the conceptualizations of *wilāya* have remained stagnant and unchanged throughout history". Addressing the doctrine of *al-insān*

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al-kāmil, whose conceptualization pre-dates Ibn ʿArabī, the intention is to study its conceptual development from Ibn ʿArabī onward, and to delve into the question that how later scholars, here *Shīʿī* mystics and philosophers, understood it, interpreted it, and adjusted it into their doctrinal platform. These two questions are prologues to the major questions, which are "whether *Akbarīan* mysticism was inexorable for later scholars, and if not, why the majority of them wanted to interpret him from a *Shīʿa* perspective".

As it is already mentioned, for example, on the conceptualizations of *khatm al-wilāya*, *al-Shaykh al-Akbar* (the Greatest Master) was inspired by *al-Ḥakīm* al-Tirmidhī (d. 295 H/910) and his theory of *khatm al-wilāya*, though Ibn ʿArabī's contribution on both the concept and the referents of *wilāyat al-ʿāmmah* and *wilāyat al-khāṣṣah* are more impressive on later Sufis. In certain areas, such as the theory of the Perfect Man, Ibn ʿArabī retains supremacy over his predecessors and successors.[1] *Al-Shaykh al-Akbar*'s legacy, however, is significant and critical to such an extent that subsequent mystics, whether in agreement with him or not, were in different ways influenced by him. Pertinent to this, is his impact on *Shīʿī* scholars and on the growth and development of *Shīʿa* mysticism in later centuries, in the sense that Ibn ʿArabī's intellectual legacy came to be read and interpreted with *Shīʿa* concerns and interests.

2.1 Bibliography, Travels, and Works

Abū ʿAbdullāh Muḥy al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad Ibn ʿArabī al-Ḥātamī (d. 638 H/1240), later known as *al-Shaykh al-Akbar*, was born in Murcia in Andalusia (Arabic al-Andalus) in today's Spain. When he was eight years old, his family moved to Seville (Arabic Ishbiliyyah), and his father started an official career there. It was in Seville that Ibn ʿArabī began his primary education with famous teachers on the *Qurʾān, ḥadīth*, literature, and other related subjects, and received *ījāza* (authorization) of teaching, as well as *khirqa* (lit. cloak). It was also at this time, the period of *jāhilīyya* (lit. ignorance) that he, as a teenager "felt drawn in a different direction. He had a presentiment of certain spiritual need" (Addas 1993, p. 31). So, the young Ibn ʿArabī was "divided between his desire to enjoy the good things of this low world and his desire for God; the period when he had a vague apprehension of the Truth but did not yet know it in its fullness" (Addas 1993, p. 31).

Ibn ʿArabī is characterized by his several adventurous journeys to different parts of the Muslim world, as well as having dreams and visions. His journeys were both geographical and spiritual, shaping his personality as the most celebrated *ʿārif* (mystic) of the Muslim world. There are two viewpoints regarding Ibn ʿArabī's methods of learning: first, from an early age, he became acquainted with numerous *shaykhs* and benefited from a number of masters, both in Seville and various other Muslim cities, from Islamic Spain to Baghdad and to Konya. These figures, who were mostly *ʿārifs* as well as a handful of theologians and jurists, impressed and shaped his ideas on *ʿirfān* (mysticism), *fiqh* (jurisprudence), and *kalām* (theology). Among those who impressed him greatly were the *Malāmatīyya* (also *Malāmatīs*, from the Arabic word *malāmah* or blame), who were praised by Ibn ʿArabī as the owners of the most exalted status of *wilāya* and whose ranks were only comparable to prophethood (Khurāsānī, in http://lib.eshia.ir/23022/4/1507, p. 5).

On the other hand, there are scholars such as Gerald Elmore who argue that they were not unduly influenced by any personal teacher and therefore can be regarded as "a perfect example of the theodidactic, *Uwaysī* mystic – a Sufi with no (visible) master among men" (Elmore 1999, pp. 103–108).[2] However, there is no room for doubt about his masters who initiated him with regular Islamic *ʿilm*, and as Claude Addas has argued, he "undertook to deepen his knowledge of the *Qurʾān* and the *ḥadīth*" (Addas 1993, p. 44). Addas provides us with the names of his teachers, as well as the legal and spiritual schools, that influenced the young Ibn ʿArabī (Addas 1993, p. 44ff). Therefore, his journey bears the imprint of both the regular Islamic training he gained from his masters, as well as the illumination (*fatḥ*), which he obtained during a retreat (*khalwa*), as the fruit of a long period of initiatic discipline (*rīyāḍa*) (Addas 1993, p. 35).[3] As mentioned earlier, one of the characteristics of Ibn ʿArabī was his dreams and visions of figures such as the Prophet, and Sufis—among them women—all of whom came to inspire him with their words and enunciations. Along with dreams and visions, he received a number of "transcendent inspirations" (Nettler 2003, p. 5), through which (by his claim) most of his works were revealed to him by God. For example, *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*,[4] as well as his magnum opus in thirty-seven volumes, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkīyah* (Meccan Revelations) and *Mawāqiʿ al-Nujūm* (the Stations of Stars), which were later written by him in a short period of time, are among those Divine gifts (Khurāsānī, p. 5).

Ibn ʿArabī's long period of physical, intellectual, and religious travel helped him both to teach and learn from others. Through this exchange, he not only achieved "an impressive literary productivity closely linked with his physical movements" (Nettler 2003, p. 1) but also gained "an original perspective that [as will be shown in this chapter] in later Islam served to re-orientate religious thought, whether Sufi or other, in a most profound way" (Nettler 2003, p. 2). Settling in Damascus proved to be most beneficial for Ibn ʿArabī in several ways. He completed the first draft of *al-Futūḥāt* (Addas 1993, p. 285),[5] as well as *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* (Khurāsānī, p. 7). His intellectual and spiritual experiences blossomed as well. In addition, he gained "the good will, friendship, and protection offered him by the powerful family of the Banū Zakī … [a factor that] enabled him to pursue his teaching in complete tranquility" (Addas 1993, p. 254). He died in twenty-eight of *Rabīʿ al-Thānī* 638/November 16, 1240, at the age of seventy-eight, and was buried in the family cemetery of *qāḍī* (also *qāzī*, lit. the judge) Muḥy al-Dīn ibn Zakī (Khurāsānī, p. 7).

For the purpose of my research, which is the reading and analysis of the concept of *wilāya* and other related terms in the writings of Ibn ʿArabī, I have chosen a few of his key texts, such as *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, with the glosses of Abu al-ʿAlā ʿAfīfī, *ʿAnqāʾ Mughrib,* and *Risālat al-Anwār* (Apostleship of Lights). There are two difficulties with reading and understanding Ibn ʿArabī's texts: the intricacies of his texts and the complexities of the Arabic language he uses. Addressing Ibn ʿArabī's thought and language, Nettler rightly argues that both his Sufi thought and language are highly complex, in some cases overlapped and ambiguous, and as such, "resist any simple and straightforward understanding" (Nettler 2003, p. 2).

2.2 The Perfect Man

The intent of the Perfect Man, which constitutes the mystical anthropology of all the *ʿirfānī* trends in the Muslim world, is very much indebted to Ibn ʿArabī and his School. It is well known that it was *al-Shaykh al-Akbar*, who, for the first time in the history of Islamic mysticism, turned the Perfect Man into a cornerstone of his theoretical mysticism (*ʿirfān-i naẓarī*).[6] The notion, however, as a number of scholars including Nicholson, Abu al-ʿAlā ʿAfīfī and Takeshita have argued, is almost as old as Sufism itself (Nicholson 1921, p. 77, ʿAfīfī 1423 H/2002, pp. 35–39[7]; Takeshita 1986, p. 15ff[8]), though in subsequent developments, Ibn ʿArabī's conceptualizations of the Perfect Man became a model for further theorization by Sufis.

Masataka Takeshita offers an elaborated elucidation of this notion in the thoughts of Ibn ʿArabī in his doctoral thesis, "Ibn ʿArabī's Theory of the Perfect Man and its Place in the History of the Islamic Thought". Along with its historical genealogy, from pre-Islamic traditions up to Ibn ʿArabī, Takeshita explains anthropocentrism as the predominant feature of Ibn ʿArabī's anthropology, and shows how he used the themes and motives familiar to early Sufism (Takeshita 1986, p. 8). Although his anthropology manifests obvious similarities to that of the early Christian fathers, "the notion of theology" of the image on the basis of the famous hadith that "God created Adam in His image" was changed dramatically by Muslim Sufis. Their belief was that, Adam, as the stereotype, was created according to God's names and attributes and not according to His essence as opposed to the Christian doctrine. Due to the significance of *tawḥīd* in Islam, Muslim theologians distinguished between the essence and the names and attributes, and in this way, endowed the latter with an intermediary position between the absolute Godhead and the creature (Takeshita 1986, pp. 15–17).

Without digging into historical debates on the theory of the Perfect Man prior to Ibn ʿArabī, what is important for our discussion here is that it was Ibn ʿArabī who used the phrase "the Perfect Man" for the first time, and mostly used it to describe Adam, who was created in God's image, as His vicegerent on earth. Adam is the *khalīfa* in terms of the totality (or synthesis) of his status—*maqām al-jāmiʿ* or *kawn al-jāmiʿ* (synthetic being)—in the sense that "he is the synthesis of the image of God and the image of the universe" (Takeshita 1986, p. 50). As Takeshita argues, in order to understand the abovementioned theory, one needs to pay attention to both the Judeo-Christian tradition of the theory of the double nature of man on the one hand, and the epistemological and ontological functions of reality in Ibn ʿArabī on the other (Takeshita 1986, p. 51ff).

Ibn ʿArabī discusses the Perfect Man on two different levels: one is the Perfect Man as the archetype, ideal exemplar, the Minor Cosmos (microcosm), and the medium by which Deity looks at His creatures. On this level, *insān* is the most perfected creature because it is created in God's image (the allegory of mirror), and so reflects this image in its entirety. Reflecting Divine attributes makes *insān* the spirit of the cosmos and *al-kawn al-jāmiʿ* (lit. the most comprehensive existence). On the second level, *al-insān al-kāmil* is used as a modulated, hierarchical being; the designation is ascribed only to a few, select beings. This is how the Perfect Man intersects with the doctrines of *wilāya* and *khatm al-wilāya*, because

most people are far from being labeled as perfect. The *Faṣṣ* of Adam (*Faṣṣ Ḥikmat Ilāhīyyah fī Kalimat al-Ādamīyyah*) in the *Fuṣūṣ* discusses the first level, for example, the level of *nashʾat ul-insānīyyah*, from which everything originates and to which everything ends (Ibn ʿArabī 1423 H/2002, vol. 1, pp. 48–49).

Along with the *Fuṣūṣ*, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkīyah* (Meccan Revelation) also contains scattered references to the doctrine of the Perfect Man. Chapter Seven; Volume One of *Futūḥāt* entitled "*fī maʿrifat bidʾ al-jusūm al-insānīyyah*" (lit. on the Gnosis of the Origin of Human Bodies) discusses the first level of *al-insān al-kāmil*. *Nashʾat ul-insānīyyah*, both in its physical and non-physical dimensions, is the origin of creation and is *al-qaṣd al-thānī* (lit. the second intention) of creation after gnosis and worship of God, which is the first intention (*al-qaṣd al-awwal*) of the creation. Insān as *al-qaṣd al-thānī* is His vicegerent and everything in the world is created for him. Al-Shaykh al-Akbar clarifies that *taʿaluq al-irādī* (lit. His intended will) and not *ḥudūth* (lit. incident) is the reason behind the creation of *insān* and why he is created by His hand (38:75)[9] and is blown by His spirit (15:29).[10] The Deity's will (lit. *al-ʾirādah*) and not incident, was determined to create *insān* after creating His gnosis. This is because His will is an eternal, everlasting, and predetermined attribute, describing His Essence which is inaccessible and will remain so (Ibn ʿArabī, vol. 1, 1405 H/1985, p. 234 ff). Therefore, *al-insān al-kāmil*, created in His image, is a window into the Creator and into His names and attributes. *Insān* is His eye, His real intention in creating the creation, and the locus for the manifestation of His names and attributes. His status is comprehensive and embraces all the realities of the universe (Ibid., pp. 252–253).

Insān is also prone to the affliction (lit. *balā*) of the faculty of thought (lit. *al-fikr*), which itself is subordinated to another faculty, for example, intellect (lit. *al-ʿaql*), because intellect is superior to and commands thought. Similarly, thought is superior to the faculty of imagination (lit. *quwat ul-khīyālīyah*), imagination is superior to the faculty of sensation (lit. *ḥissīyah*), and sensation is superior to the faculty of visionary (lit. *muṣawwarah*). There is an obligation for the faculty of intellect to know Him, though as Ibn ʿArabī asserts, only the intellects of *khāṣṣat al-llāh* (the selected ones), for example, *anbīyā* and *awlīyā*, are capable of knowing Him. This is the second level of the Perfect Man, and where it coincides with the office of *wilāya*. Having faith in His gnosis encourages *anbīyā* and *awlīyā* as the owner of gnosis,[11] to return to Him and to take Him as refugee. Although returning to Him is equated to gnosis of Him, *awlīyā*

are banned from thinking about, and/or reflecting on His Essence (lit. *dhāt*), which always remains inaccessible to them. He bestowed His gnosis upon them, as they are His manifestation as well as His witness to the creation (Ibid., pp. 253–255).

As mentioned above, it is with *Faṣṣ* on Adam that the *Akbarīan* discussion of the Perfect Man starts. In this first *Faṣṣ*,[12] Ibn ʿArabī talks about the station of man (*insān*), or the station of the *khalīfa* of God on the earth, who is the eye of God by which the Deity looks upon His creatures and shows mercy toward them. Therefore, *insān* is pre-eternal and perennial, he is the Logos (*kalima*), encompassing His names, attributes, and the secrets of creation. The cosmos is created by *insān*, and its durability and persistency is indebted to him. Moreover, *insān* is called the Seal (which means the one who brought the *wilāya* to its highest level), because He seals His treasuries and preserves them by *insān* (Ibn ʿArabī, 1423 H/2002, vol. 1, p. 50). *Insān* is different from the angels in that he not only embodies all the names and attributes, but because he is cognizant of the names and can teach them to angels, he is the more excellent. He also embodies completeness, as he manifests the images of Reality (*ḥaqq*) and of the cosmos both (Ibn ʿArabī, vol. 1, p. 55).

The Reality[13] is reflected and present in every creature, but it is only the Perfect Man or the Great Man (*al-insān al-kabīr*) which is regarded as the spirit (*rūḥ*) and the heart which animate the cosmos, the cosmos being his outward manifestation (Ibn ʿArabī, vol. 1, p. 111). The doctrine of the Perfect Man has drawn the attention of the *Shīʿī ḥakīms* of the post-Safawid era, and as will be observed in Chap. 4, both the scholars of the Schools of Tehran and Qum adjusted it into their doctrinal creed, here *Shīʿīsm*. *Imāms* are the Perfect Man, the *ḥaqq* (which is a *Qurʾānīc* term, means reality/truth), and *ḥaqīqa* (lit. rightness, appropriateness). The latter is not a *Qurʾānīc* term, but is used extensively in the *ḥadīth* literature about *imāms* and their status. *Ḥaqq* (lit. truth, reality, rightness) have always had a fundamental role in "the quest for wisdom and the happiness of the soul" in Islamic philosophy (Chittick 2014, p. 4). In the same way, *imāms* represent *ḥaqq* and *ḥaqīqa* and are regarded as 'the light of guidance' and 'the ship of salvation and happiness' (*miṣbāḥ ul-hudā wa safīnat ul-najāt*) for their believers.

In the twelfth *faṣṣ* of the book of *Fuṣūṣ*,[14] which is dedicated to the Wisdom of the Heart, Ibn ʿArabī discusses the issue of the heart in general, and the heart of the Gnostic (*ʿārif*) in particular, which originates from the mercy of God. The heart not only originates from the mercy He has

for His creatures, but also the heart of the *ʿārif* is more immense and extensive than His mercy. When God wishes to widen the heart of a chosen *ʿārif*, His purpose is that the *ʿārif*'s heart contains nothing but the remembrance of God, as He is envious (*ghayūr*) toward His subjects; there is no room in the heart of the chosen *ʿārif*s to love any other above God. So, as He manifests Himself in different ways (in different names and attributes), the heart widens and constricts in order to be capable of reflecting different manifestations, and as such, there is no more room for anything but Him (Ibn ʿArabī, vol. 1, p. 120).

The heart of the *ʿārif*, Ibn ʿArabī argues, is an allegory of the heart of the Perfect Man, and is the place of the bezel (*faṣṣ*) of the seal of the prophets. By adopting such an argument, Ibn ʿArabī takes an opposite stance, opposite to what the Folk believe as the status of the heart in receiving God's manifestation. Remembering Bevir's conceptualization of the term "webs of beliefs" (Bevir 2004, p. 190ff), and its reciprocal relationship with 'inherited tradition' (Bevir 2004, p. 195), Ibn ʿArabī's conceptualization of *istiʿdād* (a web of beliefs) as it stands against the common heritage of his time (or, Folk's common belief in the status of the heart of *ʿārif* in accepting *tajallī*), is an example of the priority of agency over structure, here a common tradition. The priority of agency over structure and people's capability of altering the traditions they inherit by changing the totality of the beliefs they hold (Bevir 2004, pp. 196–197) is also emphasized by Skinner (Skinner 2002, p. 7).

The popular belief among the mystics is that God is manifested in conformity with the preparedness of the servant, but this is not true; as according to Ibn ʿArabī, this preparedness of the servant, *istiʿdād*, "is rather the servant's preparedness to conform to a particular form of God's phenomenal appearance. Indeed, this *istiʿdād is given by God to His servant*"[15] (Nettler 2003, pp. 124–125). Thus, when this preparedness comes to the heart, the heart sees Him in the form in which He is revealed to it. Therefore, the heart of the *ʿārif* is the only thing that sees God in everything and worships him in the infinite shapes of His manifestations (Takeshita 1986, pp. 117–118).

As already noted, Ibn ʿArabī facilitates the idea that the *ʿārif* is able to enlarge himself in equal degree to the image upon which God manifests Himself (Ibn ʿArabī, vol. 1, p. 120). By such an argument, the role of the polished heart of the *ʿārif* in receiving Divine manifestations, and his preparedness to conform with the image of God, are more crucial than Divine manifestation per se, though, as stated earlier, the preparedness of the

heart is given by God to His servant. Ibn ʿArabī explains the difference between these two ideas by distinguishing between two kinds of theophanies (*tajallī*); the first one is called *tajallī al-ghayb* (the Theophany of the Unseen/invisible), and the second, *tajallī al-Shahāda* (the Theophany of the Visible).

According to the first type of theophany, the capacity (to receive His manifestations) is endowed to everyone who has a heart, and thereby the hidden and invisible Reality—which is called *huwa* (lit. he, masculine subject pronoun) and refers to His essence—is displayed in the heart of the *ʿārif*. Following this, the second theophany happens. To be more precise, when the capacity to receive His essence is achieved by the heart, at a higher level, the second theophany appears—by which *ʿārif* sees God as He appears to Himself in a form given by the place in which He is seen (Ibn ʿArabī, vol. 1, pp. 120–121).[16] ʿAfīfī explains that instead of the term 'capacity' in receiving *tajallīs*, Ibn ʿArabī prefers "the allegory of the mirror", because the issue of manifestation is more of a polished mirror reflecting upon itself His names and attributes. The heart of the *ʿārif* is ordained to accept the images of the names or permanent archetypes (*aʿyān-i thābita*), and the role and importance of the capacity of the heart of the *ʿārif* has little place in Ibn ʿArabī's mysticism (ʿAfīfī 1423 H/2002, vol. 2, p. 146). *Insān*, Ibn ʿArabī argues, is a comprehensive scheme (*al-barnāmij al-jāmiʿ*) of the Deity and encompasses His names, attributes, and deeds. *Insān* is the microcosm and the spirit which animates the macrocosm, and as such has the authority to act upon the cosmos. Everything in the cosmos praises him because he is endowed with the reality of the image of God (Ibn ʿArabī, Op.cit, vol. 1, p 199). This doctrine has a reverse as Fazlur Rahman maintains, which is the doctrine of "the universe as the 'macro-anthropos (*al-insān al-akbar*)' or 'macro-persona (*al-shakhs al-akbar*)'", and Man as 'micro-anthropos (*al-insān al-ṣaghīr*)'; while the former "patterns man on the Universe", the latter patterns the Universe on man (Rahman 1968, p. 149).

Al-insān al-kāmil is here personified in Ibrahim; the second father of all Muslims, and the mystery of the reality of the Perfect Man (al-Ḥakīm 1401 H/1981, pp. 30–32), is the gnostic as opposed to ordinary believers (*muʾminūn*), and has the gnosis (*maʿrifa*) of the truth of the Book, which contradicts the literal meaning of it. On the basis of the *ẓāhirī* (exoteric) and straightforward text-reading meaning of the *Qurʾān*, God is the absolute omnipotent, though in terms of the *bāṭinī* (esoteric) reading, His omnipotence is "qualified by the very nature of the world He has created"

(Nettler 2003, p. 91), among them the *aʿyān-i thābita* are important. As Nettler maintains, "the fixed essences [*aʿyān-i thābita*], which are one stage in an 'emanating process' of divine self-expression, determine God's choices, wishes and abilities" (Nettler 2003, p. 91), and the gnostic is aware of this truth.

The conceptualization of God and His being determined by His rules should be understood in terms of the word 'reciprocity'. Nettler rightly mentions that "God feeds you with your very being, while you feed Him with the order and structure … which determines the manner and specific content of this 'feeding'" (Nettler 2003, p. 95). Therefore, the term *mukallaf* is understood differently from its standard meaning in the Islamic technical, legal, and theological usage. In this usage, the human being is "the object of God's revelatory commands of belief and action (the *taklīf*)" (Nettler 2003, pp. 95–96). For Ibn ʿArabī, however, *mukallaf* means convention or reciprocity, or "the matter is from Him to you and from you to Him" (Nettler 2003, p. 96). So, "there is a full reciprocity and ontological intertwining between God and man" (Nettler 2003, p. 96).

This Divine–human mutuality and intertwining of relationship, or the absorption of Him in His creation, is designated as "the divine stations which are His names. His being in the world is His self-expression through the names which are the world and which possess His essence" (Nettler 2003, p. 100). Profoundly different from traditional Islamic understanding of the concept of God and His relationship with the creation, the *Akbarīan* doctrine is seemingly the "total identification of God and man through the mutual assimilation of each other's personal attributes" (Nettler 2003, pp. 100–101), and is regarded as the foundation of his theory of unity and diversity, or the One and the Many.

Returning to the *ʿārif*'s (the Perfect Man) attributes, Ibn ʿArabī believes that the *ʿārif*, due to Divine injunction and not by his choice, can act effectively in the world through *himma* (endeavor or determination) (Nettler 2003, pp. 210–211). Here, as ʿAfīfī elucidates, Ibn ʿArabī emphasizes the significance of the faculty of imagination (*khīyāl*), not only in creating God's image (every *ʿārif* creates his own God) but also in creating or making things appear in the corporal visible world (ʿAfīfī 1423 H/2002, vol. 2, p. 81 & pp. 148–158). *Himma* is pivotal not only because it touches upon the role of the creative faculty of the Perfect Man in actualizing things in the material world[17] but also because of the stress Ibn ʿArabī places on the realm in-between, which is called *barzakh* or the *mundus*

imaginalis, to be Corbinian. As William Chittick has rightly pointed out, along with the conventional reading of Islam "which conceives of the cosmos as a hierarchy of worlds", inspired by the *Qurʾān*, Ibn ʿArabī adds a new world in-between these two. Chittick evaluates his role in bringing out "the full implications of the in-between realm" as very important because it was "one of several factors that prevented Islamic philosophy from falling into the trap of a mind/body dichotomy or a dualistic worldview" (Chittick 2014, p. 11).

This realm is "both unseen, spiritual, and intelligible, and in another respect visible, corporeal, and sensible", and it is a locus where spiritual beings are corporealized and where corporeal beings are spiritualized. To be more precise, the *mundus imaginalis*, according to Chittick, "is a real, external realm in the Cosmic Book, more real than the visible, sensible, physical realm, but less real than the invisible, intelligible, spiritual realm" (Chittick 2014, p. 11). When Ibn ʿArabī states that the People of the Perfection *(ahl al-kamāl*) by the help of *himma*, can actualize things in the material world, he refers to potentialities of the *mundus imaginalis*, where the spiritual copy of corporal things exists and the Perfect Man actualizes them. ʿAfīfī, in his commentary on the Perfect Man, clarifies that Ibn ʿArabī divides *insān* into three groups: the first and the most honorable one is "the People of the Hearts" or "the Most Perfect *ʿĀrifs*", who are capable of knowing God by intuition and perceptivity (*dhawq*). The second group contains "the People of the Intellects", theologians or philosophers who are also called "the People of distinguished ideas/thoughts", who know God by limiting Him in certain images. The third group is the imitators, who follow and trust the prophets and messengers' teachings of God (ʿAfīfī 1423 H/2002, vol. 2, p. 149). The first group is the referent of the Perfect Man who is the permanent and the most perfect manifestation of God, and from this perspective, there is no difference between Divinity and humanity (Ibid., pp. 190–191).

2.3 Wilāya, Khilāfa, Nubuwwa, and Risāla

Along with the Perfect Man, *Fuṣūṣ* also contains Ibn ʿArabī's conceptualizations of *wilāya*, *khilāfa* (vicegerency), *nubuwwa* (prophethood), and *risāla* (messengership/apostleship), though before examining them, it is relevant to briefly point to al-Tirmidhī[18] as the preceding figure whose formulations of *wilāya* and *khatm al-wilāya* inspired Ibn ʿArabī in his elaborations on them. The *ʿārif* and *ḥakīm* of the third century, Abū ʿAbdullāh

Muḥammad ibn Ḥassan ibn Bishr ibn Hārūn Tirmidhī, offered a systematic discussion on the concepts of *khatm al-wilāya* and *khatm al-nubuwwa*. According to Tirmidhī, *nubuwwa* and *wilāya* have elements including revelation, words, and spirit (*waḥy, kalām, rūḥ*), along with the hidden knowledge of God, reality, and tranquility (*ḥadīth, ḥaqq* and *sakīna*) which form the components of them, respectively (Radtke and O'Kane 1996, 112–117).[19]

Awlīyā are selected by God to this office[20] and their endeavors in attaining *wilāya* are not as effective as God's will in choosing them and bestowing on them cleanliness of heart, knowledge of God's Oneness (*ʿilm al-tawḥīd*), and knowledge of His favors (*maʿrifat al-ālāʾ*) (Radtke & O'Kane, p. 153). Since the friends of God are gifted with His benefaction (*karam*), their miracles are generated from His benefaction, and they have unconditional faith in Him (Radtke & O'Kane, pp. 163–164).[21] Among these friends there is one (*khatm al-awlīyā*), who, due to his close proximity to God, is the most honorable. His sealing is a safe conduit for other *awlīyā* whose honesty and loyalty to God is imperfect. The Seal is the greatest saint and has the highest position among people after the Prophet. *Khātam*, on the basis of his distinguished essence,[22] is different from others and is called the Mahdi, who will appear in End Times and will be the proof of God on other *awlīyā* (Radtke & O'Kane, pp. 197–205).[23]

Wilāya, according to Ibn ʿArabī, is a pre-existent and perennial office,[24] because *walī* has two characteristics; he is cognizant of the Divine names and attributes, and he is the one who has completed the status of totality (*jāmiʿīyah*). The status of *walī* is one of totality and unity, as he has accessibility to Divine knowledge. *Walī* is higher than the apostles/messengers (*rasūls*) and the *nabīs* (prophet), since *nubuwwa* (prophethood) and apostleship (*risāla*) are interrupted, but *wilāya* is everlasting and uninterrupted, and from this perspective, *wilāya* is a comprehensive status more universal than *nubuwwa* and *risāla* (Ibn ʿArabī, Op.cit, vol. 1, p. 64 & pp. 134–135). Despite differences and contradictions, the offices of *wilāya* and *nubuwwa* have similarities as well. In *Risālat al-Anwār*, Ibn ʿArabī states that *wilāya* and *nubuwwa* have three things in common: attainment of knowledge from its Divine source, performance of extraordinary deeds, such as miracles (*karāmats* or charismatic power), and having the ability or *himma* to create things in the physical world (Ibn ʿArabī, *al- Rasāʾil*, n.d., p. 84).

Muḥammad ʿAlī Muwaḥid in his glosses on *Fuṣūṣ*, points out that *wilāya, risāla*, and *nubuwwa* are of the same nature. *Risāla* or apostleship is an intermediate station between God and people, and therefore He appoints *rusul* to transmit His message to them. So, *risāla* is an isthmus between Deity and people and should be regarded as a Divine gift. On the other hand, *nubuwwa* is an isthmus between *wilāya* and *risāla*, as God reveals to *nabī* a *sharīʿa* which could only be for *nabī* himself; if *nabī* has to convey the message to others, he is called *rasūl,* otherwise he is only *nabī*, which means that his message should be kept hidden. *Rusul* are also divided into two groups: the first group is to convey the message to people, and is indifferent about whether people accept it or not; while the second group includes those who use force to persuade people to accept the message of the *nabī*. In other words, their message should be spread by sword until people obey and subordinate to them (Muwaḥid 1386 *shamsī*, Op.cit, p. 78). The second group of *rusul* needs a *khalīfa* or a successor, who is the owner of sword, appointment, dismissal, and *wilāya* (Ibn ʿArabī, Op.cit, vol. 1, p. 207).

Therefore, the second usage of the term *wilāya* is the succession of the prophets, and from this perspective, the office of *wilāya* reminds us that His mercy to people and the emanation are not interrupted. *Wilāya* is both a general term for every personification of the Perfect Man, including prophets and *nabī*, as well as *khalīfas* of the prophets, including the Prophet of Islam. From this viewpoint, each prophet has a *walī* who inherits his *sharīʿa* and seals his religion. He is subordinate to it and executes it. In terms of his succession, *walī* is the servant of the cause of God and should render his service to His will (Ibn ʿArabī, vol. 1, pp. 97–98 & pp. 162–163).

Nabī and *walī* both have the right to dispose as well as the authority to act upon the cosmos, though there is a slight difference between these two types of *taṣarruf*: *walī*, or the most perfect *ʿārif*, has no authority in accepting the right of *taṣarruf*,[25] but *nabī* asks for such a right before accepting *nubuwwa*, because without having such an authority, his mission is incomplete (Ibn ʿArabī, vol. 1, p. 129). Apart from the right of *taṣarruf*, there are other differences between *nabī* and *walī*: *awlīyā* are the People of Unveiling (*ahl al-kashf*), while *anbīyā* are the People of Informing and Warning (*ahl al-indhār awi-l-ikhbār*) (Muwaḥid 1386 *shamsī*, Op.cit, p. 78). *Walī* is the everlasting and remaining name of God and is more exalted than *nabī* and *rasūl*. In terms of the succession of

prophets, the office of *wilāya* is that of the General *Nubuwwa* (*nubuwwat al-ʿāmm* or *al-ʿāmmah*), and *awlīyā* (or *anbīyāʾ al-awlīyā*, lit. *walīs* who are general prophets), regarded as signs of His mercy to people, are sent to people when a prophet dies (Ibn ʿArabī, Op.cit, vol. 1, p. 135).

Addressing the relationship of *nabī* and *walī*, Addas explains that the *Akbarīan* doctrine of *wilāya* should be understood with regard to both the esoteric interpretation of the *Qurʾānīc* verses "referring to the individuals in question" (Addas 1993, p. 277) and the office of *nubuwwa*. All the *awlīyā* are heirs to the prophets, but "each of them incarnates one particular form of sainthood, the model and source of which are represented by one of the 'major prophets'" (Addas 1993, p. 277). Therefore, a *walī* can be *mūsawī*, *ibrāhīmī*, *ʿīsawī*, *hūdī*, *Muḥammadī*, and so on, and every *walī* is superior to another only with regard to the functions he performs (Addas 1993, p. 126). On the other hand, it will be helpful to recall that for Ibn ʿArabī, *sharīʿa* (Islamic law) and *ḥaqīqa* (reality) are identical, as the way of spiritual realization is attained through "strict observance of the Law and scrupulous imitation of the Prophet's Sunna" (Addas 1993, p. 271).

Ibn ʿArabī's conceptualizations of *wilāya* include his theory on the sealing/seal of the *wilāya*. Along with *al-Futūḥāt* and *Fuṣūṣ*, in *ʿAnqāʾ Muġhrib*, as well as in his treatises (*al-Rasāʾil*) Ibn ʿArabī develops arguments for the theories of *khatm al-wilāya* and *khatm al-nubuwwa*[26]; (their divisions and components), for Mahdi and his appearance, and for the referent of the concepts of *khatm al-wilāya*. Since the extent of *wilāya* is wider than that of *nubuwwa* and *risāla*, and *wilāya* refers to a perpetual station which lasts forever, in the same way, *khatm al-wilāya* indicates His mercy and implies that if His creatures are not to be deprived of His *raḥma* and blessing, the unmerited favor of His emanation should be descended to them.

Wilāya symbolizes the uninterrupted flow of Divine emanation, but since the death of the Prophet, the gate of the prophethood of legislation (*nubuwwat a-tashrīʿ*) has come to an end, only *wilāya* (another kind of prophethood) remains, and it is through the *awlīyā* (who realize the office of *wilāya*) that the spirit of Muḥammad[27] (*al-ḥaqīqat al-muḥammadiyah*) "will continue on its course until the end of time" (Addas 1993, p. 77). Originally a Gnostic–Manichaean idea which has intruded into Sufism, *al-ḥaqīqat al-muḥammadiyah*—as the highest essence which embodies the attributes and names of God—through *Akbarīan* mysticism, which made of this light God himself, has become an 'orthodox' doctrine at the

center of Sufism. Over time, orthodoxy accepted that the Prophet is the Primal Light in which all the Prophets were foreshadowed, an idea which gave incomparable status to the Prophet of Islam vis-a-vis other prophets (Rahman 1968, p. 171 & 175). Therefore, according to the mysticism of Ibn ʿArabī, the *Muḥammedan* Seal is "the comprehensive and integral manifestation" (Addas 1993, p. 79) of the *Muḥammedan* sainthood, itself a supreme source of every other form of *wilāya* (Addas 1993, p. 80).

Ibn ʿArabī employs the allegory of the silver and golden bricks to allude to *khatm al-nubuwwa* and *wilāya*, respectively. In this regard, he narrates one dream twice, once in Chapter sixty-five of *al-Futūḥāt*, and for a second time in the *faṣṣ* of the prophet Seth of *Fuṣūṣ*. In this dream, which transpired in Mecca, the *Kaʿba* plays the central role. Ibn ʿArabī observes that the *Kaʿba* was built of bricks that were alternately made of silver and gold. The construction seemed to be complete, but when he turns his face toward the side between the Yemenite and the Syrian corners, he notices that two bricks have fallen—one gold and the other silver, one above the other—from the wall of the *Kaʿba*, making the wall incomplete. In this dream, he saw himself placing the bricks back into the wall, thus completing it.[28] The dreams traced back to a *ḥadīth* related from the Prophet in which he allegorized the prophethood as a wall and he himself as a brick by which the wall of the prophethood came to be completed and perfected. On the basis of this dream, Ibn ʿArabī interpreted that he was the seal of the *wilāya* and was to complete the wall of the *Kaʿba*. In fact, Ibn ʿArabī observed himself in his dream as both the golden and silver bricks, which meant that he was to fill the missing sections on the wall as the seal of the *Muḥammedan wilāya* (Muwahid 1386 *shamsī*, Op.cit, pp. 79–80).

Since he saw himself in the place of the two bricks and had no doubt that both were his very essence (*dhāt*), when he woke up he thanked God for showing him his true place—or his type (*ṣinf*)—among his followers, which is both the Apostle of God among the prophets and the seal of the *wilāya* among *awlīyā*. Gerald Elmore, in his explanation of the dream, points to the fact that the silver brick "is to be understood as representing the Seal's external dependence on the Prophet's law, whereas *his independent access to the very source of the law*[29] is symbolized by the more excellent, golden brick" (Elmore 1999, p. 149).

Wilāya is the central theme of the *ʿAnqāʾ Mughrib*.[30] In this book, Ibn ʿArabī develops his theory of *wilāya* as "bodied-forth in its supremely final authority" (Ibn ʿArabī, n.d., p. 80) or the seal of *wilāya*, and divides it into two types, the seal of the *Muḥammedan wilāya* (*wilāyat al-khāṣṣat*

al-Muḥammadīya) and the seal of the general *wilāya* (*wilāyat al-ʿāmm or ʿāmmah*). Jesus is the Word of God (*Kalimat al-Allah*), the logos and the seal of the *wilāya*, though in his second appearance on the earth, he will submit to the Prophet's *sharīʿa* as an all-encompassing law. In other words, because the *sharīʿa* of the Prophet of Islam is the most perfect one and has the station of completeness, it contains all the previous *sharīʿa* and by following the *sharīʿa* of the Prophet, Jesus in fact obeys the general rules and principles of all the precedent prophets (Ibn ʿArabī, n.d., p. 4).

Ibn ʿArabī's theories of the seal of the general *wilāya* and the seal of the particular *wilāya* are coherent and clear. Jesus is the referent of the former and is promoted to a high office in the spiritual hierarchy, which is unique among the major Sufi theorists (Elmore 1999, p. 144). In explaining the nature of that particular relationship between Ibn ʿArabī and Jesus, Addas maintains that "if Jesus is the Seal of Universal Sainthood, ibn ʿArabī himself laid claim to the role *Muḥammadan* Seal [and] only a partial and extremely biased examination of his writings could possibly have incited certain authors to maintain that no formal declaration to this effect is to be found in his writings" (Addas 1993, p. 79). Addas uses an example from *al-Futūḥāt* in which he claims that "I am – without any doubt – the Seal of the Sainthood, in my capacity as heir to the Hashimite and the Messiah" (Ibn ʿArabī, *al-Futūḥāt,* vol. 1, p. 244, in Addas 1993, p. 79). In his *Dīwān*, according to Addas, Ibn ʿArabī repeats his claim of the sainthood again (Addas, p. 79).[31]

On the other hand, in different places in the *ʿAnqāʾ*, he "routinely downplays" or even "explains away" (Elmore 1999, p. 180) the traditional criterion of physical relation to the Prophet, and takes a typical Sufi position in which the Seal should be even closer to the Prophet than the *Quraysh*, as it is more a matter of spiritual imamate and *wilāya* than the physical one. Salman the Persian (d. 35 H/656), who was adopted spiritually by the Prophet due to his devotion and religious commitment, bears witness to this fact. Elmore believes that Salman holds the office of *ṣiddīqīyah* (derived from Abū Bakr Ṣiddīq, meaning truthful), which is apostleship with *nubuwwa* and *wilāya* (Elmore, Ibid., p. 154). This controversial topic and the two contrasting readings of it will be discussed in the following sections.

The terms *imām* and the office of imamate are used for judgeship and *khilāfa*, interchangeably. In the first usage, Ibn ʿArabī states that everyone is an *imām* for himself, as s/he is the only one responsible for personal

decisions. In such a usage, *imām* means judge, or inner voice and conscious, and with regard to its personal usage, it means leader of a family and household. However, if *imām* is used as the leader of a community (*ummah*), the scope of the authority and responsibility of *imām* widens and encompasses everyone in the community under the guardianship, and as such, his order must be obeyed and his voice must be listened to by all (Ibn ʿArabī, *ʿAnqāʾ*, n.d., p. 78).

In addition, there is another usage of the terms *imām/*imamate, which is *imām al-qudsī* or the *holy imām*. The holy imamate is a spiritual status, and is described as "the shining and luminous light" and "a heart which is preferred to the world of *ghayb va Shahāda*", and as such, receives His manifestations in his heart. Hence, when God states that "My heavens and My earth do not encompass Me and place Me in themselves, but the heart of My faithful servant does", He refers to such a sublime status (Ibn ʿArabī, *ʿAnqāʾ*, n.d., p. 79). The heart of the holy *imām*, Ibn ʿArabī states, is "the House of Reality, *Bayt al-Ḥaqq*" and "the Seat of Honor, *Maqʿad a-Ṣidq*", and people come to pledge allegiance to Him (Ibn ʿArabī, *ʿAnqāʾ*, p. 79).

For Ibn ʿArabī, the office of imamate is multi-dimensional and contains both spiritual and political authority and responsibilities, and people come to pledge allegiance to him, as by such an allegiance, they in fact pay homage to God; it is He who is conceived as the "supreme *imām*" and "the first followed". The *imām*, who should be from the household of the Prophet, is His representative and has this honor after the Prophet. Interpreting verse ten of the *sūrat al-Fatḥ* (Victory) "Truly those who pledge allegiance unto thee pledge allegiance only unto God. The Hand of God is over their hands" (Nasr 2015, p. 1250), Ibn ʿArabī assures us that "this most serious status (*maqām al-ajsam*), will not be effective until *khatm al-awlīyā* from the household of the Prophet and the lineage of Ali takes responsibility of it" (Ibn ʿArabī, *ʿAnqāʾ*, n.d., p. 80ff).

Addressing Ibn ʿArabī's theories of *wilāya*, *nubuwwa*, the Sealing, and the Perfect Man, the goal was to lay stress on those aspects of Ibn ʿArabī's mysticism which are relevant to the discussion of *wilāya* by later scholars who discuss it from a *Shīʿa* perspective. Any study on this, however, would be incomplete if it did not pay enough attention to the political dimensions of his mysticism, and to the messianic ambitions and claims being latent in them. The *Akbarīan* conceptualization of *wilāya* has considerable potential for change in the socio-political sphere. The study of practical consequences of Ibn ʿArabī's mysticism is beyond the scope of this

research, though in Chap. 5 it will be observed how the theories of *wilāya* and *al-insān al-kāmil* facilitated Ayatollah Khomeini's understanding of the role of *walī* (wrapped in a juridical aura, of course), to claim leadership and authority.

2.4 Ibn ʿArabī in the *Shīʿa* World

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Ibn ʿArabī had a profound impact on *Shīʿa* mysticism, although the reason(s) why he was so important and *Shīʿī* mystics wanted to interpret him and his thought from a *Shīʿa* perspective has yet to be studied. It should be added that his relationship with his *Shīʿī* exponents was 'deeper' than mere interpretation and in fact contains 'adjustment' and 'dissemination'. *Akbarīan* mysticism in the hands of the *Shīʿī* and *Shīʿa*-minded Sufis surpassed its original form and transformed into a new configuration that, while maintaining similarities with and influenced from it, should be treated as an independent philosophical system. ʿAbd al-Razzāq Kāshānī, *Sayyid* Ḥaydar Āmulī (d. 787 H/1385), ʿAlāʾ al-Dawlah Simnānī (d. 736 H/1336), and the *Azerbāijānī* Sufi and poet, Shaykh Maḥmūd Shabistarī[32] (d. 740 H/1340) of the seventh and eighth centuries, to mention a few, are notable exponents in this regard.

Focusing on our question, one can identify two reasons for the interest of Persian Sufis in reading and interpreting Ibn ʿArabī's mysticism in a *Shīʿa* style. First, *Shīʿīsm*, and particularly Twelver *Shīʿīsm*, contains the same elements as *Akbarīan* mysticism, though in the case of *Shīʿīsm*, these elements remained for a long time in the more primitive state of a "raw mysticity", and needed to be fertilized and inseminated when the necessary catalyst was available. Several resources, such as the office of the imamate as the cornerstone of *Shīʿīsm* with the personality of the *imām* as the living exemplar at its heart, the doctrine of *mahdawīyyah*, the concept of Divine knowledge, and the allegorical interpretation of religious duties and of the Book, nourished this mysticity.

All of them had the potential for mystical interpretations, thanks to the scholarly works of Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi, who provides us with abundant information about classical *Shīʿīsm*, as well as the role of these elements in creating a *Shīʿa* identity in its formative period.[33] One can add to these sources supplications (lit. *duʿās*), salutations (lit. *zīyārāt*), and psalms (lit. *munājāt*), which always occupied a central place in Twelver culture.[34] Al-Shaybī, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, and recently Shahrām Pāzūkī,[35] who contributed considerably to the existing scholarship on the correlation

between *Shīʿism* and Sufism in general, and the reception of *Akbarīan* mysticism among *Shīʿī* scholars in particular,[36] studied the role of the abovementioned factors in this marriage, but neglected to discuss the potentiality of supplications in preparing the soil for such a relationship.

Examination of the content of these prayers, which were gathered over centuries, as well as their veracity, is beyond the scope of this research. Therefore, I only briefly indicate the two main themes of this trio (supplications, salutations, and psalms), for example, absolute monotheism and its pair, servitude (lit. *ʿubūdīyyah*), which had an indirect impact on the background preparation for the correlation between *Shīʿism* and Sufism. On the other hand, since these supplications had the imprint of the *imāms*—as both narrator and teacher—as well as their teachings, the narrator/*imām* is the living exemplar and the ideal type of *ʿubūdīyyah* and *zuhd*, which are also the two main motifs of Sufism in its formative period (Karamustafa 2007, *passim*). These common elements, in both Sufism and the supplication culture, pursue one aim: they concern themselves with the activation and cultivation of the soul and of the Self that seem to be neglected outside the realm of Sufi and *Shīʿa* spirituality.[37] However, this simplistic vertical relationship of God and *ʿabd* is elevated to a more sophisticated level when the two doctrines of *waḥdat al-wujūd* and the Perfect Man are introduced to the *Shīʿa*-minded Sufis.[38]

Second, and from a theological perspective, the *Akbarīan* theories of *wilāya* and *khatm al-wilāya*, as well as those of the Perfect Man and *waḥdat al-wujūd*, looked revolutionary and sometimes even alien to the non-Extremist *Shīʿa* ethos, but accommodating jarring sets of ideas within the moderate framework of Twelver *Shīʿism* was not unprecedented among *Shīʿī* scholars. Al-Shaybī shows how the extremist beliefs of the Abbasid era—and particularly those of Hisāam ibn Ḥakam (d. 199 H/815–816)—were refined from their unconventional surplusage and became incorporated into the mainstream *Shīʿism* of the second century (Al-Shaybī 1982, vol. 1, p. 150). Furthermore, as Amir-Moezzi discusses, after the fourth century (tenth century CE) and as a result of the establishment of the (Buwaihids) (also Buyids, 320 H/932–447 H/1055) and due to political considerations, Twelvers tended to highlight the more 'rational' (e.g., juridical and *kalāmī*) dimensions of their creed at the expense of its esoteric dimension.[39] History repeated itself, when in the mid-seventh H/thirteenth century, *Akbarīan* mysticism suffered the same experience and theories of *wilāya*, the Perfect Man and *waḥdat al-wujūd* were customized according to the *Shīʿa* creed.

However, our discussion of this reconciliation would be incomplete if we neglected to consider its other perspective and to ask this question "what would really have happened to Twelver *Shīʿīsm* in general and to this raw mysticity in particular, if *Akbarīan* mysticism had not undergone the Occam's razor of adjustment and incorporation"?[40] Answering this question is beyond the objectives of the present chapter, as further research is needed to investigate the significance of Theoretical Mysticism in bringing these scattered components together and giving them a philosophical meaning. Furthermore, it is no exaggeration to say that after the fourth Islamic century (tenth CE), the seventh century could also be called 'the *Shīʿa* century'. Familiarity of *Shīʿī* and *Shīʿa*-minded Persian Sufis with *Akbarīan* mysticism brought about a tremendous shift in Twelver culture and in the way Ibn ʿArabī's mysticism came to be accepted by subsequent generations.

Apart from the aforementioned figures who were influential in introducing Ibn ʿArabī into the *Shīʿa* world, the *Niʿmatullāhī silsila* (lit. chain) as one of the most well-established *Shīʿa* mystical schools, is another example whose scholars tried to integrate Ibn ʿArabī's ideas into their *ʿirfānī/bāṭinī* system. The *Shīʿa* mystical tendency of *Dhahabīyah* (also *Dhahabī*) has been greatly influenced by Ibn ʿArabī, and his thoughts have been incorporated into its doctrine. Apart from his influence on the intellectual development of later Sufis, Ibn ʿArabī's ideas, to a large degree, helped facilitate the formation and emergence of a number of *Shīʿa* messianic movements that appeared in the Muslim world. These movements, which emerged in the Islamic medieval ages—in the interim between the collapse of the Abbasid dynasty in 655 H/1258 and the establishment of the Safawid kingdom in Persia in 907 H/1501—marked a long period of time in which Sufism (and particularly the *Akbrīan* brand of it) and *Shīʿīsm* linked together, fueling one another. The socio-political developments of this time, which are well studied by figures such as Kāmil Muṣṭafā al-Shaybī[41], are more in depth than the goals of this research, though the main question which was raised earlier remains valid and needs to be studied.

In Chap. 4 of the present research, it will be observed how Mullā Ṣadrā formed a synthesis of the three intellectual tendencies of his time including *Akbrīan* mysticism, *Shīʿa* theology and Islamic philosophy. The *ḥakīms* of the Schools of Tehran and Qum, who added considerably to Ṣadrā's philosophical system, should be regarded as the culmination of *Shīʿa* understanding of Ibn ʿArabī's mysticism. The prominent *ḥakīm* of the School of

Tehran, Āqā Muḥammad Riḍā Qumshiʾī (d. 1306 H/1888) is particularly notable, as he had an undeniable impact on Ayatollah Rūḥullāh Khomeini (d. 1368 H/1989), whose ideas and conceptualization of *wilāya* will be discussed adequately in Chaps. 5 and 6 of this research.

2.5 Ibn ʿArabī's Legacy

As the greatest mystic of the Muslim world whose ideas have attracted philosophers, mystics, and theologians from his time up to the present, the questions which arise are "what was it about his ideas that was controversial and made them attractive" and "what made him different from others". Delving into these questions will help to evaluate his impression on Muslim mystics in later centuries. In a very general classification, one can safely say that Ibn ʿArabī's ideas are divided into two categories: they are either elaborations on existing ideas that would have been available at his time—ideas like *wilāya*, *khatm* and *al-insān al-kāmil*—and which he blended with his own and developed them into coherent theories/doctrines; or newly created ideas. The theory of *waḥdat-i wujūd* (though he never uses this term) (ʿAfīfī 1423 H/2002, Op.cit, p. 25), and the relationship between Essence (*dhāt*) and names and attributes (*asmāʾ wa ṣifāṭ*) are examples of the second.

Perhaps the most important thing about him and his theoretical mysticism (or speculative Sufism in Rahman's words) (Rahman 1968, p. 238) is the nexus between philosophy and mysticism. Ibn ʿArabī, like many other eminent orthodox scholars in the Muslim world, perceived mysticism as an area that can—and perhaps needs to—be philosophized or theorized. Therefore, mysticism, in his hands as well as other "speculative Sufis, is a mode of philosophic thought, except that it seeks to back itself up by a theory of *kashf*, implying a some kind of infallibility" (Rahman, p. 238), and is regarded as the product of a kind of synthesis of the "traditional orthodox *kalām*-theology based on the *Qurʾān* and Islamic doctrine with the purely speculative theology of the Sufi theosophy" (Rahman, p. 238). At the center of this system, as has been observed, stands the conceptualization of *wilāya*, "without which the doctrine of *kashf* would have collapsed" (Rahman, p. 239).

His students, and particularly his disciple and stepson, Ṣadr al-Dīn Qūnawī (d. 673 H/1274), however, were more influential in elaborating on this brand of mysticism than he was himself. Also, later mystics and *ḥakīms*, like those of the Schools of Isfahan, Tehran, and Qum, expressed

interest and advocacy in adding to this tradition—but it was our scholar whose ideas laid the foundation for theoretical mysticism to be generated. As Melvin Koushki has shown, its footprint can even be found among lettrists such as Ṣāʾin al-Dīn Turkah Īṣfahānī (d. 835 H/1432) (Koushki 2012, p. 30). Located in an orderly apparatus, the abovementioned terms and ideas helped following generations, right up to the present, to have a new understanding of the relationship between Deity and the cosmos—including Man—on the one hand, and the cosmos as Divine manifestation, on the other.

As Abrahamov has rightly pointed out, *dhāt* and *asmāʾ wa ṣifāṭ* are two components of one single problem which is the question of existence (Abrahamov 2015, p. 6), and in the *Akbarīan* School there is a separation between Deity's *dhāt*—which is unknowable and inaccessible by Man—and His names and attributes which are attainable by Man's cognition. Deity is absolute and indivisible, and this division is only employed for methodological purposes. Deity manifests Himself to the Universe/cosmos, and therefore we are able to know Him through His manifestations. The question of the manifestation of Deity is the cornerstone of the theory of *waḥdat-i wujūd* (the unity of being), and as ʿAfīfī maintains, is to explain the relationship between *al-Ḥaqq wa al-khalq*. *Waḥdat-i wujūd* indicates that Reality is one in His Essence, which is called *al-Ḥaqq*, but it is many in His names and attributes and is called *al-khalq*. Allah encompasses everything in His Essence (*jāmiʿ li kull-i shayiʾ fī nafsihī*): everything has His ingredients, and He manifests Himself in the image of every being, and from this viewpoint, the cosmos by its essence, is nothing but a dream (ʿAfīfī 1423 H/2002, pp. 24–27).

In terms of the relationship between these two, Abrahamov is certain that "God's Unity is absolute from the standpoint of His Essence, but many from the perspective of the cosmos" (Abrahamov 2015, p. 7). One can say that with regard to the status of Man (or better to say the Perfect Man) and its relationship with the cosmos and Deity, there exists a triangle: Deity manifests Himself through names and attributes both in the cosmos and in the Perfect Man (prophets and *awlīyā* have His ingredients in themselves), and as a microcosm, the Perfect Man shares all the characteristics of the cosmos. Despite their similarities, there is a difference between microcosm and macrocosm which is the capacity of Man to have spiritual journeys, known as the Fourth Journeys (*asfār al-arbaʿi*).[42]

Ibn ʿArabī mentioned these journeys in the first two volumes of *al-Futūḥāt al- Makkīyah*, though in two different conceptualizations, and

both are different from the reading of Mullā Ṣadrā (d. 1045 H/1635–1636), which was set forth four centuries later in a book with the same title (Ḥassan Zādih 1390, pp. 11–13). The theory of Ṣadrā, which is the dominant reading of an old idea in Islamic mysticism, has in fact been represented by later commentators of Ibn ʿArabī, including ʿAfīf a-Dīn al-Ṭilmisānī (d. 690 H/1291), ʿAbd al-Razzāq Kāshānī (also Qāshānī, d. 736 H/1335), and Sharafadīn Dāwūd Qayṣarī (d. 751 H/1350). As Dāwūd Ḥassan Zādih has pointed out, the first two journeys of '*ila llāh*' and '*fi llāh*' have been present in Islamic mysticism since its formative years, but it was Ibn ʿArabī who elaborated on them and added one more journey of '*baqā baʿd az fanā*' (subsistence after annihilation) to them. The journey itself, years later, was divided into two separate journeys of *min al-Ḥaqq ila al-khalq-i bil Ḥaqq* and *fi al-khalq-i bil Ḥaqq* by Ibn ʿArabī's commentators, and finally became perpetuated by Mullā Ṣadrā (Ḥassan Zādih 1390, p. 9ff) in *al-Asfār al-Arbaʿi*.

Regarding its conceptual development over time, one can safely say that the conceptualization of *asfār al-arbaʿi*, more as a product of the School of Ibn ʿArabī than of himself, is divided into pre- and post-*Akbarīan* time, and has been a source of inspiration for later generations of theologians, mystics, and philosophers. Here again, we have "webs of beliefs"—as "boundless, spherical networks, not hierarchical pyramids" (Bevir 2004, pp. 191)—and inherited traditions, as well as the capability of scholar/philosopher in adopting webs of beliefs against common tradition and in changing the tradition they have inherited (Bevir 2004, pp. 196–199).

Asfār al-arbaʿi, a symbolic sketch of the spiritual journey of Man to his completion (*kamāl*), has a strong juncture to the stations of *wilāya* and *khilāfa*. Regarding these two stations, *Dāwūd Qayṣarī* distinguishes between the station of *quṭbīyat* (polarity) and that of the perfect seekers (*sālikān-i kāmil*). The station of *quṭbīyat* (or that of the perfected seekers, *sālikān-i mukammil*) is the last station and is attained at the end of the fourth journey, but the highest station that a perfect seeker can reach is the third journey or the station of unity and totality (*waḥda wa al-jamʿ*). *Quṭb*, a station from where He looks at the cosmos (al-Ḥakīm 1401 H/1981, p. 517 & 915), has a number of characteristics, but perhaps the most important of all are *khilāfa*, *wilāya* and the station of *quṭb al-aqṭāb*, which is designated exclusively to *al-ḥaqīqat al-muḥammadīyah*. The spirit of Muhammad is inherited by his successors (not necessarily blood progeny), in the sense that the Prophet's successors enjoy his *wilāya* and *khilāfa* as well. To conclude, according to Qayṣarī, the status of *wilāya* is achieved at

the end of the first journey, the status of *khilāfa* is gained at the end of the third journey, and *quṭbīyat* is the highest attained when the fourth journey is completed (Ḥassan Zādih 1390, pp. 15–23).

2.6 Conclusion

There result several lessons from the formulations of *wilāya* in the mysticism of Ibn ʿArabī. Although a well-established concept in the deepest soil of Islamic mysticism (al-Ḥakīm 1401 H/1981, p. 1233), it was Ibn ʿArabī who promoted it to a creative construction at the heart of his theory on *waḥdat-i wujūd*. *Wilāya*, along with *nubuwwa* and *risāla*, shapes a "concentric sphere of activity" (Elmore 1999, p. 152), and claims to not only cover the sphere of human beings, but also two more modes—the generic and universal. In comparison, *wilāya* is the most comprehensive office and has superiority over the others. After that come *nubuwwa* and *risāla* which reveal that this classification is on the basis of the priority of the inward over the outward as *wilāya* is the esoteric dimension of *nubuwwa* and *risāla*, and every *nabī* and *rasūl* is a *walī*, but not vice versa.

In addition to *wilāya*, another prominent dimension of *Akbarīan* mysticism is the conceptualization of the Perfect Man as the ideal type, or microcosm, a spirit that animates the cosmos and manifests the wisdom of the all-comprehensive name, and finally a medium—eye, ear, hand—through which Deity shows Himself to His creatures. Although an old concept rooted in the Abrahamic tradition, the Perfect Man found its most elaborated presence in the writings of Ibn ʿArabī. *Al-insān al-kāmil*, best understood in Western terms as the Divine Logos through which all things are created, stands at the center of Ibn ʿArabī's worldview and integrates all its disparate dimensions (Chittick 2014, p. 16). It is a locus in which the Real (*ḥaqīqa*) has been realized to the extent of the human capacity.

'Divine Logos' is an important term in the mysticism of Ibn ʿArabī' and needs attention. We know that the *Fuṣūṣ* is divided into twenty-seven chapters, each of which is dedicated to a prophet or sage, and each of these figures presented as a logos (*kalima*) embodying the wisdom (*ḥikma*) of a specific Divine name. So, every prophet/sage represents Divine Logos relevant to his mission and to his existential capacity, though all share "the Station of No Station" (*maqām lā maqām*), also called "the *Muḥammedan* Station", which "is full realization of the Reality of Realities; [and] it embraces all stations and standpoints without being determined and

defined by any of them" (Chittick 2014, p. 22). As Chittick is certain, the Perfect Man, which stands "in the Station of No Station, is in effect the human analogue of Nondelimited Being" (*Wujūd Muṭlaq,* also *Dhāt Ghayr ul-Maḥdūd*), which assumes every delimitation without itself becoming limited (Chittick 2014, p. 22).

Addressing his legacy, Alexander Knysh is right that the Greatest Master and his mysticism are treated by a wide variety of scholars and in different genres of literature, from early biographies to later refutations and apologies, to Sufi writings, to metaphysical and theological debates, and to less theoretical and more empirical works, such as *Muqaddima* of the Tunisian thinker ibn Khaldūn (d. 808 H/1406).[43] Knysh also shows how he was considered differently in the two parts of the Muslim world. In the Muslim West, "his legacy was not considered unique or exceptional" (Knysh 1999, p. 197), while in the East, his teachings made a great impression on *ʿulemā*, "who treated him as the foremost exponent, if not the founder, of monistic philosophy" (Knysh 1999, p. 197).

In the East, where *Shīʿīsm* has traditionally been more pervasive than in the West, his legacy not only inspired many subsequent thinkers but also caused uproar and outrage due to the doctrine of the *khatm*. The Eastern *ʿulemā*, as is the case in the *Shīʿa* world, have not been simple interpreters and commentators of him, but rather accepted his legacy after examination and question. As Matthew Melvin Koushki has mentioned, the "interpenetration of Sufism and *Shīʿīsm* was to strike a particularly deep root in *Shīʿa* scholarly circles" (Koushki 2012, p. 72), and it was the rationalist School of Bahrain (7th/13th) that for the first time achieved "a synthesis of *Imāmī* theology with *Ibn ʿArabīyan* mystic-political thought" (Koushki, p. 72).

In the case of *Akbarīan* doctrine of *khatm al-wilāya,* the intellectual and spiritual exchange of ideas occurred when they were adjusted to a *Shīʿa* context. In this camp, as it is mentioned earlier in this chapter, ʿAbd al-Razzāq Kāshānī (also Qāshānī, d. 736 H/1335) and Seyyed Ḥaydar Āmulī (d. 787 H/1385) are the most prominent. Ibn ʿArabī's influence not only swept borders of mysticism and philosophy but also found its most overt manifestations in the appearance of a number of messianic and apocalyptic uprisings in the middle ages. Movements such as *Ḥurūfīyya* (also *Ḥurūfīsm*), *Nuqṭawīya, Niʿmatullāhīya*, *Nūrbakhshīya*, and *Mushaʿshaʿīya* are cases in point. These movements were centered on the idea of *wilāya* and the role of *walī* in fighting injustice, overthrowing temporal rules and establishing the government of Mahdi on the earth.

The idea of *wilāya* is the pivotal idea of the School of *Shaykhīsm* as well, which, as will be observed in the next chapter, came to emerge as an alternative to the mainstream *Shīʿīsm*, with *kashf* and *wilāya* at the center, though devoid of any liaison between theology and speculative mysticism. Ibn ʿArabī is sporadically mentioned and criticized by the first *Shaykhī* leader, but *Shaykhīsm* is far from being a serious reaction or response to the speculative mysticism of *al-Shaykh al-Akbar*, and rather, should be treated as an esoteric-*kalāmī* trend which remains constrained to its *Shīʿa* coffin. The critiques of Shaykh Aḥmad al-Aḥsāʾī (d. 1239 H/1823) on Ibn ʿArabī are clear examples of interdiscursive critiques and have had numerous equals in the Muslim world. The main focus of Chap. 3 is the study and critical analysis of the *Shaykhī* key texts in order to delve into the conceptualizations of *wilāya*, imamate and *nubuwwa*, as well as to the nature of the interaction of the *Shaykhī ʿulemā* with the predominant mystical school of their time; *Akbarīan* mysticism. It will be shown how this school contributes to the existing tradition on *wilāya*, and related concepts.

Notes

1. Reynold Nicholson discusses the impression of Ibn ʿArabī on the next generations and particularly shows how ʿAbdul al-Karīm Jīlī was indebted to his theory of the Perfect Man. Nicholson adds that both Jīlī and Ibn ʿArabī "are inspired by the same mystical philosophy … [and use] similar methods in order to develop their ideas". See:

   Reynold A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*, Appendix II, *Some Notes on the Fuṣūṣ ʿl-Hikam,* 1921 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 149.
2. Elmore's opinion seems to me surprising, since the names as well as the spiritual and legal affiliations of Ibn ʿArabī's masters are well documented. Some of them were a famous Sufi and *mutakallim* (theologian), a few were illiterate, and some others were, at the same time, his masters and disciples both. Addas not only enumerates them but also lists the names of the *ʿirfānī* and philosophical schools of his time (Addas 1993, p. 44ff).
3. Alexander Knysh also believes that he not only was not *Uwaysī* but also the reason behind his extensive journeys was to study under "the most prominent religious teachers of his time" (Knysh 1999, p. 7).
4. Nettler has given a full account of this. See:

   Ronald L. Nettler, *Sufi Metaphysics and Qur'anic Prophets: Ibn ʿArabī's Thought and Method in the Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, 2003 (Cambridge: the Islamic Texts Society), pp. 5–6.

5. Khurāsānī claims that Ibn ʿArabī wrote the second copy of the book in Damascus, and the first one having been written in Mecca in 599. Khurāsānī, p. 7.
6. Such praise and celebration of Man's status in creation has been unprecedented in Islamic culture until the time of Ibn ʿArabī. Additionally, as history attests, in subsequent centuries, it became the typical understanding of Man and his vicegerency. The author is not sure whether any scholarly research has been done on the term *dervish* and its humble status, in contrast to the egoistical and overconfident status of the Perfect Man. Such an investigation would be very helpful because it considers the historical changes of Islamic mysticism, from its formative period to its theorization by Ibn ʿArabī. Furthermore, and addressing our concern here, for example, the doctrine of *wilāya* and its developments in the post-Safawid era, this research would show, whether there was any possibility that numerous mystical and/or messianic movements revolving around the concept of the Perfect Man, could be conceived. In other words, in the absence of concepts like the Perfect Man, were Islamic Mysticisms still capable of nurturing such movements?
7. ʿAfîfî believes that it was Manṣūr Ḥallāj who, for the first time, drew our attention to "this Jewish maxim" that God has created Man on a Divine image (*ṣūrat ul-ilāhīya*), and therefore Sufis err in attributing it to the Prophet of Islam (ʿAfîfî 1423 H/2002, p. 35).
8. Masataka Takeshita, *Ibn Arabi's Theory of the Perfect Man and Its Place in the History of Islamic Thought*, University of Chicago, Ph.D. dissertation, 1986.
9. "[God] said, 'O Iblis! What had prevented thee from prostrating unto that which I created with My two Hands? Dost thou wax arrogant, or art thou among the exalted?" (Nasr 2015, p. 1115).
10. "So when I have proportioned him and breathed into him of My spirit, fall down before him prostrating" (Nasr 2015, p. 646).
11. Ibn ʿArabī's argument for the nature of true knowledge, for example, His gnosis and accessibility of *khawāṣṣ* to it, is in fact a Platonic one. Only the philosopher is the owner of the true knowledge and the 'just' one, and hence, has every right to be the ruler, or the philosopher-king.
12. *Faṣṣ* or bezel of [Divine] wisdom, in the mysticism of Ibn ʿArabī is an allegory for *ḥikmat* or the esoteric heritage which is inherited to all the prophets and the *awalīyā* from the spirit of Muḥammad (*al-ḥaqīqat al-muḥammadīyah*). *Al-ḥaqīqat al-muḥammadīyah* is the logos carrying *ḥikmat* from Deity to the prophets and to the *awalīyā* (ʿAfîfî, vol. 2, p. 3). The *Fuṣūṣ* is mostly "on the nature of God as manifested through prophecy, each of its twenty-seven chapters being attached to the logos (*kalima*) of a prophet typifying a particular Divine attribute. Since God does not reveal Himself completely

except in Man, the first chapter treats of Adam as the microcosm, the Perfect Man, the absolute mirror of Divinity" (Nicholson 1921, p. 149). Nicholson in this chapter, entitled "Some Notes on the *Fūṣūṣ ʿL-Ḥīkam*" points to the difficulties he had in reading, understanding and translating Ibn ʿArabī's complicated text and states that "the theories set forth in the *Fuṣūṣ* are difficult to understand and even more difficult to explain, … [as] the author's language is so technical, figurative and involved that a literal reproduction would convey very little. On the other hand, [Nicholson states] if we reject his terminology, we shall find it impossible to form any precise notion of his ideas" (Nicholson 1921, p. 149). Other non-Arab scholars, such as Sharaf al-Dīn Khurāsānī and William Chittick, both of whom have written entries on 'Ibn ʿArabī', refer to this point.

13. For different meanings and usages of the term *ḥaqq* in the terminology of Ibn ʿArabī, see:

    Suʿād al-Ḥakīm, *al-Muʿjam al-Ṣufi: al-Ḥikma fī Ḥudūd al-Kalima*, 1401 H/1981 (Beirut: Dendera), p. 337.

14. William Chittick, in his article entitled *the Chapter Headings of the Fūṣūṣ*, elaborates on the significance of each chapter heading of this book, and the way chapters are understood by Ibn ʿArabī's first commentators. See:

    William C. Chittick, The Chapter Headings of the Fūṣūṣ, *the Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn ʿArabi Society*, Vol. II, 1984.

15. The italic is in the text.

16. ʿAffifī explains these two as such: the Reality has two theophanies, the Theophany of the Invisible and the Theophany of the Evidence. In the first theophany, He manifests for His Essence in His Essence upon His names and attributes and is called the emanation of the more sacred (*fayḍ al-aqdas*) (ʿAffifī, Ibid., vol. 2, p. 145). The reason for this theophany is the love of the Deity for His Essence which motivates Him to be manifested in Divine names and attributes. As a result, permanent archetypes (*aʿyān-i thābita*) appear. In the second theophany, He appears "in the images of the extraneous archetypes" (*aʿyān-i khārijī*), and is called the emanation of the sacred or *fayḍ-i muqaddas* (Ibid., p. 145), and as a result, the concomitants (*lawāzim*) of permanent archetypes in the world appear. These two realms are in contrast, as the former represents unity and inward, while the latter displays outward and multiplicity (Ibid., p. 145). *Aʿyān-i thābita* have two modulations: the first one is the images of the names and attributes, while the second modulation is designated to the realities of the extraneous archetypes. The emanation happens at both levels.

17. Though again I should emphasize that the *himma* of the *ʿārif* does not stem from his free will or personal choice but through Divine injunction, although, even it does, the concepts of 'freedom' and 'choice' itself, both

God's and man's, are "compelled and ordained in the very order of things" (Nettler 2003, p. 215). Nettler reads: "the divine and human 'free' choices and their results are subsumed within the larger universe of metaphysical order and determination – and the choices are then fixed in their own domain" (Nettler 2003, p. 215).

18. Muḥammad Sūrī, in his article *Ḥakīm Tirmidhī va Naẓarīyayi Wilāya*, explains why Tirmidhī and some of his other contemporary *ʿārifs* were not called Sufi, but *ḥakīm* or *faqīr* (poor), and why they did not reveal any affiliation to official Sufi *ṭarīqas* (lit. path). Sūrī maintains that in the third century, terms such as Sufi and *taṣawwuf* were solely referred to the *ʿārifs* of the School of Baghdad, and therefore, in order to refer to the masters of other schools/*ṭarīqas*, and especially those of Transoxiana, either *ʿārif* or *ḥakīm* has been used. People of the Levant used to call their *ʿārifs* as *faqīr* and not Sufi. See:

    Muḥammad Sūrī, Hakīm Tirmidhī wa Naẓarīyayi Wilāya, *the Journal of Falsafeh va Kalām*, vol. 4, Winter 1385, p. 91.

19. Tirmidhī himself was accused of having prophetic ambitions, while he had chosen an obscure life. He believed that there is no difference between *nabī* and *rasūl*, except the fact that the latter has a *sharīʿa* that should be proselytized to his people, while *nabī* submits to the existing *sharīʿa* of his time and does not bring a new law. Aside from their differences, these two have a similarity, in the sense that both benefit from revelation, and hence, it is obligatory for people to accept them. The office of *wilāya*, in turn, is devoid of such features; unless when *walī* reaches the status of *muḥaddath*, which is equal to *risāla* and *nubuwwa*. *Muḥaddath* is the one who receives His revelation by inspiration and talks to God through *ilhām*. Only in this case, *walī*—like *nabī* and *rasūl*—is immune from sin. Tirmidhī, despite having anti-*Shīʿa* beliefs, believes that twelve *Shīʿī imāms* are *walī* and immune from sin. See: Ibid., pp. 94–99.
20. For typology of *awlīyā*, see:

    Suʿād al-Ḥakīm, *al-Muʿjam ul-Ṣūfī: al-Ḥikma fī Ḥudūd al-Kalima*, 1401 H/1981 (Beirut: Dendera), pp. 518–519.

21. The idea of *awlīyā* being selected by God's will to the office of *wilāya* and having no right or authority in choosing the course of their life is very dominant in the *Shaykhī* School. *Imāms*, from a *Shaykhī* viewpoint, are totally devoid of any power to make any decision and even their daily actions are determined by Him. They are immune from sin, not because they voluntarily decide not to commit sin, but because they are not able to do sin. From this perspective, their status is very close to that of the angels who worship God involuntarily and not out of their decision. This is discussed further in Chap. 3.

22. Tirmidhī emphasizes that by 'essence' he means *walī*'s absolute and unconditional faith and trust to God, and therefore *walī*'s deeds are not as determinative as his faith and submission. Perhaps, the idea that "believer should be like a dead corpse in the hands of His God" generated from this idea which teaches absolute submission and subordination.
23. The impact of Tirmidhī on Ibn ʿArabī has been discussed in a number of sources. For a useful study of the impact of Tirmidhī on Ibn ʿArabī, see: Takeshita, Op.cit, 1986, p. 128ff.

    As for the influence of the preceding Sufis on Ibn ʿArabī, Schimmel rightly believes that although the old ideas were upgraded to a theoretical level by Ibn ʿArabī, but his mysticism can be regarded as a reason for the stagnation of Islam: "but with Ibn ʿArabī, Sufism becomes *ʿirfān*, a kind of special mystical knowledge and does not necessarily its personal voluntaristic character; this change has been considered by critics in both East and West as one of the reasons for the 'stagnation' of Islam after the thirteenth century". See:

    Annemarie Schimmel, Islam: an Introduction, 1992 (Albany: State University of New York Press), p. 115.
24. Along with *wilāyat al-takwīnīya* (Introduction, a., p. 11), the idea of the eternity (*azalīyya*) of *wilāya* is also new and belongs to the later generations of scholars. The author's understanding is that later conceptualizations of *wilāya* and related terms are intoxicated by *Shīʿa* extremist movements and *ghālī* scholars whose contributions to these ideas as well as further developments of *wilāya* have not been studied appropriately yet. In the early ages, as we observed in Tirmidhī, *wilāya* was not understood and conceptualized by *wilāyat al-takwīnīya* or the idea of eternity.
25. *Walī*/perfect *ʿārif*'s close friendship with God results in his powerlessness and absolute submission to His will, a virtue which is absent in the office of *nubuwwa*. This idea, which is basic and predominant in mysticism, finds its maximal understanding in *Shaykhīsm*, and is prevalent in the conceptualizations of *wilāya* in the Schools of Tehran and Qum too. They are discussed in Chaps. 3 and 4 of this research.
26. The Seal of the *wilāya* "is simply the *nāʾib* or substitute for the Seal of the Prophets within the ranks of sainthood. In the case of the person of the Prophet, sainthood (*walāya*) is 'veiled' by prophecy (*nubuwwa*); in the case of the Seal of the Saints it is openly displayed" (Addas 1993, p. 200).
27. I borrow the term from Binyamin Abrahamov, as I believe it is closer to the meaning and connotations of *al-ḥaqīqat al-muḥammadīyah*, than the established term '*Muḥhammedan* Reality'. The latter seems to be superfluous.

    Binyamin Abrahamov, *Ibn al-ʿArabī's Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, an annotated translation of '*The Bezels of Wisdom*', 2015 (London and New York: Routledge), p. 7. The spirit of Muḥammad in the terminology of Ibn

ʿArabī is called 'the First Father in Spirituality' (*abul awwal fi al-rawḥānīyāt*), or 'the origin of the cosmos', as opposed to Adam, the first prophet, who is called *abul ajsām al-insānīya* (the Father of Human Bodies) (al-Ḥakīm 1401 H/1981, pp. 46–47).

28. Claude Addas in her *Quest for the Red Sulphur* has explained the dream in details. See:

    Quest for the Red Sulphur; the Life of Ibn ʿArabī, Translated from French into English by Peter Kingsley, 1993 (Cambridge: the Islamic Text Society), p. 213.
29. Italic is in the text.
30. As Gerald T. Elmore has shown in his survey on *ʿAnqāʾ*, the book was written "long before the production of his great masterpieces, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkīyah* and *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, by and in which the *Akbarīan* teachings would attain final definition". Elmore also maintains that the book "should be understood as a personal treatment and an existential expression of man's presentation of himself to the world". Gerald T. Elmore, *Islamic Sainthood in the Fullness of Time: Ibn ʿArabī's Book of the Fabulous Gryphon*, 1999 (Brill Academic Pub), pp. 12–13 & pp. 76–108. Elmore observes *ʿAnqāʾ* as the very personal narrative of the author's desire for rising up out of his obscurity and making himself known to others. p. 48. And for the appellation of *ʿAnqāʾ*, see Elmore 1999, pp. 184–195.
31. Focusing on the trio of 'visions, retreats and revelations', Addas maintains that it was at the end of a nine-month retreat in the year 586 H/1190 in Seville that Ibn ʿArabī was told he was the *Muḥammedan* Seal, the supreme Heir (Addas 1993, p. 92). This incident, having been elected as the Seal, is going to be repeated many times later. In the same year (in 586 H) in Cordoba, Ibn ʿArabī had a dream in which he is announced "that he has been designated the *Muḥammadan* Seal; the incident that occurred a few years later at Fez …" (Addas 1993, p. 200). In Mecca, he experienced the vision again, and as Addas rightly mentions, what happened in this holy city "marked the definitive and solemn fulfilment of the divine promise, and the recognition by the Messengers of God, … of the universality of office conferred on the *al-Shaykh al-Akbar*: a kind of pact of allegiance in the tabernacle of Sainthood" (Addas 1993, p. 200).
32. Shabistarī's brightness of mind is revealed by means of his comprehension regarding the complexities of *waḥdat al-wujūd* and his skills in adding to Ibn ʿArabī's intellectual system. He could be regarded as the representative of a brand of mysticism whose main characteristic was pouring *ʿirfān* into Persian literature as means of expounding and illuminating it. For Shabistarī, the rich tradition of Persian literature was a framework through which the intricacies of the *Akbarīan* mysticism were expressed more fully. In his magnum opus *Gulshan-i Rāz* (the Rose Garden of Mystery) which is written in the form of an ode (*mathnawī*), Shabistarī discusses the main

ʿirfānī/kalāmī ideas of the First Emanated, the state of completeness or totality (*maqām-i jāmiʿ*), as well as the theory of the Perfect Man, of *wilāya* and *nubuwwa* (Shabistarī, n.d., p. 16).

33. From among Amir-Moezzi's books, I particularly am interested in these two:

    Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi, *The Divine Guide in Early Shiism; the Sources of Esotericism in Islam*, Translated into English by David Streight, 1994 (New York: State University of New York Press).

    Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi, *the Spirituality of Shii Islam; Beliefs and Practices,* 2011 (London & New York: I. B. Tauris Publisher).

34. The main two messages of this trio (supplications, salutations, and psalms), are *tawḥīd* and servitude (lit. *ʿubūdīyah*), with a special emphasis on safeguarding believers from the hardships of life and death. The allegory of *ḥiṣn* (lit. castle) and/or *silāḥ* (lit. weapon), which shelter believers or arm them to overcome difficulties is a recurring theme in the Twelvers' prayer culture. The most prominent example is the well-known *Jawshan al-Kabīr* and *Jawshan al-Ṣaghīr* (Major and Minor Armor, respectively), which has taken its name from it.

35. Shahrām Pāzūkī, *Jāmiʿ al-Asrār: Jāmiʿ bayn Taṣawwuf wa Tashayuʿ* (the Comprehensive of Mysteries: the Comprehensive of Sufism and Shīʿīsm) in *ʿIrfān-i Iran* (Iranian Mysticism), (collected essays), No. 7, Muṣṭafā Azmāyish (ed), 1379 *shamsī* (Tehran: Ḥaqīqat Publication), pp. 78–103.

36. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Sufi Essays*, 1977 (New York: Schocken Books).

    Kāmil Muṣṭafā Al-Shaybī, *A-Ṣala Bayn al-Taṣawuf wa al-Tashayuʿ* (The Correlation Betwixt Sufism and *Shīʿīsm*), 2 volumes, 3rd edition, 1382 H / 1962 (Beirut: *Dār al-Andalus*).

    Kāmil Muṣṭafā Al-Shaybī, *Sufism and Shīʿīsm*, 1991 (Surbiton: LAAM).

    And many other younger scholars who studied *Shīʿīsm* and Sufism from this perspective. One of them is Rebecca Masterton, whose research delves into the spiritual authority of awlīyā and its similarities in *Sufism and Shīʿīsm*. See:

    Rebecca Masterton, A Comparative Exploration of the Spiritual Authority of the *Awliyā'* in the *Shi'i* and Sufi Traditions, *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (2015), pp. 49–74.

37. Bernd Radtke has discussed the importance of this goal in Sufism in light of "the impress of enlightenment and science". See: Bernd Radtke, *Between Projection and Suppression: Some Considerations Concerning the Study of Sufism*, in *Shi'a Islam, Sects and Sufism, Historical Dimensions, Religious Practice and Methodological Considerations*, Ed: Frederick De Jong, 1992 (Utrecht: Publications of the M. Th. Houtsma Stichting), pp. 70–82.

38. In his *Sufi Essays,* Seyyed Hossein Nasr maintains that "the Sufi teachings revolve around the two fundamental doctrines of the Transcendent Unity of Being (*waḥdat al-wujūd*) and the Universal or Perfect Man (*al-insān*

al-kāmil)" (Nasr 1977, p 35). The doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd*, as Nasr emphasizes, was not the main Sufi outlook about *tawḥīd* prior to Ibn ʿArabī. Putting the lens of *Akbarīan* mysticism on eyes, Nasr has, in fact, a posteriori analysis of Sufi developments up until the seventh century when *al-Shaykh al-Akbar*'s mysticism, gradually but continuously, turned to be the prevalent brand of Sufism in the Muslim world. Before *Akbarīan* mysticism, Sufis' first concern was *tawḥīd* and not necessarily the sophisticated theory of *waḥdat al-wujūd*. The doctrine of "the Universal or Perfect Man" had the same destiny. As a number of scholars, including Masataka Takeshita in his Ph.D. thesis entitled *Ibn Arabi's Theory of the Perfect Man and Its Place in the History of Islamic Thought* (University of Chicago, 1986), discussed it extensively, it was Ibn ʿArabī who converted the doctrine of *al-insān al-kāmil* to one of the cornerstones of his theoretical mysticism, as prior to him the Second Pillar of Sufism was asceticism and piety.

39. Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi, in his newest interview entitled "*Dīn Pazhūhī dar Muwājiha bā Falsafah wa Tārīkh*" (Religious Studies in Facing History and Philosophy), calls the fourth century "a *Shīʿa* century", due to the political achievements of the Buyids in establishing the first ever *Shīʿa* government in a majority-dominated Sunni society. See: http://ccip-iwan.com/Maghaleh3-3.html?fbclid=IwAR1O0v9zaDa-OZME2xddXA8e5rPh-df6CvdV6bsIgiSQxPrCW0ImdS-S5c0, last accessed November 18, 2018.
40. This question is important because it helps us understand the reason(s) for the relative isolation of some theological schools, such as *Shaykhīsm*, which resisted *Akbarīan* mysticism and therefore remained an elite-friendly, limited school. Although, any assessment of the social weight and acceptance of *Shaykhīsm* requires more research and investigation.
41. Kāmil Muṣṭafā Al-Shaybī, *Al-Ṣala Bayn al-Taṣawūf wa Tashayūʿ* (The Correlation Betwixt Sufism and Shīʿism), 2 volumes, 3rd edition, 1382 (Beirut: Dār al-Andalus).
42. These journeys are as such: *min al khalq-i ila al-Ḥaqq* (the journey of creation/the creature to the Truth), *bil Ḥaqq-i fi al-Ḥaqq* (in the Truth with the Truth), *min al-Ḥaqq ila al-khalq-i bil Ḥaqq* (from the Truth to creation with the Truth), and *fi al-khalq-i bil Ḥaqq* (with the Truth in creation). http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ip/rep/H027.htm, last accessed December 27, 2016.
43. James W. Morris, in his article entitled *An Arab "Machiavelli"? Rhetoric, Philosophy and Politics in Ibn Khaldun's Critique of "Sufism"*, has discussed Ibn Khaldun's criticisms of contemporary 'Sufism'. The article is accessible here http://www.ibnarabisociety.org/articlespdf/hi_critics.pdf, last accessed February 7, 2017.

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CHAPTER 3

The *Shaykhī* School and *Wilāya*

The conceptualization of *wilāya*, *nubuwwa*, imamate, the stations of gnosis, and the sealing was not confined to Ibn ʿArabī and/or numerous *ʿirfānī silsilas* that were shaped subsequently. Almost all of the *Shīʿa* schools, whether mystical or *kalāmī*[1] (as in *Shaykhīsm*, which is the interest here), are centered on *wilāya* and the question of authority as their principal problem. From this perspective, *Akbarīan* mysticism and *Shaykhīsm* have similarities to each other, and a plethora of literature produced by the *Shaykhī ʿulemā* over a period of 120 years testifies to the fact that *wilāya* was one of their main questions. Depending on the inclination of the school, however, the conceptualization of *wilāya* differed. The author seeks to examine if the conceptualizations of *wilāya* in *Shaykhīsm* underwent any changes, or remained stagnant and if its similarities with the doctrine of *wilāya* in the *Akbarīan* mysticism should be considered as stagnation.

Before delving into the *Shaykhī* conceptualization of *wilāya*, it is necessary to discuss the relationship between the *Shaykhī* School and *Akbarīan* mysticism, which, in my opinion, is more complex than the doctrine of *wilāya*, and the way it is conceptualized by both Ibn ʿArabī and the *Shaykhī* leaders.[2] This question is a little sensitive because every school of thought is a product of its age. *Shaykhīsm* is no exception, and therefore one can say that there was a general intellectual influence on *Shaykhīsm* from Ibn ʿArabī, which, as noted in Chap. 2, had become quite widespread and popular in

L. Chamankhah, *The Conceptualization of Guardianship in Iranian Intellectual History (1800–1989)*, Palgrave Series in Islamic Theology, Law, and History, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-22692-3_3

Persia from the mid-seventh century. On the other hand, the *Shaykhī* School in general and its founding father Shaykh Aḥmad al-Aḥsāʾī (d. 1239 H/1823) in particular were both open critics of *al-Shaykh al-Akbar* for two reasons. First, Aḥsāʾī believed that Ibn ʿArabī confused the minds of *Shīʿas* regarding their faith and how true it was, and from this perspective, he disliked everything about Ibn ʿArabī. Second, for Aḥsāʾī, *Akbarīan* mysticism was but a damage to the whole Path, because it had caused lots of problems for Twelver *Shīʿīsm*, and had in fact distorted it.

In terms of metaphysical ideas, Aḥsāʾī firmly believed that Ibn ʿArabī did not understand *tawḥīd* at all, and his doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd* is but a distraction from the *imāms*' teachings on *tawḥīd, nubuwwa*, and imamate. Recalling the discussion in Chap. 2 on Kāshānī's reading of *Akbarīan mysticism*, and particularly of *waḥdat al-wujūd*, Aḥsāʾī's critique becomes more understandable. Aḥsāʾī's magnum opus, *Sharḥ al-Zīyārat al-Jāmiʿat al-Kabīrah* (Commentary on the Grand Comprehensive Visitation), is in fact, an echo of his disgust toward the doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd*. However, in terms of *wilāya*, which is the concern of the present research, the similarities of these two schools are nominal and not real because Aḥsāʾī, in the entire body of his works, always remains a defender of the faith against heretics such as Ibn ʿArabī. On the other hand, as will be observed in the following, on the two concepts of manifestation and theophany, as well as the doctrine of *ẓuhūr,* the *Shaykhī* leaders are inspired by the *Akbarīan* doctrine of *tajallī*, though this inspiration needs to be treated as one of the examples of "general intellectual influence", which was mentioned above.

Given this, the outlook of scholars, such as Todd Lawson, who describes this relationship as 'love-hate' (2005a, pp. 125–154), does not seem to be plausible and needs to be revised. This relationship, from the side of Aḥsāʾī, was devoid of any love and eventually resulted in adopting a very conservative doctrine of *tawḥīd* as well as that of *wilāya*. For example, in *Risāla-ya Rashtīyah* (Treatise on *Rashtī*),[3] he does not hesitate to condemn Sufis for being misled (*ghāfil*), ignorant (*jāhil*), and in need of guidance (*al-mustarshid*). For al-Aḥsāʾī, both *al-ṭarīqat ul-maʿrūfat bil mutaṣawafah* and *aw al-ʿurafāʾa ʿalal ḥaqīqah* (those who are known as Sufis or truthful mystics) are blinded by false teachings and that is why they stand against the true message of Islam, which is the teachings of the *imāms*. Furthermore, Sufis are following Sunnism, a false (*al-bāṭil*) path against the truthful path (*al-ḥaqq*), which therefore resembles a malignant tree (*al-shajarat ul-khabītha*) (Aḥsāʾī 1430c H, p. 315). Every Prophet,

Aḥsāʾī maintains, has enemies, who are *shayāṭīn al-ins* (lit. demons created in the form of man), and *Mumīt al-dīn* Ibn ʿArabī is one of the adversaries of the Prophet of Islam (Aḥsāʾī, p. 316). The fact is that Aḥsāʾī's critiques of the 'astray' Ibn ʿArabī and his master al-Ghazzali (d. 505 H/1111), as well as many others including Mullā Ṣadrā (d. 1045 H/1640) and his student, Mullā Muḥsin Fayḍ Kāshānī (d. 1091 H/1680), "may the increasing curse be upon them", are poor and more prone to his misunderstanding, if not to say ignorance, of the intricacies of *Akbarīan* mysticism and of *Ṣadrīan ḥikma* (Ibid., p. 317ff).

Aḥsāʾī, unlike many other Persian figures of his time, who believed that Ibn ʿArabī was too big to ignore, knowingly crossed him, and as mentioned above, the similarities between the office of *wilāya* in Akbarīan mysticism and his philosophy are nominal. *Wilāya* was a signifier with two totally different signs, a pure *kalāmī* one, which was conceptualized by Aḥsāʾī and his followers, and an *ʿirfānī* one, theorized by Ibn ʿArabī and his students. The *kalāmī* narrative of *wilāya* was inspired by the teachings of the *imāms*, whose realm (*sāḥat*), for Aḥsāʾī, was more sublime than the misunderstandings of Ibn ʿArabī and his like. Despite this, in both schools, the office of *wilāya* displays plenty of similarities, chief among them the core and inward essence of *nubuwwa* through which the Divine message continues.

Awlīyā possess the four stations of *bayān, maʿānī, abwāb*, *and* imamate (presentation, significatum, gates, and imamate, respectively). Therefore, imamate and *nubuwwa* make a double-faceted station: one side facing God and the other side facing people. Pertinent to this is the station of multiplicity, vis-à-vis that of totality, which is exemplified in *wilāya* and *nubuwwa*, respectively, though each of them represents one dimension of the reality of *tawḥīd*. In the station of *wilāya*, *walī* expands and manifests the message of *nubuwwa*. *Wilāya* also is an ontological as well as a cosmological status, and therefore it is not only one of the fundamentals of *Shīʿīsm* but is also connected to the celestial role and power of the *imāms*. In the *Shaykhī* School, the Prophet and the *imāms* are the effective cause (*ʿillat-i fāʿilī*) of creation, and in the absence of their effectiveness, God's act of creation will not be finalized. From this perspective, *wilāya* is the mode through which God manifests Himself in the cosmos in a modulated manner. In an obvious similarity with the *ʿirfānī* understanding of the term, it is *wilāya*, insofar as it is *nubuwwat al-khāṣṣah*, followed by *wilāya* to the extent that it is *nubuwwat al-ʿāmmah*.

The *Shaykhī ʿulemā* have also written copiously about the notion of the return of the Hidden *imām*. Leaving aside the messianic implications of notions such as expectation (*intiẓār*), appearance (*ẓuhūr*), and gate (*bāb*/the intermediacy of the Hidden *imām*), what is important for discussion in this chapter is that the *abwāb* are the representatives of the continuation of the 'polar motif', which is both a characteristic of *Shīʿa* thought and vital in the formation of *Shaykhīsm*. The role of the *Shaykhī ʿulemā* as the guides and the preservers of the community of believers is merely to be the bearer of the *imām*'s charisma.

Previous scholars, such as Henry Corbin, have delved into the *Shaykhī* epistemology and imamology, and more recently other scholars including Denis MacEoin, Idris Samawi Hamid, and Denis Hermann have contributed extensively to the existing tradition on *Shaykhīsm*. This chapter builds on their work in an original way, and through study and critical analysis of key *Shaykhī* texts, will show the impact of the *Shaykhī ʿulemā* on our understanding of the challenging concept of 'leadership' in *Shīʿīsm*, and how their alternative has influenced, both practically and theoretically, further developments in the *Shīʿa* world. It will also be observed that there are implications regarding Aḥsāʾī's intention in bringing an alternative to the mainstream (*Uṣūlīsm*), proven by a number of facts, including his efforts to redefine *ijtihād*, as well as the emphasis on his recurring dreams of the *imāms*. And last but not least, although *Shaykhīsm* is an autonomous school of thought and should not be evaluated by later events, it was the *Shaykhī* conceptualization of notions such as leadership, occultation, eschatology, the future return, and the occult sciences that rendered the formation of the subsequent movements of *Bābīsm* and *Bahāʾīsm*.

3.1 *Shaykhī*[4] *ʿUlemā*

Shaykh Aḥmad ibn Zayn al-Dīn ibn Ibrāhīm al-Aḥsāʾī (d. 1239 H/1823)[5] was born in al-Ahsa, in the northeast of the Arabian peninsula, to a *Shīʿa* family of Sunni origin in the year 1166 A.H. (1753 C.E.) (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, p. 15).[6] His biography appeared in a number of *Bābī* and *Bahāʾī* texts;[7] one of the treatises of his successor Seyyed Kāẓim Rashtī (d. 1259 H/1843), entitled *Dalīl al-Mutaḥayyarīn* (Proof of the Astonished); some encyclopedia entries;[8] secondary sources;[9] a biography by Abul Qāsim Khān Ibrāhīmī (1388 H/1969) which is written in his two-volume book entitled *Fihrist-i Kutub-i Mashāyikh-i ʿIẓām*[10] (the Publications of Dignified Maters); and a standard autobiography, which is cited in

many of his writings, including the voluminous *Sharḥ Zīyārat al-Jāmiʿat al-Kabīra*[11] (Commentary on the Grand Comprehensive Visitation). Here, the author is not going to reiterate details of his life, but instead, try to touch upon those aspects which will be of relevance to the debate of the *Shaykhī* School in this chapter. In his biographical sketch, there exist three notable points.

He gives an extensive narration of his dreams of *the imāms*, including the twelfth *Imām*,[12] in which he benefited directly and immediately from their Divine knowledge and Divine emanation (*fayḍ*). In addition, he mentions a number of inspirations in which hidden matters are revealed to him—if only briefly (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, pp. 10–14). Dream is an important theme, both in the formation of the *Shaykhī* doctrine and in the shaping of the alternative model of leadership, and hence needs closer attention. As Louise Marlow has rightly pointed out, unlike modern societies in which dreams are marginalized, in premodern cultures dreams were prevalent and effective. Not only did dreams have "the primary connotation of unreality" (Marlow 2008, p. 1), but they were regarded as "the private experience of the individual dreamer, but also as public events of significance for the larger community in which the dreamer participated" (Marlow 2008, p. 1).

Regarding the significance of dreams in Islamic culture in general and in the *Shaykhī* School in particular, one can ask about the kind of truths a dream conveys, and what the epistemological status of dream is for certain Islamic thinkers. Eric Ormsby is certain that dreams carry "a special imprint of authority, they seem to represent a way of knowledge, and yet, at the same time, they involve neither the communications of the senses nor the inborn certainty of a priori knowledge" (Ormsby 2008, p. 142), and therefore dream was "a form, albeit a shadowy form, of prophecy itself" (Ormsby 2008, p. 142).

The second point is that, despite Aḥsāʾī's dreams of the *imāms* and the Prophet, which could be interpreted as 'spiritual *ījāza*' from them (MacEoin 2009, p. 79), he has been honored by many authentic *ījāzas* from his masters to teach and declare *fatwā*. Seyyed Kāẓim Rashtī (d. 1259 H/1843) in *Dalīl al-Mutaḥayyarīn*, Ibrāhīmī in his encyclopedia entry, Mudarris Tabrīzī in *Rayḥānat al-Adab* (Biographical Evaluation of the People of Epithet and Title), Vahid Rafati in his doctoral thesis, and MacEoin have mentioned these *ījāzas*, as well as the names and titles of those who granted Aḥsāʾī their permissions (Rashtī, n.d.-a, pp. 51–56; Ibrāhīmī 1373, p. 663; Mudarris Tabrīzī 1369, pp. 79–80; Rafati 1979, p. 41,[13] MacEoin 2009,

pp. 75–80).[14] His effort to seek for permission is an indication of his distaste for being regarded as a scholar devoid of any association with the mainstream tendency. He needed these *ījāzas* to be able to live a 'normal' intellectual life, as did his peers. Corbin, unlike MacEoin, however, believes that Aḥsāʾī has never had a teacher, and should be regarded as one of those 'perfect believers' who received their knowledge in dreams and visions through the 'Invisible Man' (*shaykh-i min al-ghayb* or *rijāl al-ghayb)*.[15] Corbin cites Aḥsāʾī *'Uwaysī'*, attributed to Uways al-Qaranī (d. 657 H/1258), who did not find an opportunity to visit the Prophet but submitted to Islam. According to Corbin, *Uwaysīs* are more familiar with the reality of Islam and *Shīʿīsm* than those who have learned it from a teacher (Corbin 1346 *shamsī*, pp. 25–26), though as already observed, this opinion, with regard to Aḥsāʾī's numerous *ījāzas*, seems to be futile. MacEoin mentions other cases such as his "contempt for Sufism and certain forms of mystical philosophy, in particular the thought of ibn ʿArabī and Mullā Muḥsin Fayḍ Kāshānī (d. 1090 H/1680),[16] his refusal to collaborate closely with the state, and his rejection of the validity of *takfīr*", as evidence that Aḥsāʾī "did not seek to dissociate himself from the *Uṣūlī* tradition, even if his relationship with it was not, perhaps, one of total identification" (MacEoin 2009, p. 78).

The third point is that it is quite well known that Aḥsāʾī had a "strong interest in natural philosophy" (Samawi 1998, p. 42),[17] including chemistry, alchemy, and astronomy in general, and the occult sciences in particular.[18] These sciences had confirmation from *the imāms*, especially the first and the sixth *imāms* (Samawi 1998, pp. 32, 42). Aḥsāʾī as well as his successors and mainly Seyyed Kāẓim Rashtī regarded these sciences as the second source of their esoteric knowledge, which was surely an extension of their direct initiation into knowledge by *imāms*. As Idris Samawi has pointed out, Aḥsāʾī was not only familiar with relevant sources and materials made known at his time but also in a number of writings he admitted that he practiced the occult sciences frequently (Samawi 1998, pp. 42–43).[19]

Seyyed Kāẓim ibn Qāsim al-Ḥusseynī al-Rashtī (d. 1258 H/1843), mostly known as Seyyed Kāẓim Rashtī, was the son of a Seyyed from Rasht, in northern Iran. Information on the life of Rashtī is not as detailed as Aḥsāʾī's, although MacEoin gives a lengthy account in his biography (MacEoin 2009, 107–137). He was appointed as head of the Community by Aḥsāʾī before his death in 1241/1828 (MacEoin 2009, pp. 116–117), and from that time onward he was actively engaged in the affairs of the

School. Unlike the aloof lifestyle of his master, Rashtī was politically involved with the Ottoman, as well as with the Iranian officials in Iran and in the *Shīʿa* cities of Karbala and Najaf (MacEoin 2009, pp. 127–134 & Cole and Momen 1986, *passim*). Rashtī was a prolific writer and wrote extensively on the fundamentals of the *Shaykhī* doctrine. In addition to *Sharḥ Khuṭbat al-Tuṭunjīya*[20] (Commentary on the Sermon of the Gulf), he wrote a number of treatises, such as *Asrār al-Shahāda* (the Mysteries of Testimony), *Rasāʾil dar Jawāb-i Suleymān Khān Afshār* (A Response to Suleymān Khān Afshār), *Dalīl al-Mutaḥayyarīn*, *Risālat al-Ḥujjat al-Bāligha*h (the Treatise of Certain Proof), *Maqāmāt al-ʿĀrifīn* (the Stations of the Gnostics), and *Wasāʾiṭ-i Āqa Muḥammad Sharīf Kermānī* (the Wills of Āghā Muḥammad Sharīf Kermānī).

Compared to Aḥsāʾī, he laid more stress on the occult sciences and especially *jafr* as a methodology for explaining themes such as imamate and *wilāya* from a *Shaykhī* perspective. As mentioned before, *Sharḥ Khuṭbat al-Tuṭunjīya* was written by a scholar who tries to illustrate the office of *wilāya* as celestial and as a manifestation of Divinity. From this perspective, *walī*, either the Prophet or *imām* (and especially *imām* Ali), is the bearer of the station of Deity (Divinity) as is manifested in His names and attributes. Since Divine Essence is not comprehensible by human gnosis, the Deity manifests Himself in His names (*asmāʾ*) and attributes (*ṣifāt*), and *awlīyā* are the bearers of all these manifestations (*ḥāmil-i ẓuhūrāt-i rubūbīya*) (Rashti, 1421 H/2001, vol. 2., p. 13). Rashtī acknowledges three stations of Divine Essence (*rubūbīya*), *nubuwwa* (which is the station of totality [*maqām al-jāmiʿ*]), and imamate (which is the station of multiplicity [*maqām al-tafṣīl*]) (Ibid.). In the following, Rashtī's contributions to the *Shaykhī* doctrine will be discussed further.

Another *Shaykhī* leader is Mullā Mīrzā Ḥassan Gawhar (d. 1266 H/1850), a native of Arasbaran in Azerbaijan in northwestern Iran. He moved to Ottoman Iraq to pursue religious studies. After living in Najaf, he left for Karbala to attend Aḥsāʾī's classes, and after his death, he became one of the most prominent students of Seyyed Kāẓim Rashtī (Gawhar 1423 H/2002, pp. 3–4 & Gawhar, n.d., pp. 3–4). He had *ījāza* from Aḥsāʾī (Gawhar, n.d., pp. 144–145), and ran his own circle of teaching and training in Karbala, claiming that a number of the later famous *ʿulemā* had been his students. Gawhar wrote numerous books, including short treatises and commentaries on theological and juridical topics, such as imamate, *nubuwwa*, *wilāya*, and fundamentals of *Shīʿa/Shaykhī* doctrine. He also wrote refutations on his two rivals: on Karīm Khān Kermānī, enti-

tled *Risāla fī Radd-i ʿalā Ḥājj Muḥammad Karīm Khān Kermānī* (Refutation on Ḥājj Muḥammad Karīm Khān Kermānī), and on Mullā Muḥammad Jaʿfar Astarābādī, entitled *Risāla fī Jawāb-i Iʿtirāḍ-i Mullā Muḥammad Jaʿfar Astarābādī* (Treatise to Mullā Muḥammad Jaʿfar Astarābādī's Objection) (Gawhar, n.d., pp. 5–7).

Gawhar and Kermānī were rivals on the issue of the leadership of the *Shaykhī* School. Kermānī, due to his affinity with the Qajar court, and the reputation, wealth, and power which resulted from that position, won the claim.[21] Fortunately, we possess detailed accounts of Kermānī's life. Muḥammad Karīm (Khān) was the son of Ibrāhīm Khān Ẓahīr al-Dawla, the cousin and son-in-law of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shah Qajar. He was born in Kermān in 1227 H/1812 when his father, one of Aḥsāʾī's advocates, was the governor of Kermān. Yaḥyā Aḥmadī Kermānī maintains that Ibrāhīm Khān ibn Mahdī Qulī Khān ibn Muḥammad Ḥassan Qajar was appointed as the governor of Kerman in 1218 H/1803 in order to restore prosperity to the city after its destruction by the assault of Āghā Muḥammad Khān Qajar (d. 1211 H/1797) (Aḥmadī Kermānī 1371, p. 140). After the death of his father, Karīm Khān moved to Karbala to study under Rashtī. He had a number of *ījāzas* from his master as well as other prominent *ʿulemā*, and wrote two hundred and sixty books on a variety of topics such as *tawḥīd*, *nubuwwa*, imamate, *wilāya*, and resurrection. He died in Negar, a small village in Kerman in 1288 H/1871, and was buried in Karbala (http://www.alabrar.info/).

Kermānī's contribution to the School can be divided into two interrelated categories. First, he wrote extensively on the concept of the Fourth Pillar (*rukn-i rābiʿ*)[22] and tried to theorize it. Kermānī elaborated more on this concept than did Aḥsāʾī, Rashtī, and his rival Gawhar. Second, he Persianized the *Shaykhī* creed, in the sense that until his time, *Shaykhīsm*, both geographically and theoretically, was regarded as more of an Arabic school of thought. His opus in four volumes, *Irshād al-ʿAwām* (the Guidance of the People), is written in Persian, and except for a few writings, the rest of his works are written in this language. He composed two of his refutations on the cause of *Bābīsm* in Arabic[23] but later translated one of them into Persian.

Over the course of 120 years, the abovementioned scholars have added to the existing literature on authority and succession of the *imāms*. Furthermore, through their writings, several perspectives of Islam and Islamic intellectual traditions unite. This tree, as was common in other Islamic schools, has its roots in mysticism, theology, jurisprudence, and the *bāṭinī* dimension of Islam. Fortunately, much has been written by

them, and so, on the basis of their literature, we can estimate their impact on intellectual developments and on subsequent actual events. In the following section, the historical and intellectual contexts of *Shaykhīsm*, which had their imprints on the formation and later developments of the School, will be documented. Then attention will focus on the *Shaykhī* conceptualizations of imamate, *nubuwwa*, and *wilāya*, with discussion on how each of Aḥsāʾī's successors, by focusing on different sections of their master's heritage, has actually affected the course of events.

3.2 Historical Context and Intellectual Developments

The collapse of the Safawids at the hand of "a rag-tag bunch of tribesmen" (Matthee 2012, p. 245) resulted in the disintegration of their empire and the emergence of a number of local governors, though none of them was capable of offering any alternative center of political power and economic activity. There was a brief Afghān assault, and "Maḥmūd's death in [1137 H/]1725 was followed by large-scale, long-term chaos that was exacerbated by the rapacious policies of Nādir Shah in the 1730s" (Matthee 2012, p. 255). It took a full century for Iran to regain a measure of stability, and afterward, three dynasties claimed legitimacy in the Safawids' name, but all of them lacked its mystique and mobilizing power. After a short period of the Afshārs (also Afshārīd 1736–1796/1148 H-1210), which was followed by the Zand dynasty (also Zandīya 1750–1794/1163 H-1208), the Qajars appeared on the scene. For the first time in a hundred years, they were able to recapture Persia's integration and relative stability. In contrast to the Safawids, the Qajars failed "to construct a statewide bureaucracy" (Abrahamian 1982, p. 38). They were unable to crush the authority of local communities and their self-administration in favor of a more centralized apparatus, to operate effective economic and financial plans, to build a "viable standing army" (Abrahamian 1982, p. 39), and finally, "to recapture the full grandeur of the ancient shah-in-shahs" (Abrahamian 1982, p. 40). Their system, from time to time, was threatened by stiff opposition which arose from external dangers, local tribesmen, clergymen, communal rivalries, and, from Muḥammad Shah and Nāṣir al-Dīn Shah onward, social uprisings and movements. Their epoch featured serious discontentment, such as *Ismāʿīlī* revivalism in the form of Āqā Khān Maḥallātī's (d. 1298 H/1881) revolt,[24] the *Bābī* uprisings

announcing *jihād* against the establishment, and the Reuter Concession,[25] which was immediately denounced in widespread resistance by all ranks of businessmen, clergy, and nationalists against it. There was also the Constitutional Revolution of 1907.

These incidents highlight a distinctive feature of the Qajar period: the inability of the establishment to exercise authority and power over society. The court was obviously too ineffective and weak to execute power. Its various drives for modernization and reform,[26] on the contrary, propelled social classes and strata, such as the traditional middle class (*bāzārīz*), intelligentsia, and a notable group of clergymen, toward the new route of Western links. This contact with the West generated class consciousness, fueled discontent, and transformed these classes into a "propertied middle class",[27] who pressured the establishment to share with them the power and resources of wealth (Abrahamian 1982, pp. 58–69 & 2008, Chapter One, pp. 8–33).

Qajar's economic and monetary situation also merit consideration. There is a tendency among historians of Iranian studies to depict the social situation of Persia in the Qajar era under the titles of 'social disorder', 'social disaster', 'catastrophe', 'the age of crises', and 'the age of decline'.[28] There are two reasons for this. First, observers are eclipsed by the glory of the Safawid era, when Persia politically and economically was honored as a superpower (though as Rudi Matthee has rightly discussed, this image does not reflect the truth).[29] Second, they are tempted to draw such a picture in order to explain the catastrophe and disaster as "signs of moral weakness and the prelude to impending doom" (Amanat 1989, p. 29) as well as evidence for the coming of Armageddon (*fitna/malāḥim*); all of these are prerequisites for the return of the Mahdi, the savior.[30]

Peter Avery argues that the economic and social situation in these years, in contrast to what is portrayed by Amanat and others, was not that catastrophic. In fact, the country was marked by urbanization and the growth and wealth of the middle class. Avery maintains that the spring of the *Bābī* movement from among the middle class (and particularly mercantile classes) should be treated not as a symptom of an ill economy but rather "the fostering by the early Qajar kings of the merchants" (Avery 1965, p. 76) that brought religious tensions to the fore (Avery 1965, pp. 76–77). It was also at this time that, under the shadow of "the prospering merchant class" (Avery, p. 77), the first foreign contacts after the rise of the Qajars were made. Avery concludes that the

urban class, including merchants (and also *ʿulemā*), continued to prosper under the early Qajars (Avery 1965, pp. 77–94).

Along with economic and political contexts, Iran's religio-intellectual landscape under the Qajars needs to be discussed adequately. Three major discourses marked the intellectual horizon of Persia at this time, and their influence continued into the following century. First, the appearance of new trends in *Shīʿa* jurisprudence, including the treatises on *jihād* (known as *jihādīya*) and the birth of *fiqh-i mashrūṭah* (a type of jurisprudence which deals with Constitutionalism). Second, the vitality and popularity of different brands of esotericism, including the *Ismāʿīlī* movement, the *Shaykhī* School, and in later years, the two messianic eruptions of *Bābīsm* and *Bahāʾīsm*. The third discourse was the crystallization of the legacy of Mullā Ṣadrā in the School of Tehran. There have been other trends which lie outside the scope of this research, including different currents of *Shīʿa* mysticism and western philosophy which left their mark on the intellectual developments of this era.

Locating Shaykh Aḥmad Aḥsāʾī's philosophical activities in the intellectual context of nineteenth-century Persia, one comes up with a number of currents which shaped his wide range of ideas and theories. To generalize, his philosophical activities had three sources, which have been dominant in the seminaries and madrasas of Persia for centuries: esotericism; developments in *Shīʿa* jurisprudence and their crystallization in the two schools of *Akhbārī* and *Uṣūlī*; and philosophical developments after Mullā Ṣadrā. With regard to esotericism, in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Persia, the *bāṭinī* ideas, and particularly pre-messianic speculations and longings, were intense and in circulation (Amanat 1989, pp. 93–94), depending on the time and the situation they became activated. By *bāṭinī* ideas, I refer to ideas such as expectation (*intiẓār*), appearance (*ẓuhūr*), and future return (*raǰʿa*), which were signified, and could have found new signifiers in different socio-political contexts and in different times. Other ideas can be added to these, such as *kashf* (revelation), whose importance in the *Shaykhī* School is already mentioned; esoteric interpretation of the *Qurʾān*; dreams of the *imāms*; and a hierarchical, hidden chain of leadership and authority. All of them shaped the components of *Shaykhīsm* as an esoteric school.

Recalling the methodology here, esotericism of the Qajar era manifests a good example of the existence of a web of beliefs that constitutes a network of interconnected concepts which stand against inherited traditions and alter them (Bevir 2004, p. 191ff). Webs of beliefs, according to Bevir,

have features such as their boundless, spherical, and anti-hierarchical structure as well as the freedom of the author to choose their starting point (Bevir 2004, p. 191ff). In terms of the relationship between webs of beliefs and the inherited intellectual traditions of every epoch, traditions do not come into being before an individual holds beliefs, but individuals are not tradition-bound and can alter them or migrate from this tradition to that (Bevir 2004, p. 193ff). The *Shaykhī* School not only pushed the existing, inherited *bāṭinī* tradition of its time to its limit but stepped beyond it and created a new tradition, which has not yet been challenged or discredited by an analogous discourse. In studying the *Shaykhī* webs of beliefs on messianism and mahdism, on *intiẓār* and *zuhūr*, and on utopia, one needs to pay attention to the fact that this web was held against the background of the traditions of their time, where these traditions themselves "derived from people holding webs of beliefs against the background of earlier traditions, and so on" (Bevir 2004, p. 195).

In terms of development in *Shīʿa* jurisprudence, and particularly, the rivalry between the two schools of *Akhbārī* and *Uṣūlī,* as the second source of Aḥsāʾī's philosophical activities, he was most likely influenced by this rivalry. He, and following him the whole *Shaykhī* apparatus, took a pro-*Akhbārī* position with regard to ideas such as *ijtihād* (the offering of independent effort in the interpretation of the *sharīʿa* law) and *taqlīd* (emulation or imitation in *sharīʿa*-related questions), as well as the role of *mujtahids* in the Community. A dispute started in the mid-seventeenth century when the influential figure of the *Akhbārī* movement, Muḥammad Amīn al-Astarābādī (d. 1036 H/1627), challenged *Uṣūlīsm* on its reliance of *ijtihād*. He mainly criticized the *Uṣūlī*'s use of *ʿaql* (reason) and *ijmāʿ* (consensus) as 'legal principles' (*uṣūl-i fiqh*) to conduct *ijtihād*, and therefore recognized the *Qurʾān* and *hadīth* as the only legitimate means to reveal the opinion of the *imāms*.[31]

As Denis Hermann has analyzed, for Astarābādī, "these doctrinal developments" have been "influenced by Sunnism and, in particular, by *Shāfiʿīsm*" (Hermann 2015, p. 7), and therefore must be rejected. Hermann is right when he maintains that all "the main currents of *Imāmī Shīʿīsm*" from *Sufism* to *Uṣūlīsm*, to *Akhbārīsm*, and later to *Shaykhīsm*, should be regarded as responses to the painful absence of the *imām* after the major occultation (*ghaybat-i kubrā*) (Hermann, p. 7). In terms of their opposition to the mainstream (*Uṣūlīsm*) on *ijtihād*, and, as will be observed in the following, on the doctrine of the Fourth Pillar (*rukn-i rābiʿ*), one can safely conclude that, while they tried to maintain their independence

from both, the *Shaykhī ʿulemā* appeared "to be the heir of" the *Akhbārī* movement at a time when it was "in decline following the success it had during the twelfth/eighteenth century" (Hermann, p. 19).[32]

The third source of Aḥsāʾī's thought was philosophical development after Mullā Ṣadrā. In general, the philosophy of Mullā Ṣadrā can be classified as process metaphysics as opposed to substance metaphysics. According to the process approach to metaphysics, features such as 'becoming' and 'novelty' are regarded as the essential descriptions of a metaphysical endeavor. In substance metaphysics, "the fundamental realities of the world are entities (called 'substances') with essences which are fixed and unchanging" (Samawi 1998, p. 10). Plato's and Aristotle's philosophies can be categorized as substance philosophy because it is believed that Platonic 'Ideas' and Aristotelian "physical and material realms", as something immaterial and atemporal, are the loci of these entities (Samawi 1998, pp. 10–11).

In opposition to this is process metaphysics, which is based on process and "is characterized by continuous novelty, becoming, dynamism, flux or essential (as opposed to accidental) motion. Its being is identical to its becoming" (Samawi 1998, p. 11). Process philosophy/metaphysics therefore recognizes both the reality and fundamentality of process (Samawi 1998, p. 12). Without digging into the details of this classification and its development through history, what is important for this research is to relate Aḥsāʾī's philosophical activities with one of these traditions and to find his intellectual context in the post-*Ṣadrīan* era. As Idris Samawi maintains, despite the dominance of substance metaphysics in the post-Avicennan time, the process metaphysics found its true revival in the hands of Mullā Ṣadrā, a development which happened "from within the tradition of the *falāsafah*" (Samawi 1998, p. 21). His *ḥikmat al-mutaʿālīya* was a synthesis of three currents, a synthesis 'within' Peripatetic metaphysics of ibn Sīnā, the illuminationism of al-Suhrewardī, and the philosophical mysticism of Ibn ʿArabī. In addition, "Mullā Ṣadrā claimed to have proved the existence of motion in the category of substance, a move that marks the dawn of process philosophy in the tradition of *falsafah*" (Samawi 1998, p. 22).

The metaphysical school of Mullā Ṣadrā was the predominant school of *falsafah* in the post-Safawid era, and it remained so until the time of Aḥsāʾī. Therefore, despite Aḥsāʾī's critical commentaries on two of Mullā Ṣadrā's writings and his critiques on "what he saw as certain leanings towards pantheism in Ṣadrā's works" (Samawi 1998, p. 22), Mullā Ṣadrā was the

major point of departure for him. In addition to Aḥsāʾī's inspiration from the process metaphysics, as a *Shīʿī mutakallim* (theologian), his early sources of thinking were revelation and *Shīʿa* tradition, which are both "very process-oriented in nature" (Samawi 1998, p. 25). Therefore, in the post-*Ṣadrīan* era, it was almost impossible to find a philosopher who was not a theologian, and as such did not need to reconcile faith and philosophy. Pertinent to this is the prevalence of the mysticism of Ibn ʿArabī and its impact on the minds and writings of philosophers/theologians of this time. In case of our scholar, he combined both *Shīʿa kalām* and Mullā Ṣadrā's process philosophy—despite critical commentaries of him—and as observed earlier in this chapter, had a difficult relationship with the mysticism of Ibn ʿArabī. Samawi goes further and believes that "delving deeper into the teachings of the earlier Shia Imams/Sages inspired Shaykh Aḥmad to radically transform the metaphysics of Mullā Ṣadrā into a system that is even more dominated by process theme" (Samawi 1998, p. 25 & unpublished article, pp. 20–23).

After locating Aḥsāʾī's philosophical activities in the post-*Ṣadrīan* era and indicating the sources of his thought as it developed over time, attention will turn to the conceptualizations of *wilāya*, *nubuwwa*, and *imamate* in the key *Shaykhī* texts, followed by a discussion of the doctrine of *wilāyat al-takwīnīya* and the idea of '*imām* as the four causes', and then a study of the *Shaykhī* eschatology and its nexus to the office of *wilāya*.

3.3 Imamate, *Nubuwwa*, and *Wilāya*

Henri Corbin uses the term integrity (entirety/totality) to explain the reality of this "divine school of thought". *Shaykhīsm*, Corbin writes, is a consistent composition of *sharīʿa* and spirituality, supporting "a pure and perfect imamology",[33] which is called *Shīʿīsm*. At the center of this imamology lies the gnosis of *imām*, which is inseparable from the esoteric meaning of the *Qurʾān* and of the revelation on one hand and the inward of the previous revelations on the other. Henceforth, the gnosis of *imām* connects to, and also reveals, the reality of Divine revelations. The totality of this imamology has three components: the transmitted sources (*naql*) vs. the intellectual sources (*ʿaql*), esoteric interpretation (*bāṭinī taʾwīl*),[34] and a series of sciences, such as chemistry, alchemy, and the Science of the Letters (Corbin 1346 *shamsī*, pp. 2–8). *Wilāya* and *nubuwwa* are closely linked because *wilāya* is the fruit and reality of *nubuwwa*. *Nubuwwa* and *wilāya* are the stations of the outward and the inward of the Prophetic as

well as of the *Qurʾānīc* revelations, respectively, and wherever the cycle of *nubuwwa* comes to an end, the cycle of *wilāya* begins (Corbin 1346 *shamsī*, pp. 78–79).

Wilāya is the heart, the dominant theme of this imamology, and has three fundamental motifs: (a) the theme of the cycles of Prophecy (*nubuwwa*), (b) the cycles of Revelation, and (c) spiritual sciences of nature. With regard to the first theme, Corbin argues that "*Shīʿa* gnosis, as an initiatic religion, is an initiation into a doctrine [therefore], *walāyat*, as an initiation and as an initiatic function is the spiritual ministry of the *imām*, whose charisma initiates his faithful in the esoteric meaning of the prophetic revelations" (Corbin 1994, p. 134). Thus, *imām* is *walī*, and as such, is the grand master, the master of initiation. There is also a theophanic feeling common to *Shīʿīsm* and to Sufism revolving around the office of imamate. The Person of the *imām*, Corbin writes, is the pre-eminent theophanic form (*maẓhar*). He is the person of the *Shāhid*, the beautiful being chosen as the witness of contemplation (Corbin 1994, pp. 133–139).

The *Shaykhī* belief in the twelfth *imām* requires having spiritual faith in him, which is a unique experience, bestowing upon the believer a Divine blessing and gift. *Imām*, in terms of a believer's capability, shows him his own polar orientation, which is every single believer's direction and path of faith (Corbin 1346 *shamsī*, pp. 78–79). The *imāms*, "in their theophanic persons, together with the Prophet and the resplendent Fatima, form the pleroma of the 'Fourteen Very-Pure'" (Corbin 1977, p. 59); among them, Fatima has the predominant position and role. The eternal figure of Fatima-Sophia is the source of "a cosmic Sophianity",[35] which has a "threefold dignity and function". This includes that she is "the manifested form", she is all thinkable reality, the pleroma of meanings of all the universes, and she, as "the secret of the world of the Soul, is also its manifestation (*bayān*), without which the creative Principle of the world would remain unknown and unknowable, forever hidden" (Corbin 1346 *shamsī*, pp. 64–65).

Given this brief introduction, this section starts with the theological conceptualizations of the notions of imamate, *nubuwwa*, and *wilāya* in the writings of the *Shaykhī ʿulemā*. It will start with Shaykh Aḥmad's oeuvre *Sharḥ al-Zīyārat al-Jāmiʿat al-Kabīra*, a great composition of the Divine *ḥikma* indeed (Corbin, Ibid., pp. 78–79), and then will study major texts written by Rashtī, Gawhar, and Kermānī. The aim is to show how these notions are linked to one another, on one hand, and to the *Shaykhī* epistemology, on the other.

In his voluminous *Sharḥ al-Zīyārat al-Jāmiʿat al-Kabīra* attributed to the tenth *imām*, Ali al-Naqi (d. 254 H/868),[36] Aḥsāʾī, from an esoteric perspective, presents an imamology, which is not only tied to the fundamentals of *Shīʿīsm* but also is connected to celestial issues. *Awlīyā* have four stations. The first is *al-sirr al-muqannā bil sirr* (the secret veiled by the secret), which is also called the station of *tawḥīd* or *bayān*. In this station, *awlīyā* are regarded as the manifestations of His names and attributes, as Divine Essence is not comprehensible by a human being. According to a *ḥadīth* transmitted from *imām* Ali, *maqām al-bayān* means to know Him as He is in His reality and know that nothing is similar to Him. This station indicates absolute *tawḥīd* and is what the *imāms* explain in their esoteric teaching of Divine Essence. The second station is *maqām al-maʿānī* (the station of significatum), which is termed as *sirr u-sirr* (the secret of the secret, or the hidden of the hidden, *bāṭin al-bāṭin*). The second station "is the reality of the *imāms* insofar as they represent and manifest God in the totality of his essence and his names". The third station is *abwāb* (gates), the *sirr* or intermediacy (*al-wisāṭa wa al-tarjuma*). They are gates to God, as they facilitate His emanation to people. The fourth station is that of imamate, which is *ẓāhir* (apparent) or *ḥaqq* (reality), while the first station is called *ḥaqq al-ḥaqq* (the reality of the reality) (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, pp. 42–50).[37]

Relevant to this is Aḥsāʾī's discussion of seven stations of gnosis, namely (a) *maʿrifat al-ithbāt al-tawḥīd* (the gnosis of monotheism), (b) *maʿrifat al-maʿānī* (the gnosis of significatum), (c) *maʿrifat al-abwāb* (the gnosis of gates), (d) *maʿrifat al-imām* (the gnosis of *imām*), (e): *maʿrifat al-arkān* (the gnosis of Pillars), (f) *maʿrifat al-nuqabā* (the gnosis of leaders, directors), and lastly (g) *maʿrifat al-nujabā* (the gnosis of nobles) (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, p. 43). It is noteworthy that in the first volume of the abovementioned *Khuṭba*, Seyyed Kāẓim Rashtī transmits the same *ḥadīth* and quotes the same verse (*āyah*) of the *Qurʾān* to prove the stations of gnosis, as well as the stations of *awlīyā* (Rashtī 1421 H/2001, vol. 1, pp. 448–450). Gawhar also develops the same argument to describe the stations of the Prophet and of the *imāms* (Gawhar 1423 H/2002, pp. 470–474). It would seem that Kermānī is more creative in his debate on the four stations of *awlīyā* and the sevenfold stations of gnosis connected to it. He not only uses the same *ḥadīth* and verse of the *Qurʾān* to develop his argument for the theory of *maqāmāt* (stations) and *maʿārif* (levels of gnosis) but also goes further and backs it with rational reasons as well. In *Irshād al-ʿAwām*, he looks to be more of a *ḥakīm* than a *Shaykhī mutakallim* (theologian) who amply elaborates on the *Shaykhī*

fundamentals. He ties *nubuwwa* with concepts such as *ḥikma* and justice, maintaining that the Prophet's philosophy of being is to fulfill His justice for people and to reveal Divine wisdom (*ḥikmat al-ilāhīya*) for them. *Awlīyā* manifest His names and attributes and are the intermediacies of emanation, but they have come to preserve social order and civilization as well. Prophets are perceived to be kings of the world, chosen by the Wise Creator (his terminology is reminiscent of a peripatetic *ḥakīm*), in order to guide people in the righteous way (Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 1, p. 12ff).

The *awlīyā* are also identified with *aʿrāf* (lit. the people of the heights), which is mentioned in the *Qurʾān*, 7: 46–48. On the basis of a number of narratives, the *imāms* and the Prophet are *aʿrāf*. Aḥsāʾī transmits a *ḥadīth* from *imām* Ali (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, p. 44) in which he introduces himself and other *imāms* as *aʿrāf*, who have a number of functions both in this world and in the hereafter. The office of *aʿrāf* is to identify the people of Heaven (*ahl al-janna*) and to separate them from the people of Hell (*ahl al-nār*), in the sense that those who accept their *wilāya* are allowed to enter Heaven, and those who deny it will exist in Hell forever. In addition, *aʿrāf* help God in facilitating emanation and assist Him in creating the world. They are also His light and His words (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, p. 48). Kermānī uses the Arabic term *tuṭunj* (lit. gulf), to describe the status of *imām* Ali and one of the proofs of *aʿrāf*: the one who stands at the origin of mercy and/or agony (Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 2, pp. 184–186, 117–125).

In the *Shaykhī* doctrine, imamate and *nubuwwa* are closely linked. Imamate is the *bāṭin* or inward of *nubuwwa*. Tuned to the idea of the sealing, *Shaykhīsm* maintains the necessity of imamate as a complementary station to *nubuwwa* and the revealer for the Prophet's message. An *imām* is a teacher who instructs believers in the concealed dimension of the message of Islam (Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 1, p. 84). *Wilāya* is also the station of multiplicity (*maqām al-tafṣīl*), vis-à-vis *nubuwwa*, which is the station of totality (*maqām al-ijmāl*) (Gawhar 1423 H/2002, p. 466). In this station, each of them represents one dimension of the reality of *tawḥīd* (Gawhar 1423 H/2002, p. 475). *Walī* is to expand and manifest the hidden message of *nubuwwa*. Communicating a *ḥadīth* from *imām* Ali in which he calls himself the point under the Arabic letter of 'b' *(bā)*, Rashtī names the station of *wilāya* as *rubūbīyat al-thālithah* (lit. the third Divinity), which is the expansion and manifestation of *rubūbīyat al-thānīyah* (lit. the second Divinity),[38] or the station of *nubuwwa*. 'A' (*alif*), the first letter of the Arabic alphabet, stands for this station (Rashtī 1421 H/2001, vol. 2, pp. 12–13 & Rashtī, n.d.c, p. 9ff).

Despite Aḥsāʾī's commentaries on Fayḍ Kāshānī and on the entire *Ṣadrīan* tradition as well as his distaste of mysticism, in the *Sharḥ*, he agrees with the author of *Kalimāt* and the mystics. Imamate and *nubuwwa* are always regarded as being a double-faceted station. ʿAzīz Al-dīn (Azīzuddīn) Nasafī in his classic, *al-Insān al-Kāmil* (the Perfect Man), maintains that *nubuwwa* has two faces, namely a face toward God and a face toward people, while *walī* only looks at God, and whenever he turns his face to people, he becomes a Prophet (Nasafī 1379, p. 316). Thus, *wilāya* is treated as the core of *nubuwwa*, the esoteric aspect of it, and a God-oriented status. By looking at the face of God, the *walī* becomes even more remote and inaccessible to people, and it is the office of imamate which becomes more attainable by believers. *Imām* has two dimensions, one toward God and another toward people, though the source of his legitimacy and even popularity, is exclusively Divine. Whatever is revealed to the Prophet is revealed to them, and is preserved by them from misinterpretation and misunderstanding (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, pp. 51–52). In the general interpretation of the status of *nubuwwa*, Aḥsāʾī argued that God has chosen the *imāms* to be guardians and custodians of people in all four positions and to be intermediaries between Him and the people. On the basis of the last position, He has excluded the fourteen immune figures to be His attributes, His names, His blessings, His extensive mercy, and also His *maʿānī* (significatum) (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, p. 52).

In *Kalimāt*, *wilāya* is embedded in the doctrine of the Perfect Man (also the Universal Man) (Fayḍ Kāshānī 1390, pp. 188–195), and both *wilāya* and imamate have two attributes: being absolute and being delimited (*muṭlaq* and *muqayyad*), respectively. Hence, there are the absolute *nubuwwa* and the absolute *wilāya*, in addition to the delimited *wilāya* and *nubuwwa* (Fayḍ Kāshānī 1390, pp. 188–190). Fayḍ maintains that the origin of all creatures is *Ḥaqīqat al-Muḥammadīya*,[39] which encompasses all celestial and terrestrial perfections.[40] The Universe and human beings are components of it and have been created to serve it in order to be completed. Moreover, there is no veil between this Reality and God (Fayḍ Kāshānī 1390, pp. 190–191).

Aḥsāʾī's contention on *wilāya* and imamate as being reflected in the *Sharḥ* has the typical resonance with the one which is presented by Fayḍ Kāshānī when he is narrating a number of *ḥadīth* from different *imāms*,

attempting to make it clear that imamate is not distinguished from *nubuwwa* and that the core of both is *wilāya*. *Awlīyā* are eligible to receive revelation in all its forms, such as inspirations, visions, and dreams. They even receive "the specific revelation", which so far had been supposed to be an exclusively prophetic attribution. When arguing that truthful and reliable knowledge is the Divine knowledge, Aḥsāʾī's words remind us of Fayḍ's, when he clarifies that we are eligible to reach Divine knowledge by reciting *dhikrs* (remembrance, repeating Divine names), mediation, and purifying our hearts from vice (Fayḍ Kāshānī 1390, pp. 240–241). *Wilāya* is also an office of authority. Aḥsāʾī acknowledges the complete authority of the Prophet and the *imāms* over the life of believers. The *walī* is one who is more eligible than believers to have authority over their lives, their deaths, and their wealth (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, p. 72). *Walī* gains his power from closeness to and friendship with God, and that is why the pair *wilāya/walāya* designates two facets of one reality.[41] *Imāms* are regarded as the donors of all benefits as well as the swords of revenge (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, p. 58). They are also *shāhid* (witness of contemplation) from God upon people and are His luminous lights since they eliminate the deepest and the most profound dark. They are the holders of the column of light (*ʿamūd min a-nūr/noor*) through which they are able to watch people and see their actions (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, pp. 58–60).

As Corbin explains, in a mystical experience, the word 'witness' and the figure of the 'Heavenly Witness' are designated to the suprasensory personal guide/master, who guarantees "with such certainty a theophany perceived by love alone". This guide of light is called by a number of names, such as "the Sun of heart, the Sun of certainty, the Sun of faith, the Sun of knowledge, the spiritual sun of the Spirit". It is he who "carries the mystic up toward the Heavens" (Corbin 1994, pp. 84–85, 91–92, 119–120). In the first volume of the *Sharḥ*, Aḥsāʾī' extensively talks about *shuhadā* and their role: they are the *imāms*, the witnesses, or *ḥujja* (proof) of God to people and His signs among them. *Ḥujja* is therefore the very secret of *shāhid*, as without it, God and His presence would remain in a state of disappearance and abstraction. Thus, *shāhid* could also be regarded as a mirror through which He looks at His people and watches them. Therefore, the *imāms* are His theophanies (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, pp. 365–372 & vol. 2, pp. 169–173).

3.4 *Imāms* as the Four Causes

Shaykh Aḥmad's imamology goes beyond the classic *Shīʿa* understanding of the cosmic role of the *imāms*.[42] *Awlīyā* "are the storage (*maʿdan*) of Divine wisdom (*ḥikmat al-llāh*, or the eternal wisdom, lit. *hikmat al-azalīyya*)", from which has emerged *ḥikmat al-ḥaqīqīya* or the sacred substances of *awlīyā* (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, p. 170). *Ḥikma* is a modulated station and has three levels including *ḥikmat al-ḥaqqīya* (also called *ḥikmat al-llāh*), which is the highest level of *ḥikma*; *ḥikmat al-ḥaqīqīya* or *awlīyā*'s substances, which is a sign of God; and finally, their *wilāya*, which has originated from His authority and dominion (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, p. 170). *Ḥikma* or Sophia in the Hellenic literature, as both the method and the final goal, is the gnosis of God, and the *imāms* are to be "understood as Logos, or Word, through which gnosis of God is obtained" (Samawi 1998, p. 87).

According to Aḥsāʾī, the Prophet and the *imāms* are the effective cause of creation (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, pp. 190–194), and in the absence of their effectiveness, His act of creation will not be finalized (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, pp. 361–362). Aḥsāʾī's notion of the idea of *wilāyat al-takwīnīya*, or "the existential and absolute cosmic authority of the *imāms*" is not an innovation but actually a heritage of the *Sadrīan ḥikma* and the term specifically used by Mullā Ṣadrā (d. 1045 H/1635 H) for any "cosmic role for the *imāms*"[43] (Rizvi 2013, p. 2). *Imāms* are the trustees of His secret and the last letter by which His greatest name is completed (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, pp. 194–195). *Baqīyatallāh* (the Remnant of God), which is both a common title for all the *imāms* and a specific title used exclusively for the last *imām*, carries all the attributes and meanings being implicated by *wilāyat al-takwīnīya*. Believers not only come to know God by their *imāms* but also worship God and praise Him through them. It is through the *imāms* that people are provided with subsistence (*rizq*) and receive death (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, pp. 249–250). Aḥsāʾī re-defines the term 'believer' (*muʾmin*) as a person who is examined by belief in *awlīyā* and argues that submission to *awlīyā* is more obligatory for believers than doing daily prayer (*ṣalāt*) (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 2, pp. 54–55, 58–155). Therefore, in the *Shaykhī* terminology, blasphemy and faith mean enmity/disobedience to *awlīyā* and obedience to them, respectively (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 2, p. 228).[44]

In relation to *wilāyat al-takwīnīya*, Kermānī argues that the Prophet and *imāms* have two statuses: the apparent authority (*quṭbīyyat-i ẓāhirī*) and the hidden guardianship, which is *wilāyat al-takwīnīya*. Regarding the latter, they enjoy a position by which nothing would be hidden from them, and their knowledge is to embrace everything in the Universe. In addition, they are granted absolute authority over the life of believers (Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 1, p. 120, pp. 125–128). By focusing on the Divine weight of imamate, the *Shaykhī ʿulemā* move the *imāms* away from the accessibility of believers even further, to the realm of *hūrqalyā*, and henceforth, they need to create another level of being, which is *qurāʾi ẓāhirah* (visible towns). For example, in a statement addressing *imāms*' different performances, Aḥsāʾī totally discharges them from any subjectivity in talking or in keeping silent, in doing *jihād* or restraining from it, and even from killing or being killed (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, p. 235).[45] In relation to this, both Rashtī and Kermānī also argue that due to the distance of the Hidden *imām* from ordinary people (*ʿawām*), they need visible leaders to act as an intermediary between him and his followers (Rashtī, *Risālat al-Ḥujjat al-Bāligha*, n.d.c, p. 91ff & *Risāla Dar Jawāb-i Suleymān Khān Afshār*, n.d.e, p. 28ff, & Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 4, p. 50).

On the basis of verse eighteen of the *sūrah* of *Sabaʾ* (Sheba), stating that "And We set between them and the towns that We had blessed towns easily seen" (Nasr 2015, p. 1047) and also *imām* al-Baqir's interpretation of the word 'towns' (*qurāʾ*),[46] Aḥsāʾī[47] argues that the rest of the verse is assigned to jurists (*fuqahā*) "and We measured the distance between them: Journey between them in security by night and by day" (Nasr, p. 1047). Henceforth, according to this *taʾwīl*, the visible towns are jurists "who are perceived as being the *imāms*' messengers (*rusul*) and transmitters (*naqalah*) to their *Shīʿas*" (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, p. 353, 378–380). Jurists are adherents of the faith, as they spread the message of the *imāms* and their *ḥadīth* by teaching (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, p. 353). Moreover, they are eligible to receive absolute obedience because they have been raised to eminency by their closeness to the *imāms* (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 2, p. 285).

Aḥsāʾī is not clear on what he means by the word *qurāʾ*,[48] and it is his successors, especially Muḥammad Karīm Khān Kermānī, who shed more light on it. In his *Irshād al-ʿAwām*, which contains the creeds of the *Kermānī Shaykhī* School, Kermānī explains how believers should understand 'towns' (*qurāʾ*). According to him, there exist eight towns, precisely

eight stations of knowledge between the Hidden *imām* and people. Although a reminder of the seven mystical valleys, "the eight towns" are used allegorically to point to the numerous stations a believer should take in gaining knowledge of the *imāms*. In the middle of their path, believers should stop at the eighth station, which is the station of the *Shaykhī ʿulemā*. A group of people, Kermānī states, are at the first station, the gnosis of Islam, which has three dimensions: *sharīʿa* or law, *ṭarīqa* or path, and *ḥaqīqa* or truth. Then come the stations of *nujabā* and *nuqabā*, and finally, there is the station of the Fourth Pillar. It is only through the gnosis of the Fourth Pillar that a believer is able to know his *imām* (Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 4, pp. 127–128). The Fourth Pillar came to be assigned as the fourth fundamental of *Shaykhīsm* after unity, *nubuwwa*, and imamate (Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 4, pp. 57–61). Kermānī argues that the Fourth Pillar is an indication of the maturation of *Shīʿa* thought, and since that time has not yet come, it stands at the end—after unity, *nubuwwa*, and imamate. For him, the Fourth Pillar is eternal, though it has been hidden hitherto and is revealed now[49] (Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 2, p. 13 & vol. 3, pp. 33–34 & vol. 4, pp. 67–69, 128–129).

According to Kermānī, the holders of the office of the Fourth Pillar are the *imām*'s name, attribute, and remembrance,[50] and therefore their identity and existence are not intrinsic (*dhātī*), but accidental (*ʿaraḍī*); they are to reveal the *imām*'s light and dignity (Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 4, pp. 127–128). The gnosis of the Fourth Pillar, like the gnosis of imamate, is innate, having been gifted to us in the world of the *al-dharr*[51] (Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 2, p. 14, 171–178 & vol. 4, pp. 66–67), and only the people of the heart (*ahl al-fuʾād*) were eligible to submit to it. The office of the Fourth Pillar is given to those who are called *aṣḥāb al-yamīn* (people of righteousness), *sābiqūn* (forerunners), and *muqarrabūn* (intimates) (figures such as Salman the Persian, Abū dhar, and the two last vicegerents of the Hidden *imām*), who are commanded to be unseen and veiled. The Perfect Man (or the Perfect *Shīʿa*/*nāṭiq-i wāḥid*) is the only eligible figure to hold the office of the Fourth Pillar.[52]

The *Shaykhī* interpretation of the office of imamate and its nexus with the Four Causes and *wilāyat al-takwīnīya* has another component, which is infallibility (*ʿiṣma*) of the *imāms*. Aḥsāʾī's opinions on *ʿiṣma* are reflected in an independent treatise called *Risālat al-ʿIṣma wa Rafʿa*. Infallibility is a Divine attribute, or emanation, which originates from His absolute justice (*ʿadl al-muṭlaq*) and prohibits its holder to sin. Those who are adorned by it are safeguarded and preserved by His protection. Aḥsāʾī emphasizes

that Divine grace prevents *imāms* from relinquishing good and doing bad, in the sense that *ʿiṣma* necessarily dispossess them from any ability, desire, and/or will to sin.[53] Rather, the *imāms* are obligated to observe precepts and to abandon sin (Aḥsāʾī, Op.cit, 1430c H, pp. 3–5). Quoting *imām* Ali, he maintains that by infallibility, the *imāms* are His tongue and His deed by which He speaks and acts (Aḥsāʾī 1430c H, p. 6). From this perspective, Aḥsāʾī ties infallibility with the status of absolute guardianship, which is higher than *nubuwwa* and entails the station of intermediacy and representation. The holders of the absolute guardianship are granted absolute justice or infallibility by which they come to be the close companions of God (Aḥsāʾī 1430c H, pp. 11–13).

Infallibility is an inseparable element of representation and designation. God, in the world of the *al-dharr*, has armed His *walīs* with infallibility in order to protect them from fault and sin (Aḥsāʾī 1430c H, p. 20), and, at the same time, he has prevented oppressors (*ẓālimīn*) from achieving the covenant of *wilāya* and imamate (Aḥsāʾī 1430c H, p. 22). Moreover, for Aḥsāʾī, infallibility came to be a specifically *Imāmī* attribute, since Twelver *Shīʿas* believe that all Prophets are free from (*munazzah*) committing sin, which is distasteful to Him (Aḥsāʾī 1430c H, p. 26). Equating infallibility with designation, Corbin argues that these two attributes grant *imāms* both a Divine position and a non-temporal ancestry, and that is why the *Shīʿa* meaning of imamate differs from the Sunni understanding of it (Corbin 1391a, vol. 1, p. 402).

In *Risālat al-ʿIṣma wa Raǰʿa*, Aḥsāʾī develops an argument for the idea of infallibility of the *ʿulemā*. They are *ġhawth*[54] (lit. help or aid), and it is impossible for any age to be deprived of them.[55] It is also through them that God looks at His creatures, and it is by them that He helps those who are seeking aid (Aḥsāʾī 1430c H, pp. 79–81). Aḥsāʾī coins another concept, *khawāṣ al-khawāṣ* (the most distinguished people), which is designated to the specific vicegerents of the Hidden *imām*, or *Shaykhī* leaders. This concept describes those highly distinguished figures who are very close to God due to their avoidance of sin (Aḥsāʾī, Op.cit, 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, pp. 129–130), while Kermānī applies the term to both the specific vicegerents and the whole *Shaykhī* community (Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 3, p. 32, 54, 80).[56] It is on the basis of this hierarchical concept that gnosis is classified into four groupings. The first three, which are the gnosis of Deity, of the manifestations, and of the gates, are attainable by *khawāṣ al-khawāṣ* or the *Shaykhī* leaders, but the last one, the gnosis of the *nuwwāb* (the gnosis of the *Shaykhī* *ʿulemā*), could be accessible by ordinary people (Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 1, pp. 88–140).

The *Shaykhī ʿulemā* or the gates of God, who are gifted with the attribute of infallibility, are regarded as the true bearers of the charisma of *imāms*. At the beginning of this chapter, Aḥsāʾī's visions and dreams of the *imāms,* with whom he claims to be in contact, were discussed.[57] Having channels of direct contact with *Ṣāḥib al-Zamān* (the Lord of the Age) is important, not only because he receives guidance from the *imām* but also because it is a source of legitimacy due to its value and credit. Thus, as the "de facto leader and defender of the faith", he, as well as the rest of the *Shaykhī* leaders, would be able to "exercise a large amount of charismatic authority" (MacEoin 2009, p. 18 & 23).

3.5 The *Shaykhī* Eschatology and the Idea of the Future Return

The *Shaykhī ʿulemā* have significantly contributed to the doctrine of the future return of the Hidden *imām*. In *Shaykhīsm*, notions such as expectation, appearance, and gate (*bāb*/the intermediacy of the Hidden *imām*) have messianic implications. Abbas Amanat has shown that messianic fervor not only preoccupied the *Shaykhī* literature and practice but more than that, around the 1830s and 1840s, "premessianic speculations [were] particularly intense … especially among individual seekers of *ẓuhūr* who were later converts to the *Bāb*". Based on the writings of "the early *Bābīs*, as well as those of the *Bāb* himself", Amanat concludes that messianism was both 'in circulation' and "also influential in conversions" (Amanat 1989, pp. 93–94). In fact, out of the *Shaykhī/Bābī* circle, the prophecies and signs toward the advent of the Mahdi were in the same way present and outstanding. '*Niʿmatullāhī* emissaries' and 'Persian *Ismāʿīlīsm*' that had experienced a revival in the nineteenth century shared the same speculations (Amanat 1989, pp. 70–105).

The *Shaykhī* sources promised the immanency of the future return of the Twelfth *imām* as an event more likely to occur in the near future. Aḥsāʾī, in *Risālat al-Ḥayāt ul-Nafs* (Treatise on the Life of Self), which is a treatise on the return of the Prophet, of the *imāms*, and of a number of notable Muslim figures, describes their return to this world as the actualization of God's promise of the establishment of Mahdi's just government. He uses the idea of the future return to impart the faith of *Shīʿīsm* as the only true sect in Islam. His narratives should not be treated as a standard eschatology, such as Zoroastrian eschatology, or even a *Bayānī*

(*Bābī*) one, both of which are much more elaborate and rich, but rather as a story in accordance with his imamology. The question of the establishment of Mahdi's just government, and its close connection to categories such as resurrection, the hereafter, and the judgment, is replaced by a vindictive sectarian battle within Islam. As will be argued, from this perspective, the *Shaykhī* eschatology should be treated as an eschatology of revenge, being less concerned with the establishment of justice at the end of the world—as the main purpose of any narrative of eschatology—and more concerned with taking revenge on *ʿĀshūrā* tragedy (Aḥsāʾī 1430b H, vol. 5, pp. 15–55).

In addition to *Risālat al-Ḥayāt ul-Nafs*, Aḥsāʾī elaborated on the future return of the *imāms* and the Prophet in the third volume of the *Sharḥ*, whilst focusing on *ʿĀshūrā* and arguing that the advent of *al-Qāʾim* is a preliminary event for the return of al-Hossein. Here again, the third *imām* and taking revenge from the Umayyads are the central themes (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 3, pp. 48–100). Rashtī also addresses *ʿĀshūrā* and maintains that al-Hossein's unjust martyrdom is important both in the life of the faith of *Shīʿīsm* and in the whole history of the preceding Prophets and their missions. In a treatise entitled *Asrār al-Shahāda*, he discusses the *Shaykhī* eschatology with a particular focus on the city of Karbala, on *ʿĀshūrā* and its martyrs, and their relations to the previous Prophets. According to Rashtī, all the Prophets have come to bear testimony to the imamate and *wilāya* of the Prophet and his household, especially his grandson al-Hossein (Rashtī, n.d.b, p. 2ff). Rashtī ties *ʿĀshūrā* to the lives of previous Prophets to present it as an eternal accident which is rooted in the depth of history, and as such, representing good in an eternal battle between good and evil.

In *Sharḥ Ḥayāt al-Arwāḥ*, Gawhar discusses the topic in detail. By distinguishing between *ẓuhūr* and *raǰʿa*, he argues that the appearance of the Hidden *imām* at a time unknown is called *ẓuhūr*, while the future return of the *imāms* is called *raǰʿa*. His narrative contains the typical path of events of the *Shaykhī* eschatology in which not only the Prophet and his household will have a future return but also a number of previous Prophets along with their successors (*awṣīyā*) will return to help the son of Fatima in his fateful war with the descendants of Yazīd (Gawhar 1423 H/2002, pp. 598–675). For Kermānī, Karbala is the spirit of the body (the earth), and it is the first city to have been created 22,000 years before the creation of other cities and is exalted to be the father of all of them. It is also the intellect (*ʿaql*), the

heaven of the earth, and the pedestal (*kursī*) of *nubuwwa*, compared with Kufa, which is the pedestal of *wilāya* (Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 2, pp. 96–106, & vol. 3, 1267 H/1850, pp. 153–160, 171–203).

Seyyed Hossein Nasr sheds light on the existing harmony between scientific geography and sacred geography. He maintains that since Muslim geographers believed that there was "no sharp distinction between scientific geography – as it is understood in the modern sense –, and sacred geography – in which directions, mountains, rivers, islands, etc., become symbols of the celestial world"—every clime (*iqlīm*, or sacred city) had a correspondence in the celestial order and "had connected to a planet and a zodiac sign" (Nasr 1992, p. 99). "In Islamic geographical texts", Nasr explains, "it is believed that there are seven heavens which are not only connected to seven climates, but are also their counterparts". Nasr calls it the combination of "descriptive and symbolic geography", which had been obtained from ancient civilizations: "the climates, which are the counterparts of the seven heavens, were known to the Babylonians and the Greeks, as well as to the ancient Iranians, who had a concentric rather than longitudinal conceptualization of it" (Nasr 1992, p. 99). Not only locations "are the terrestrial image[s] of the celestial order" (Nasr 1992, p. 99) but also events, such as famine and rain, and figures have metaphysical counterparts.

The *Shaykhī* eschatology starts with a cosmic chaos, which continues with the appearance of *Dajjāl* (the Islamic anti-Christ), and later *al-Sufyānī*, which has an Umayyad root. In the meantime, some *Shīʿī* figures return to the scene and are immediately killed by the army of evil.[58] In a complementary explanation to Aḥsāʾī's, Kermānī suggests an argument for the future return of the Prophet as the last return of all. He puts forward four reasons for this. First of all, since the Prophet is the most distinguished and celebrated (*ashraf*) of all people, his return would be a sealing (*khatm*) to any return. Second, as preceding Prophets have been only his forerunners, previous returns are regarded as a prelude to his return. Third, he is the universal spirit (*rūḥ-i kullī*) and the absolute wisdom (*aql-i kullī*) of the world, and his return would be the last step in the completion of the body. And finally, by his return, the outward and the inward dimensions—*bāṭin* and *ẓāhir*—of his mission will correspond with each other (Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 1, pp. 84–85).

The appearance of the Twelfth *imām*—which coincides with a number of climatic changes,[59] such as a famine, followed by a heavy rain—in *Jumād al-Awwal* is an advent from the Unseen which is always referred to in the

Shaykhī texts as *mundus imaginalis* (Corbin 1391a, vol. 1, p. 264) or *hūrqalyā*: "our *walī* is in *hūrqalyā* and will manifest and return to this world from *ʿālam al-mithāl*" (Aḥsāʾī 1430d H, vol. 8, p. 421).[60] *ʿĀlam al-mithāl* is the world that the 'spiritual body' of *muʾmin* (believer, here *imām*) or the "Anima substantive of the adept" becomes the Earth of his Paradise and also the Earth of his Resurrection (Corbin 1977, p. 72, 84). From this perspective, the manifestation of the awaited *imām* "is not an external event destined suddenly to appear on the calendar of physical time"; it is an event that gradually takes place as "the pilgrim of the spirit, rising toward the world of *hūrqalyā*, brings about the advent of the awaited *imām* in himself" (Corbin 1977, pp. 72–73).

Hūrqalyā (originally *Havarqalyā*)[61] is a key concept in *Shaykhī* epistemology and anthropology and deserves closer attention. The quest of every seeker is the Orient, thereby orienting himself as "a primary phenomenon of … [his] presence in the world". This Orient, however, is not situated on geographical maps, since it belongs to the eighth territory,[62] which is not "comprised in any of the seven climes",[63] and "is in the direction of the north, beyond the north. Only an ascensional progress can lead toward this cosmic north chosen as a point of orientation" (Corbin 1994, p. 1ff). The north, first and foremost, is of significance "by a mode of perception", by "primordial Images, preceding and regulating every sensory perception, and not with images constructed a posteriori on an empirical basis". The world of archetype images which precede all empirical data is "the autonomous world of visionary Figures and Forms", where beings and things are seen and are given their meaning by the active imagination. "The Angel Gabriel of the *Qurʾānīc* revelation, who is identified with the active Intelligence of the Avicennan philosophers, is the mediator through which imaginations are engaged. This autonomous world of visions is called the Earth of *Hūrqalyā*" (Corbin 1994, pp. 4–16).

In the work of Aḥsāʾī, as Rafati maintains, *havarqalyā* (the realm of the subtle) has several connotations and is often used synonymously with "the realm of similitudes" (Rafati 1979, pp. 107–108) or *ʿālam al-mithāl* (also ithmus/*barzakh*). It is in this territory that the Twelfth *imām*, along with his fathers, lives and it is also from this world that he makes direct contact with his believers (Aḥsāʾī 1430d H, vol. 8, pp. 421–22). As his visit is not experimental, his return also takes place in the supersensory world.[64] That being acknowledged, the events of this history are seen to be much more than what we ourselves call facts: they are visions. On the other hand, everything that we call history and value as historical is not seen in

hūrqalyā, and is not an event in the earth of *hūrqalyā*, and therefore is devoid of religious interest and spiritual meaning. The orientation of the terrestrial earth toward the earth of *hūrqalyā*, toward the celestial pole, confers a polar dimension on terrestrial existence and gives it a direction not evolutionary but vertical, ascensional. The past is not behind us, but under our feet (Corbin 1977, pp. 89–90).

By the argument that the *imāms*' bodies belong to this world and are deprived of any temporal impurity, Aḥsāʾī maintains that forms, figures, and bodies of the world of *hūrqalyā* have maximal transparency and purity (Aḥsāʾī 1430d H, vol. 3, p. 107). Aḥsāʾī makes a strict distinction between the "organic, animated body (*jasad*) … and … corporeal mass or volume (*jism*)", and by doing so recognizes four bodies for humans: two *jasads* (A and B) and two *jisms* (A and B), which "represent a twofold accidental body and a twofold essential body" (Corbin 1977, p. 91). *Jasad* A belongs to the material perishable world, and *jism* A is not everlasting and does not belong to the elemental world or to "the Terrestrial Elements". The second *jasad*, though hidden in the first *jasad* (*jasad* A), is not perishable: it is rather composed of "archetypal elements, the subtle elements of the 'earth of *hūrqalyā*'". The second *jism* "is the essential subtle body, archetypal, eternal and imperishable" (Corbin 1977, pp. 91–92), and is called *jism al-ḥaqīqī* or *jism al-laṭīf*.[65]

This body, which is composed of *jasad* B and *jism* B, is "seventy times nobler and more subtle than those of the body of elemental flesh in which it is hidden and invisible. It has shape, extent, and dimension, and is nevertheless imperishable" (Corbin 1977, p. 96). The *jasad-i hūrqalyāyī* survives in the grave, but the grave is not the 'graveyard'; it is "exactly the mystical earth of *hūrqalyā* to which it belongs, being constituted of its subtle elements; it survives there, invisible to the senses, visible only to the visionary Imagination" (Corbin 1977, p. 96 & Rafati 1979, pp. 108–115).[66]

The idea of the future return is vital in the formation of the *Shaykhī* School, in the sense that faith (*īmān*) is conditioned by belief in the future return. Faith would not be complete until believers have true belief in the future return because belief is a gate leading followers to certainty and assurance. Therefore, by elaborating on the two categories of *khiṣṣīṣīn* (the most distinguished ones) versus *khāṣṣīn* (the specific ones), the *Shaykhī ʿulemā* argued that those who believe in the future return in general and in the return of the Twelfth *imām* in particular are *khiṣṣīṣīn* and enjoy a higher position than *khāṣṣīn*: "belief in the future return is the reality of submission, [which is] Islam, and one of the signs of the perfect faith"

(Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 3, p. 100).[67] The idea and the structure of this anthropological hierarchy, as Corbin mentions, "correspond to the idea and structure of an esoteric astronomy; the one and the other exemplify the same archetypal Image of the world" (Corbin 1994, pp. 62–63).

3.6 Occult Sciences

The occult sciences (*ʿulūm-i khafīya* or *gharība*) are methodologies used to study and describe the phenomena of the physical world. This kind of science has a long history in the Muslim world and a number of Muslim philosophers, such as Avicenna, Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (d. 672 H/1274), and Bahāʾ al-Dīn al-ʿĀmilī (known as Shaykh Bahāʾī, d. 1030 H/1621), have famously written about it. In this regard, Avicenna's treatise called *Risāla-yi Shāqūl* (the Treatise of Plumb Line) or Shaykh Bahāʾī's *Kashkūl*[68] (Analects) are evident examples (Nasr 1992, pp. 153–157). Matthew Melvin Koushki has researched extensively on the occult sciences (particularly lettrism and *jafr*) and their history in the Tīmūrīd period. Focusing his inquiry on Ṣāʾin al-Dīn Turka Iṣfahānī (d. 836 H/1432), Koushki shows how, in pursuing his neoplatonic-neopythagorean quest, Turkah deployed "all available means, whether rational or mystical, scientific or magical" to comprehend the twin Books, the *Qurʾān* and the Cosmos (Koushki 2012, p. I & p. 33ff). Koushki argues that Turkah's lettrism was part of a larger intellectual project in western Iran (mainly Isfahan) and it had three strands: gnostic-messianic, Sufi, and intellectual (Koushki 2012, p. 29).

Seyyed Hossein Nasr observes the usage of these sciences from a mystical perspective and believes that due to the centrality of Unity in Islam, by numbers, letters, and figures (all components of the occult sciences), Muslim thinkers wanted to express "unity in multiplicity" (Nasr 1992, p. 146, pp. 295–296). Here, I will not delve into the *Shaykhī* philosophy of the occult sciences and only highlight those parts which connect the occult sciences to the *Shaykhī* conceptualization of *wilāya* and *nubuwwa*. Fortunately, the *Shaykhī ʿulemā* have left us with a rich literature, and Shaykh Aḥmad Aḥsāʾī, Seyyed Kāẓim Rashtī,[69] and Muḥammad Karīm Khān Kermānī[70] wrote several texts on the occult sciences. For them, in addition to its function as a means to decipher the cosmos, the occult sciences have also been regarded as a medium to the gnosis of metaphysical forces, such as stars, jinn, and ghosts.

In *Risāla-yi Rashtīya* (Treatise on Rashtī), Aḥsāʾī raises the issue of the occult sciences (in Aḥsāʾī's words *khamsa-yi muḥtajaba*), including *Kīmīyā*, *Līmīyā*, *Hīmīyā*, *Sīmīyā*, and *Rīmīyā*.[71] In addition, he offers another argument for the idea of *jafr*, which helps him render his conceptualization on the philosophy of creation, or *bidʿ*. *Bidʿ* is His will (*mashīyya*) and is the first creature of Him. In Islamic philosophy, His *mashīyya* is termed as *ṣādir-i awwal* or the first emanated. Then the letters were created, which are called the Second Man (*ādam-i thānī* or *bidʿ-i thānī*), vis-a-vis *ādam-i awwal*, which is His *mashīyya*. The letter of 'a' (*Alif*), which is the first letter of the Arabic alphabet, is the most prominent of all and is called the first invention (*ikhtirāʿi awwal*) or His act. Other letters stem from *Alif*. *Alif* also stands for the Prophet Muhammad, the owner of the station of brevity (*ijmāl*), while 'b' (*bā*), the second letter, signifies Ali. 'Ba' is the softer form of *Alif* and also its description. Henceforth, the office of *wilāya* is not only regarded as the continuity of *nubuwwa* but also it is to disperse and distribute what the Prophet says (Aḥsāʾī 1430c H, vol. 8, 353–354).

Aḥsāʾī states that every letter contains distinctive properties (*khāṣīyat*) which are speculative (*fikrīya*), verbal (*lafẓīya*), numeral (*raqamīya*), and figural (*ʿadadīya*). On this basis, there have been founded the collective nouns of *subḥānallāh*, *al-ḥamdulillāh*, *lā ilāha ila llāh*, and *Allah Akbar*. They constitute the four Pillars (*arkān*) of Islam, each of them representing one dimension of the message of Islam, including *tawḥīd*, *nubuwwa*, imamate, and *Shīʿa*. These Pillars are the causes of liveliness and death (*ḥayāt wa mamāt*), maintenance (*rizq*), intellect (*ʿaql*), soul (*nafs*), as well as nature and substance (Aḥsāʾī 1430c H, p. 355–356). As Juan Cole maintains, Aḥsāʾī emphasizes that the twenty-eight basic letters of the Arabic language have not only been backed by cosmic forces but the cosmos itself is perceived to be a 'divine text' (Cole 1994, p. 1).

This text is composed of single letters, each of which is a symbol pointing to a feature. Cole tries to makes this 'linguistic cosmology' understandable and even logical by saying that Aḥsāʾī's contribution has two contrasting poles, simplicity and complexity, and immateriality versus materiality, which is being successfully reconciled in a unified and meaningful system. He argues that for Aḥsāʾī, "the letters are elements, so that letter mysticism in this Greco-Arabic tradition is not only cosmological linguistics but also atomistic physics and a natural, 'cosmic' dimension to the alphabet as symbol can therefore also be discerned" (Cole 1994, pp. 10–11). Moreover, Cole maintains that "revisionism and … dynamism" (Cole 1994, p. 15)

embedded in this system are claimed to not only explain the philosophy of creation, "but it is they that underlie the mystery of Resurrection. It is here that we begin to see the radical possibilities in Aḥsā'ī's thought for the ability of the letters to be recombined, suggesting that the world need not always be as it is, that it can in effect be spelled out differently, especially by a messianic figure" (Cole 1994, p. 10).

Rashtī in *Dalīl al-Mutaḥayyarīn*, in addition to *jafr*, mentions two more occult sciences, the science of elixir and the science of numbers, which contain the methodology of gaining knowledge and decoding the secrets of the material world. By transmitting a *ḥadīth* from *imām* Ali stating that "people know the apparent dimension of these sciences, but I know both dimensions: outward and inward. The outward only contains the Classical Elements such as fire, earth, water and air, while the inward is so strange in a sense that it only brings confusion", Rashtī argues that these sciences were handed down among the *imāms* to the Hidden *imām* and his vicegerents during his occultation (Rashtī, n.d.-a. p. 10).

Rashtī's *Khuṭbah* is also written from the *jafr* perspective. Here *jafr* is a methodology by which believers come to understand the position of the Prophet and his household. In the first volume of the *Khuṭbah* he tries to give an esoteric interpretation of the first *sūrah* of the *Qur'ān*. *Ḥamd*, meaning praise be to God, is a mirror reflecting Divine Essence and has two faces: one facet refers to absolute monotheism (*tawḥīd*), and the second one is a status in which all Divine names, attributes, and *fi'l* (act) are manifested (Rashtī 1421 H/2001, p. 51). *Ḥamd* also stands for multiplicity in which form (*ṣūrat*) and substance (*māddih*) gather. This indicates the most perfected manifestation, which is the manifestation of the throne (*'arsh*) in the pedestal (*kursī*). Rashtī states that this is the position of the twelve astrological signs which stand for the twelve *imāms*. Not only the Sun (*shams*) gravitates on its orbit in the throne but every world has a number of minor and major suns. *Shams al-jismīyah* (the Material Sun), the last of the suns and probably the most perfected one, belongs to the last world, which is our world, or the material world (*'ālam-i jismānī*). *Shams al-jismīyah* is called the Sun of *Nubuwwa* (*al-shams al-nubuwwa*), and it symbolizes a light that not only enlightens the material world but also affects everything in it. Here, *al-shams al-nubuwwa* is in its entirety and multiplicity. The moon also stands for *wilāya* (*al-qamar al-wilāya*). *Ḥamd*, in its multiplicity, symbolizes the absolute *wilāya*, which is a foliage tree with a body and branches (Rashtī 1421 H/2001, p. 52).

Rashtī transmits a *ḥadīth* from the Prophet saying that "Ali and I are from the same tree, while Fatima is its offshoot, the *imāms* are the branches, and our knowledge is the fruit of it" (Rashtī 1421 H/2001, p. 53). By knowledge, Rashtī means "the wisdom of the saints" (Rashtī 1421 H/2001, p. 53) or gnosis. It is in gnosis that "knowledge and being coincide; it is there that science and faith find their harmony" (Nasr 1992, p. 337) as gnosis is the highest form of knowledge in Islam. The gnostic not only has definite conceptualizations of the universe but also "sees all things as manifestations of the Supreme Divine Principle, which transcends all determinations" (Nasr 1992, p. 337).

The absolute *wilāya* (*wilāyat al-muṭlaqah*) is the manifestation of the outward face of *ḥamd*, while the inward stands for Divine Essence, which is incomprehensible to and unreachable by man. Therefore, *ḥamd*, as the name and attribute of God, is designated to the position of absolute *wilāya*, which belongs to Ali and his sons (Rashtī 1421 H/2001, vol. 1, p. 57 & pp. 121–2). Connected to his discussion on *wilāya* and its relation to *ḥamd*, Rashtī develops an argument for the understanding of the conceptualization of the *Muḥammedan* Light (*al-noor al-Muḥammadīya*), which is also known as the *Muḥammedan* Reality, the First Intellect, and the First Pen (*al-qalam al-awwal*). This *nūr/noor*, when called *al-aql al-awwal*, is a medium through which God speaks to His creatures, and when named as *al-qalam al-awwal*, is a tool by which He has created the whole creation. From the Neoplatonian axiom that "from the One (*al-wāḥid*) emanates only one (*wāḥid*) (*lā yaṣduru min al-wāḥid illa l-wāḥid*)", Rashtī argues that *al-noor al-Muḥammadīya* is the first emanation *or ṣādir-i awwal* (Rashtī 1421 H/2001, vol. 1, pp. 101–105 & pp. 548–549). From *al-noor al-Muḥammadīya* has been generated twenty oceans of light, including Divine knowledge, knowledge that no one except for God possesses (Rashtī 1421 H/2001, vol. 1, p. 276–277 & 476–477).

Gawhar in *Rasāʾil al-Muhimma fī Tawḥid wa al-Ḥīkma* (Important Treatises in Monotheism and Wisdom) develops an argument for the conceptualization of *al-noor al-Muḥammadīya*, which is believed to be the Divine substance or *nafs al-malakūtīyat al-ilāhīya*. Although it is self-existent, Divine substance has originated from the intellect (*ʿaql*) and returns to it after its completion (*kamāl*). The intellect, according to Gawhar, is also equivalent to the exalted Divine Essence (*dhāt a-llāh al-ʿulyā*), which is the cause of everything. Therefore, the Prophet's self (*nafsihī*) is a symbol of *nafs al-malakūtīyat al-ilāhīya* (the intellect), which is the cause of creation. In his interpretation of *bismi llāhi r-raḥmān-i*

r-raḥīm, Gawhar, following his master, puts forward that the letter of 'B', which is the first letter of this *āyah* and symbolizes the status of the Prophet Muhammad, is the cause of the creation, and Ali is the point beneath it (Gawhar, n.d., p. 42 & 109).

As an eternal reality, *al-noor al-Muḥammadīya* is both the inner reality of the Prophet and the Logos: "it is the archetype of the whole creation, containing within himself the 'idea' of the cosmos just as according to the Gospel of St. John all things were made by the Word of Logos" (Naṣr 1992, p. 340). *Al-noor al-Muḥammadīya* is the continuity of a perennial spirit over history, and has found numerous instances, such as Ali, who is not only the cousin, son-in-law, and the successor of the Prophet, but more than that, the Prophet himself, and also his *walī*. From this perspective, Ali is a mirror reflecting *Muḥammedan* Reality in himself. The chain of *wilāya* and *awlīyā*, which is a continuous uninterrupted string, starts with Ali and ends in his grandson, the Twelfth *imām*. Therefore, despite different names and persons, these spiritual figures are bearers of an everlasting reality or primal *noor* which is never extinguished (Naṣr 1992, Chapter thirteen, pp. 337–353; Elmore 1999, pp. 82–83 & 187–188).

Like his predecessor, Rashtī also had an uneasy relationship with mysticism and especially with the school of Ibn ʿArabī (Lawson, Op.cit, 2005a, pp. 125–154). Addressing his conceptualization of the status of the absolute *wilāya*, of *al-noor al-Muḥammadīya*, and of the status of *ḥamd*, which is designated to the Prophet and Ali, he seems to be more of a Sufi than a *Shaykhī mutakallim*. In the first volume of *al-Khuṭbah*, he states that *ḥamd* is a mirror manifesting His names and attributes, such as greatness, power, and beauty (Gawhar, n.d. p. 122). Here, his words resonate of *Akbarīan* mystics who observe in the universe nothing but His theophany. The Deity has appeared to the word of *ḥamd* (a reminder of the word, '*kalima*' in Christianity?), which symbolizes His absolute *wilāya* and, due to the modulated reality of it, the *wilāya* of His chosen people (Gawhar, n.d. pp. 122–128). The name of Muhammad, which is His remembrance and His appearance in a name, is derived from the Primal Word or *ḥamd*. In the same manner, Ali should be understood as a Divine name and stands for the station of multiplicity (*maqām al-tafṣīl*) and His names (Rashtī 1421 H/2001, vol. 1, pp. 402–404).

Ḥamd here is the First Emanated and has different names, such as light (Rashtī 1421 H/2001, vol. 1, p. 144), point (*nuqṭah*) (Ibid., p. 143), and the *Muḥammedan* Reality (Ibid., p. 134). The Arabic letter of *Alif* 'a' is called the *lawā* of the point. *Lawā* literally means emblem or flag, and

Rashtī, by using it for the status of Ali, intends to say that he is the one who represents the Prophet Muhammad's cause and mission after him (Rashtī 1421 H/2001, vol. 1, p. 143 & Gawhar n.d. p. 89).

Rashtī's *Khutbah*, as well as some of his other writings, such as *Asrār al-Shahāda*, *Rasā'il dar Jawāb-i Suleymān Khān Afshār*, *Dalīl al-Mutaḥayyarīn*, *Risāla-yi Ḥujjat-i Bāligh*i, *Maqāmāt al-ʿĀrifīn*, and *Waṣā'ṭ-i Āqa Muḥammad Sharīf Kermānī*, contain similar themes to those of Aḥsā'ī. *Walī* is the owner of the column of light (*ʿamūd al-noor/ ʿamūd min al-noor*) through which he sees the lives of people (Rashtī 1421 H/2001, vol. 1, p. 229). He is also a star, indicating His plans and power for His creatures in the same way that he is the bearer of His *mashīyya* and Divine light for His subjects (Rashtī 1421 H/2001, vol. 1, p. 233). Rashtī distinguishes between two kinds of Divine Majesty (*jalāl*): the majesty of power (*jalāl al-qudra*) and the majesty of greatness (*jalāl al-ʿaẓima*).[72] The latter exemplifies *shams*, which stands for the Prophet Muhammad and is higher than the former, which stands for the moon or the absolute *wilāya* of Ali. The moon (*qamar al-wilāya*) gains its light/ existence from the Sun (Rashtī 1421 H/2001, vol. 1, p. 248 & 250–253 & 385–387).

Constructed on the covenant of *wilāya* is a house (*bayt*) which has four columns, each stands for (the acceptance of/testimony upon) His Divinity (*rubūbīya*, also *rubūbīyat*), the Prophet Muhammad's *nubuwwa*, Ali's *wilāya*, and closeness and affinity with His friends and enmity with His enemies, respectively (Rashtī 1421 H/2001, vol. 2, p. 108 & Rashtī, *Risālat al-Ḥujjat al-Bāligha*, n.d.c, p. 73). Each of these levels accounts for one station of gnosis, and the last one, which is the gnosis of the faith of *Shīʿīsm*, indicates the office of the specific vicegerency of the Hidden *imām* (Ibid., p. 91ff). In terms of the theory of the Fourth Pillar, Rashtī argues that in addition to the rightly guided ones (*Rāshidūn*) and trustees (*umanā*), the *ʿulemā* preserve the Faith from deviation and are the sources of Divine knowledge. These visible towns are the signs of the path to the holy towns or the *imāms* (Ibid., p. 4). The gnosis to "the People of the Rightness" (*ahl al- ḥaqq*) (Ibid., p. 91) and their station is the Fourth Pillar of *Shaykhīsm*, which is the fourth station of gnosis (Ibid., pp. 73–74).

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter is indebted to the existing tradition of *Shaykhīsm*, although, despite the contribution of the abovementioned figures, the question of *wilāya* and its nexus to *nubuwwa* and imamate, and to the stations of gnosis, has not been studied adequately. For this reason, the chapter sought to study and analyze the main *Shaykhī* texts in order to grasp the intention of the authors by examining their conceptualizations of *wilāya*. This has directed the study to the following conclusions about the nature of *wilāya* and of the *imām*'s authority in the *Shaykhī* School:

The *Shaykhī* conceptualization of the notions of *wilāya*, *nubuwwa*, and imamate is a classic one with apparent equivalences within the doctrine of *wilāya* in the School of Mullā Ṣadrā (which will be studied in the next chapter), and from this perspective, the *Shaykhī* doctrine of *wilāya* is but the continuation of the philosophy of Ṣadrā. *Wilāya* is the inward of *nubuwwa* and its continuity, and furthermore, *wilāya* is the hiddenness of God, and hence, needs to be mediated through a gate. The office of the *rukn-i rābiʿ* was invented in order to create a bridge between *wilāya*—which, like Divinity, is unreachable by Man—and people. *Walī* (*imām*) has a face toward people and a face toward Deity and is regarded as the manifestation/theophany (*ẓuhūr*) of Him. The issues of manifestation and theophany are *Akbarīan* and display the continuity of this tradition in the *Shaykhī* School. *Walī* is also *Shāhid* (lit. witness) of God upon people; it is through His eyes that His subjects are watched over. *Shāhid,* as the esoteric version of intermediacy (Corbin 1391a, vol. 1, pp. 507–508), is *ḥujja* (proof), a sign for those who believe in the Day of Judgment and the one who testifies to people on behalf of God. Believers come to understand everything with the help of these *shuhadā* (pl. witnesses), since in the absence of them, no one is capable of understanding.

The concept of *ẓuhūr* is important in the *Shaykhī* School and needs closer attention. As Rafati rightly maintains, the concepts of *ẓuhūr*, *khātamīyya* (sealing), *Qāʾim*, and the Day of Judgment are given metaphorical interpretations in *Shaykhīsm*, and unlike the mainstream, which adheres to the belief that the advent of the *Qāʾim* will occur on the Day of Judgment, the *Shaykhīs* believe that the appearance, and not the advent, of the *Qāʾim* is the Day of Judgment (Rafati 1979, pp. 173–174). Without entering into the debate of the nature of the Day of Judgment, I briefly mention that the *Shaykhī ʿulemā* did not believe that the *imām*

lived in the *ghayb* (occultation) and would arrive from it, but that he lived among people and would appear as the Prophet Muhammad did (Rafati 1979, p. 175ff).

Imām (*walī*) will become apparent on the Day of Judgment and his appearance is Deity's manifestation, and since the office of *wilāya* has always represented the hiddenness of God, now, the person of *imām/walī/Qāʾim* will be regarded as His theophany. It will happen at the end of time, and when the *imām* appears, the boundary between man and God will be removed. Reminiscent of the idea of *waḥdat-i wujūd* of Ibn ʿArabī, in the *Shaykhī* doctrine of *ẓuhūr*, the unification of God and man is postponed until the end of time, and hence, gains a utopian aura. As it will be observed in the next chapter, the *ḥakīms* of the Schools of Tehran and Qom developed similar arguments to conceptualize the office of *wilāya*, with two significant differences: the influence of *al-Shaykh al-Akbar* is undeniable in their work, and as such, they can be regarded as the true students of the School of Mullā Ṣadrā, whose metaphysics found a new dimension in their writings. These figures were not only inspired by him but also significantly added to the conceptualization of it. The other difference is that the *Shaykhī* emphasis on eschatology and messianism—as the continuation of esotericism—is absent in these two schools.

And last, the passive *Shaykhī* millenarianism bore no fruit toward actualizing the *Shaykhī* dreams, as this duty was assigned to Seyyed Ali Muḥammad Shīrāzī (*bāb*, 1235–1819/1266–1850) to declare himself. First, the special vicegerent of the *imām*; second, the *Qāʾim* (who abrogates the Islamic *sharīʿa* and whose appearance 'is' the day of Judgment); and finally, the new Prophet (another continuity with the *Shaykhī* tradition of the denial of the idea of *khātamīyya*/sealing). As has been observed, in *Shaykhīsm*, the Divine manifestation is postponed until the Day of Judgment, when the *imām* will appear. Shīrāzī, himself the materialized *Qāʾim*, invented another messianic figure whose personage was said to be the origin of all Divine names and attributes as well as Divine manifestation. The utopia of the *ẓuhūr*, having been postponed until the end of time, is once again postponed (2000 or more years) in the hands of Shīrāzī (Shīrāzī n.d., p. 62), until the messianic figure of "He whom God shall make manifest" (*Man-yuẓhiruhullāh*) (Smith 2000, pp. 180–181), the promised figure of all religions, will appear.

Notes

1. I refrain from using theological for *kalāmī* because these two are not always identical. It is very debatable to translate *kalām,* in the Islamic sense of the term, as theology.
2. The author is very much indebted to Professor Idris Samawi Hamid for his generous help on this chapter.
3. Risāla-yi Rashtīya is one of the treatises of *Jawāmiᶜ al-Kalim* (Comprehensive Words), vol. 8, pp. 309–456, in which Aḥsāʾī responds to the questions set forth by al-Mollā ᶜAlī ibn al-Mīrzā Khān al-Jīlānī al-Rashtī. Jīlānī's main concern was Sufism and its relevance to the Shaykhī creeds.
4. *Shaykhīya* or *Kashfīya*; the appellation is due to the fact that *kashf* or *mukāshifa* (the 'unveiling' of inner meanings) plays an important role in this school of thought. It is also a point of difference between *Shaykhīsm* and other schools, though the adjectives of *Shaykhī/Shaykhīsm* derive from the title of Shaykh Aḥmad Aḥsāʾī.

   Seyyed Kāẓim Rashtī, Aḥsāʾī's successor in *Dalīl al-Mutaḥayyarīn*, explains how one should understand *Kashfīya* in contrast to *Bālāsarī*, which refers to the rest of *Shīᶜas.* In the Qajar period, *Bālāsarī* vs. *Pāyīnsarī* explained the notorious dispute between *Shaykhīs* and non-*Shaykhīs* in Iran and Ottoman Iraq. Since the former used to pray beneath the tomb of *Imām* al-Hossein in Karbala in order to show its extreme respect and love for him, they have been called *Pāyīnsarī*, literally those who stand beneath the *Imāms.* For Rashtī's explanation, see: Seyyed Kāẓim Rashtī, *Dalīl al-Mutaḥayyarīn,* n.d.a, (n.p.), p. 3 onward. Rashtī claims that this name is chosen by God in the world of *al-dharr* and refers to believers who, by choosing to leave the void path, walk on the righteous path (Rashtī, n.d.a, p. 17). In this work, I use the terms the *Shaykhī School/ ᶜulemā* as they are the preferred terms used by the *Shaykhīs* themselves and primarily refer to a theological school of thought which came to find practical and sociological implications as well. Vahid Rafati has discussed the appellation of these terms as well as their implications in his PhD thesis. See: Vahid Rafati, Op.cit, 1979, pp. 47–48.
5. The year of his death is controversial. In *al-Abrār*, http://www.alabrar.info/, which belongs to the *Kermānī Shaykhīsm*, the date of his death is mentioned as 1241 H/1826. Also, in *Rayḥānat al-Adab* there exist four years (1241, 42, 43, 44) as the year of his death.

   Mīrzā Muḥammad ᶜAlī Mudarris Tabrīzī, *Rayḥānat al-Adab fi Tarājim al-Maᶜrūfīn bil Kūnyata aw Laqab* (Biographical Evaluation of the People of Epithet and Title), vol. 1, 3rd edition, 1369 (Tehran: Khayyām), p. 81.

6. Aḥsāʾī is marked by multiple travels all over the *Shīʿa* world. He left his village for the *Shīʿa* shrine cities of Karbala and Najaf at the age of twenty. He settled there until a plague swept these cities. He went back home for a while, and for a second time, left al-Ahsa for Iraq in 1212 H/1797. After staying in Basra briefly, he left Iraq for Iran in order to visit the holy shrine of the eighth *Imām* in Mashhad. En route to Khorasan, he stayed in Yazd, where he was warmly welcomed by authorities, locals, and *ʿulemā*. He left Yazd for Mashhad, and after staying there for a while, returned to Yazd. Apparently, his stay in Yazd was a source of benefit and blessing for him and the city too. As his reputation increased, not only local officials and *ʿulemā* but Fatḥ ʿAlī Shah Qajar (d. 1249 H/1834) were willing to meet him. He accepted the invitation of the Shah, left Yazd for the capital, and stayed there for a short time. In Tehran, he engaged in dialogue with the Shah because he had composed *a-Rasālat ul-Sulṭānīya* (Majestic Treatise) as an answer to the Majesty's questions. The treatise is accessible here: *Al-Jawāmiʿ al-Kalim,* nine volumes, 1430 H (Basra: Al-ghadīr Publication), vol. 5, pp. 145–160. He also wrote another treatise as an answer to the questions put forward by the Shah, called *a-Rasālat ul-Khāqānīya* (the Treatise of the Great Khān), which was the title of the second Shah of the Qajar dynasty. In 1234 H/1818, after returning to Yazd, he started writing, teaching, training, and initiating students and disciples, as well as answering numerous questions presented to him from different places and authorities. On his way back to Iraq, he resided in Kermanshah, next to the borderland of the Ottoman territory, where he was warmly welcomed by Prince Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrza Dawlatshāh, the son of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shah and the governor of the city (Aḥsāʾī, 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, pp. 14–18). Aḥsāʾī's reputation was damaged by the excommunication *fatwā* which was issued against his ideas on corporal resurrection by Mullā Muḥammad Taqī Baraghānī (d. 1263 H/1846) known as 'the third martyr'. He was therefore compelled to return to the shrine cities. Here, for the second time and due to his ideas in the book *Sharḥ al-Zīyārat* about *Imām* Ali and his *wilāyat al-takwīnīya*, he left Iraq for Medina, where he passed away and was buried in the cemetery of al-Baqīʿ (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, p. 19). In fact, and unlike what is mentioned in his book, the main reason for his departure from Iran was not his ideas on *Imām* Ali's *wilāya*, but rather his opinion on the Hidden *Imām* as lives in the realm of *hūrqalyā* and specifically his denial of the physical resurrection. Regarding Baraghānī's excommunication *fatwā*, Samawi believes that "the spark ignited" by him and his associates "inexorably led to a polarization within the scholastic establishment between the supporters of Shaykh Aḥmad and his detractors" (Samawi, unpublished article, p. 16).

7. One of the most important texts is *The Dawn-Breakers*, which is the English version of the Arabic *Maṭāliʿ al-Anwār*, having been documented by Nabīl Zarandī and translated into English by the late Guardian of the Cause of God (*Walī-ya Amr-i llāh*), Shoghi Effendi. In this book, Nabīl has distorted the *Shaykhī* chronicles in order to emphasize the emergence of *Bābīsm*. In this text, events, places, and figures are, at times, reduced or promoted to help the reader get familiar with the *Bābī* cause.

   Mullā Muḥammad (Nabīl) Zarandī, *Maṭāliʿ al-Anwār (Tārīkh-i Nabīl)*, n.d. (n.p.). And the English translation is:

   Mullā Muḥammad (Nabīl) Zarandī, *The Dawn-Breakers: Nabīl's Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahāʾī Revelation,* translated into English and edited by Shoghi Effendi, 1970 (Wilmette, Illinois, USA: Bahāʾī Publishing Trust).
8. D. M. MacEoin, *Aḥsāʾī, Shaikh Aḥmad,* Encyclopaedia *Iranica*, vol. I, Fasc. 7, pp. 674–679. & Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn Ibrāhīmī, *Aḥsāʾī, Dāʾyratu-l-Maʿārif-i Buzurg-i Islāmī*, vol. 6, 1373 (Tehran) pp. 662–667. & Alessandro Bausani, *al-Aḥsāʾī*, Encyclopedia of Islam, Second Edition. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs (eds), 2016 (Brill Online).
9. D. M. MacEoin, *the Messiah of Shiraz*, 2009, Chapter two, pp. 59–105. & Idris Samawi Hamid, Ph.D. thesis, Op.cit, 1998, pp. 26–56, and Todd Lawson, *Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy in Twelver Shīʿīsm: Ahmad Al-Aḥsāʾī on Fayḍ Kāshānī, (the Risālat al-ʾilmīyya)*, in *Religion and Society in Qajar Iran*, Robert Gleave (Ed), 2005 (London & New York: Routledge), pp. 128–130.
10. This collection can be found here: http://www.alabrar.info/ On the Basis of Ibrāhīmī's biography, Henry Corbin has composed his *Maktab-i Shaykhī az Ḥikmat-i Ilāhī-ya Shīʿī* (L'ecole Shaykhie en Theologie Shi'ite), translation into Persian and introduction by Aḥmad Bahmanyār, 1346/1967 (n.p., Tābān Publication), pp. 14–42.
11. This book is mentioned as *Sharḥ* throughout this chapter.
12. Some sources, such as Idris Samawi's thesis, only mention the names of the three *Imāms*: the second, the fourth, and the fifth. The twelfth *Imām* is not mentioned at all.
13. Rafati, Op.cit, 1979.
14. Henri Corbin, in his *Maktab-i Shaykhī az Ḥikmat-i Ilāhī-ya Shīʿī,* claims that these *ījāzas* were not solely spiritual, but physical. He narrates a dream of the Tenth *imām* by Aḥsāʾī in which the *Imām* gave him a number of papers (actually 12 papers) containing the *ījāzas* from each of the twelve *Imāms.* Corbin, Op.cit, 1346 *Shamsī*, p. 22 & 24.
15. Such a controversy, as we saw in Chap. 2, was around the sources of knowledge of Ibn ʿArabī as well, and since the so-called 'esoteric knowledge' is a vast area with unclear boundaries and content, no one can admit

or disprove whether a certain scholar has received his *ʿilm* from Divine sources or not. Todd Lawson takes a different stance with MacEion and agrees with Corbin. He maintains that "Shaykh Aḥmad made it clear that the only religious authority he would submit to would be the *Imāms* themselves as opposed, say, to any *marjaʿ al-taqlīd* of the *Uṣūlīs*. This also implied that his own knowledge, thus derived directly from the Prophet and the *Imāms*, was qualitatively superior to that of others". Lawson, Op.cit, 2005a, p. 135.

16. Todd Lawson in the abovementioned article has elaborated on the nature of the relationship between Aḥsāʾī and Sufism in general, and Aḥsāʾī and Mullā Muḥsin Fayḍ Kāshānī in particular. As he certainly points out, "it would appear from everything we know of Aḥsāʾī's thought … and it is certainly not enough … that what others consider philosophical sophistication our author himself would view as irreligion, an abuse of the holy laws of intelligence". Lawson, Ibid., pp. 129ff.
17. Idris Samawi Hamid, *the Metaphysics and Cosmology of Process According to Shaykh Ahmad Ahsai*, PhD thesis, State University of New York, 1998.
18. William R. Newman in his article *the Occult and the Manifest among the Alchemists* has looked deeper into the issue. He distinguished between the alchemical theory of the occult and manifest, as opposed to Galeno-scholastic theory, and argues that the former, having originated in the Greek civilization of Hellenistic or Roman Imperial times, and passed through Islam and arrived finally in the Latin West via Jābir ibn Ḥayyān, is a striking example of the permutation of ideas by virtue of their transmission. The significant point is that the alchemical theory was radically different from the medical and scholastic literature on occult qualities, though it shared some of the same original sources. According to the alchemical theory, the occult qualities of a substance could become manifest because they were not by their very nature insensible, and that every material substance has a *bāṭin* and a *ẓāhir* (*occultum* and *manifestum* in Latin and interior and exterior) and they can invert literally. See:

    William R. Newman, *the Occult and the Manifest among the Alchemists*, in *Tradition, Transmission and Transformation*, F. Jamil Ragep, Sally Ragep, and Steven Livesey (eds), 1996 (Leiden, New York and Koln: E. J. Brill), pp. 173–198.
19. One can classify Aḥsāʾī's writings into two categories: the first category includes those commentaries, or independent texts and treatises, which are composed by a jurist and committed to the *Uṣūlī* tradition and its principles of writing and thinking, though trying to push it to its limits (Lawson 2005b, pp. 127ff). From a philosophical perspective, he was the true heir of some characters of "post-*Avicennan* philosophy in Eastern Islam, [especially having that] focused on the major part of his attention on the works"

of the philosophy of Mullā Ṣadrā and his school, "as the last major philosophical school predating him" (Samawi 1998, p. 41). In relation to his commentaries, I should say that the most prominent philosophers of the *Sadrīan* School are pilloried by him. In this regard, Mullā Ṣadrā's (1045 H/1640) *Sharḥ al-ʿArshīya* (the Commentary of the Wisdom of the Throne) and *al-Mashāʿir* (Intellects) (MacEion 2009, p. 72, 95), as well as his pupil and son-in-law's, Mullā Muḥsin Fayḍ Kāshānī (d. 1091 H/1680), are being criticized by him. His comments of Fayḍ include more than 2500 verses from his *Risālat al-ʿIlmīyya* (the Treatise on Knowledge) as well as other writings of Fayḍ (MacEion 2009, p. 72), though for the detailed list of his commentaries on his contemporary scholars, see MacEion 2009, pp. 72–73. On the other hand, he made huge efforts to integrate the *Shīʿa imāms'* teachings into this tradition (Samawi 1998, p. 40). It is from this perspective that he laid special stress on his dreams and visions of the *imāms*: Aḥsāʾī, through the very personal channel of dreams, is the recipient of the *imāms'* Divine knowledge, on one hand, and its transmitter into the existing philosophical and theological tradition, on the other. The second category embraces those writings that could be labeled as his esoteric/allegorical interpretations of some of *Qurʾānīc* verses, as well as central Islamic concepts such as imamate, *wilāya, nubuwwa*, creation, resurrection, and infallibility (*ʿiṣma*). Relevant to this, there are other materials explained by the 'methodology' of *jafr* and the science of the letters. *Sharḥ Khuṭbat al-Tuṭunjīya* by Seyyed Kāẓim Rashtī (though it is unfinished) is notable in this regard.

20. The *Khuṭbah* which is "only loosely and inadequately translated as is an Arabic sermon, discourse or oration ascribed to the first *Shīʿī Imām* Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib (d. 40 H/661). It is not found in the well-known compilation of around 400 sermons (and other materials) ascribed to *Imām* Ali entitled *Nahj al-Balāgha* compiled in about 400 H/1009–10 by Sharīf al-Raḍī ibn al-Hossein al-Mūsawī (d. 406 H/1015), or in other well-known collections of materials attributed to *Imām* Ali. The *Khuṭbah* has been infrequently published in the original, although it can be found, however, along with the allegedly Kufa delivered *Khuṭbat al-Bayān* also ascribed to *Imām* Ali in volume two of the *Ilzām al-Nāṣib fī Ithbāt al-Ḥujjat al-Ghāʾib* (the Commitment of the Constitute to Prove the Ḥujja), 5th ed., 1404/1984 (Beirut: Mawsūʿat al-Aʿlā) of *Ḥājj Shaykh* ʿAlī al-Yazdī al-Ḥāʾirī (d. 1333 H/ 1915). Very little studied and seldom commented upon in any language, the *Khuṭbah* is a challenging, magisterial oration containing important religious doctrines relating to *Shīʿa walāya* (on one level, *Imām* centered "Divine providence") and high imamology as well, for example, as important *Islamo*-biblical or *Isrāʿīlīyāt* themes or motifs". Stephen Lambden in: http://hurqalya.ucmerced.edu/node/296/, last accessed

02/04/2017. As Amir-Moezzi has argued, there is a great confusion regarding the title and text of the sermon, as it is reported by various authors (*Shīʿa* and Sunni) in different periods. The *Khuṭbah* is old, and a long version of it was already reported "in *Nuṣayrī* texts dating from the end of the third century AH" (Amir-Moezzi 2001, p. 121). Along with the abovementioned *ġhālī* source, the text is mentioned by "the *Ismāʾīlī* thinker and propagandist, Muʾayyad fil-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (d. 470 H/1077)" (Amir-Moezzi 2001, p. 121), as well as "the Twelver theosopher and traditionist Rajab al-Bursī (d. 814 H/1411)" (Amir-Moezzi 2001, p. 121) in his *Mashāriq*. Shaykh Kāẓim, like his predecessor Mullā Muḥsin Fayḍ Kāshānī in his *Kalimāt-i Maknūnah* (Hidden Words) and his successor ʿAlī Yazdī Ḥāʾirī in his *Ilzām al-Nāṣib fī Ithbāt al-Ḥujjat al-Ghāʾib*, uses the version of Bursī (Amir-Moezzi 2001, p. 122).

21. Perhaps, one of the most prominent differences between Gawhar and Kermānī was the latter's belief in a visible vicegerent who is not only accessible to believers but also carries all the responsibilities of the *imām*. Kermānī focuses on the necessity of the availability of *imām*, and since he is not reachable by ordinary people (*ʿawām*), there ought to be a *nāʾib*, who actually occupies the *imām*'s place. The theory of the Fourth Pillar resulted from such supposition (Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 4, p. 13ff). On the other hand, Gawhar maintains that the occultation of the *Imām* should be understood by the principle of facilitating *fayḍ* (*qāʿiday-i lutf*), which is well known in the *Shīʿa* theology. Therefore, Gawhar takes it for granted that a Hidden *Imām* is sensible, and his remoteness from his believers is not important. For more information, see: Mullā Mīrzā Ḥassan Gawhar, *Sharḥ Ḥayāt Arwāḥ* (the Commentary on the Life of Souls), 2nd edition, 1423 H/2002 (Kuwait: Jāmiʿay-i Imām Sadiq), pp. 570–581.
22. MacEion translates *rukn-i rābiʿ* as "the Fourth Support" (MacEion 2009, pp. 19ff).
23. He composed eight refutations on *Bābīsm*, two in Arabic and six in Persian. His successors, from his son, Muḥammad Khān Kermānī, to the last *Shaykhī* leader of his clan, Abdul Riḍā Ibrāhīmī, who was assassinated in Kerman in 1358 *shamsī*/1980, followed his path in getting themselves involved with the causes of *Bābīsm* and *Bahāʾīsm*. *Shaykhīsm* was accused of nurturing the *Bābī* movement, and it is understandable that by refuting it, they wanted to vindicate themselves of such an accusation. Kermānī has important treatise entitled *Khātama-yi Nāṣarīya* (the Seal of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shah) in which he attempts to make it clear for the Shah that he and his school have been always loyal, both to the monarchy and to Islam. *Khātama-yi Nāṣarīya*, 3rd edition, n.d. (Kerman: Saʿādat publication).
24. Farhad Daftary in his studies on *Ismāʿīlīsm* in the Qajar period explains how the combination of political power, economic benefit, and religious

ambition placed Ḥasan ʿAlī Shah, known as Āghā Khān I, forty-sixth *Ismāʿīlī Imām* of the *Nizārī Ismāʿīlīsm*, against the Shah of the time Muḥammad Shah, who himself had appointed Āghā Khān to the governorship of Kerman. As a result of the dismissal of his service, Āghā Khān resisted against the central government in Tehran and finally fled to Afghanistan and India. See: Farhad Daftary, *The Ismāʿīlīs; Their History and Doctrines*, 1990 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 435ff.

25. George Nathaniel Curzon (d. 1925), in his *Persia and the Persian Question*, called the Reuter Concession "The most complete and extraordinary surrender of the entire industrial resources of a kingdom into foreign hands that has ever been dreamed of", Vol. I, 1966 (London. Frank Cass and Co. Ltd). p. 480.
26. In general, up to the formation of the first messianic movement in the eighteenth century, there were three main courses of drives for modernization: the first one was led by Prince ʿAbbās Mīrzā, the unhappy heir and thus governor of Azerbaijan. His drive had striking military and administrative aspects limited to Azerbaijan and specifically to Tabriz. The second drive was more generalized and nationwide, started from the court in Tehran by Amīr Kabīr. His efforts, like those of ʿAbbās Mīrzā's, had been inspired by the *Tanẓīmāt* reforms in Turkey, but unlike ʿAbbās Mīrzā, he successfully won "the confidence of the heir apparent, the future Nāṣir al-Dīn Shah" (Abrahamian 1982, p. 53). The third phase was initiated by Nāṣir al-Dīn Shah himself after the assassination of his prime minister. But these "innovations", as Abrahamian has rightly noted, "instead of driving for rapid change, induced a slow drift toward change; instead of defending the state against external enemies, they were aimed at buttressing the court against internal opponents, and, instead of protecting the economy, they sought to tempt Western interests further into the Iranian economy" (Abrahamian 1982, pp. 54–55 & 2008, Chapter Two, pp. 34–62).
27. Addressing the modernization process, its effects on the social strata, and reactions to it, it is worthy of note that the *Shaykhī* leaders, and specifically those who founded the *Shaykhī* School of Kerman, brought to the surface their dissatisfaction with the West in general and the thirst for economic and political change, which was common among the mentioned social classes in particular. They not only criticized the whole process of modernization but also took refuge in the most conservative interpretation of a role a *Shīʿī* leader could ever assume.
28. Abbas Amanat, Op.cit, 1989 (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press).
29. Rudi Matthee, *Persia in Crisis; Safawid Decline and the Fall of Isfahan*, 2012 (New York: I.B. Tauris & Cp. Ltd), *passim*.

30. Another sociologist of post-Revolutionary Iran has analyzed the causes of the formation of the Revolution of 1979 from this perspective. Saʿīd Ḥajjārīyān, *Mawʿūdīyat dar Inqilāb-i Rūssīyeh va Inqilāb-i Islāmī-i Iran* (Mahdīsm in the Iranian and Russian Revolutions), PhD thesis, Tehran University, 1382.
31. For a historical account of the 'demise' of *Akhbārīsm* in the nineteenth century after the treatment it had received in the hands of Āqā Muḥammad Bāqir al-Bihbahānī (d.1205/1791) and later engagements of some *Akhbārī* figures in anti-*Shaykhī* dispute, see Andrew Newman's article in:

    Andrew J. Newman, *Anti-Akhbārī Sentiments Among the Qajar ʿUlemā: the Case of Muḥammad Bāqir al-Khwānsārī* (d.1313/1895), in Religion and Society in *Qajar* Iran, Robert Gleave (Ed), 2005 (London & New York: Routledge Curzon), pp. 155–173.
32. Kazemi Moussavi observes that this "devotional attachment to the role of the Imams", which "soon developed a fixed and exclusive hierarchy of those bearing the knowledge of the Imams" (Kazemi Moussavi 1996, p. 129), was in fact a challenge of the *Shaykhīs* to a process which eventually bore fruit in the emergence of the office of *marjaʿīyyat* by the *Uṣūlī fuqahā*. He concludes that the consolidation of the *ʿulemā's* position was urged by the *Shaykhī* appearance on the scene (Ibid). There were many factors involved in making the office of *marjaʿīyyat,* and the *Shaykhī* challenge was just one of them. One the other hand, the dispute between *Uṣūlī* and *Akhbārī* provided the *Shaykhī ʿulemā* with an opportunity to take an independent position, as well as to present an alternative to both. Although, this could by itself be the subject of a research project.
33. It was Corbin who coined this term to explain the very characteristic of the *Shīʿa* theosophy. In his book entitled *Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth*, he indicates to this point by saying that "While prophetology is an essential element of Islamic religion as such, in *Shīʿa* theosophy it is divided into prophetology and imamology. Beside the prophetic function, which delivers the message of the literal Revelation, there is the initiatic function, which initiates into the hidden meanings of revelations, and which is the function of the *Imām*" (Corbin 1977, p. 58).
34. "Symbolic exegesis of the [*Qurʾān*] based on the claim that there is an inner (*bāṭinī*) meaning behind the external (*zāhirī*) text. By extension, it can be applied to other scriptures, as well as to rituals and the whole of nature. The theory and practice of this hermeneutical method was elaborated by *Ismāʿīlī* thinkers" (http://www.iis.ac.uk/glossary/b) of the eleventh century. According to these writers, "while the revelation (*tanzīl*) was delivered by the prophet to all people, the knowledge of its *taʾwīl* rests with the *imām*, the sole authoritative source of interpretation, and they considered that this *taʾwīl* should not be disclosed to the masses, lest it is

misunderstood" (http://www.iis.ac.uk/glossary/b). It was assumed that the esoteric and exoteric dimensions of the revelation and of the *Qurʾān* came together, but in later centuries, there appeared a number of sects/movements solely on the basis of the esoteric dimension of the *Qurʾān*, as well as that of the rituals and teachings. Bella Tendler in her article on the *Nūṣayrī* sect has argued that in the *Nūṣayrī* thought, knowledge only indicates esoteric knowledge and it is accessible through a properly conducted initiation. See:

Bella Tendler Krieger, Marriage, Birth, and Bāṭinī Taʾwīl: A Study of Nūṣayrī Initiation Based on the Kitāb al-Ḥāwī fī ʿIlm al-Fatāwī of Abū Saʿīd Maymūn al-Ṭabarānī, *Arabica* 58 (2011) pp. 53–75.

35. In Corbin's text, cosmic Sophianity refers to *Ḥaḍrat Fatima* because she is Sophia, "which is to say divine wisdom and power, embracing all he universes" (Corbin, Op.cit, 1977, p. 65), and that is why "the whole universe of the soul and the secret of the meanings given by the Soul is the very universe and secret of *Ḥaḍrat* Fatima" (Ibid).
36. *Sharḥ* is a commentary on *Zīyārat al-Jāmiʿa-t al-Kabīra*, written at the request of Seyyed Ḥassan ibn Seyyed Qāsim al-Ḥusseynī al-Ishkiwarī al-Jīlānī in 1230 H/1814. The *Zīyārat* itself is a prayer of visitation of the holy shrines of the *imāms*, related on the authority of *Imām* Ali ibn Muhammad Naqi, and is recorded by Ibn Bābwayh (Shaykh Ṣadūq) and Shaykh Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. al-Ḥassan al-Ṭūsī. *Sharḥ* is a collection of the most important theological problems in *Shīʿa* thought, and the *Zīyārat* itself "is a master work in expressing the status of the *imāms* and Shaykh Aḥmad explains its status as such" (Rafati 1979, p. 59). The prayer is famous among the *Shīʿa*, and many scholars have written commentaries on it (Rafati 1979, pp. 58–59).
37. Aḥsāʾī's explanation of the four stations of *awlīyā* is based on a famous *ḥadīth* by the sixth *Imām*, Jafar al-Sadiq, which is related by Abū Jaʿfar Moḥammad ibn al-Ḥassan ibn Farrukh al-Ṣaffār al-Qumī in *Basāʾir al-Darajāt fī Fazāʾil Āl-i Muḥammad* (Clear Proofs in the Sciences of the Household of the Prophet and on whatever is designated to them by God) in which the *Imām* says "*inna amrinā sirr o fī sirr, wa sirr o mustatar, wa sirr o la yafīdu illā sirr, wa sirr ʿalā sirr wa sirr o muqannā bil sirr*" (Al-Qumī 1404 H, p. 28).
38. There is no doubt that there is only one Divinity, but here Rashtī wants to say that the offices of *wilāya* and *nubuwwa* share Divine attributes and features and that is why they can be called *rubūbīyat al-thālithah* and *rubūbīyat al-thānīyah*, respectively.
39. For a *Shaykhī* explanation of this concept and its nexus to other *Shīʿa* concepts such as infallibility, the greater infallibility, absolute imamate, absolute *wilāya*, and polarity (*quṭbīyat*), see: Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 3, pp. 85–89, 138–141.

40. In the *Akbarīan* School, the presence of the perfect man is always regarded as all encompassing since, from an outward perspective, it is physical man, but inwardly he comprehends the realities of all things. See:

    William C. Chittick, The Five Divine Presences: From Al-Qūnawī to Al-Qayṣarī, *the Muslim World,* Vol 72, Issue 2, April 1982, pp. 107–128.
41. For a discussion of this pair, see:

    Michel Chodkiewicz, *Khātam al-Awlīyā: Nubuwwa wa Wilāya dar Āmūzayi Ibn ʿArabī* (Le Sceau des Saints: Prophetie et Saintete dans la Doctrine dbn ʿArabī) translation into Persian by Hossein Murīdī, 1389 (Tehran: Elhām) and

    Gerald T. Elmore, *Islamic Sainthood in The Fullness of Time: Ibn ʿArabī's Book of the Fabulous Gryphon*, 1999 (Leiden: Brill).
42. After him, his pupil Rashtī continued to pave the way his master had prepared for him earlier. *Sharḥ al-Khuṭbat al-Tuṭunjīya* is a good example.
43. As Aḥsā'ī maintains in the first volume of the *Sharḥ*, *imāms* are "the guardians of blessing", because it is through their being that He pours down rain on people and on the earth and grows plants and seeds in it (Aḥsā'ī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, pp. 75–76, vol. 2, pp. 157–166).
44. Aḥsā'ī also instructs his readers to respect *awlīyā* and to express absolute obedience toward them in order to gain good morality, a purified soul, and closeness to God (Aḥsā'ī 1420 H/1999, vol. 2, pp. 271–72). This idea is the idea of modulation or gradation of *wilāya*, which is founded on the gradation of being. Later on, he describes *wilāya* as the atonement of sins, equating it with water by which impurities will be removed (Aḥsā'ī 1420 H/1999, vol. 2, p. 278).
45. I should emphasize once again that *wilāya/walāya*, as a modulated status, has two forms: the first one, which is specified to the *imāms* and the Prophet, is a Divine gift (or grace) and is donated to them from God. It is He who takes initiative in choosing them for Himself as His friends (*awlīyā*) and it is on the basis of this affinity that the right of absolute authority is given to them. On the other hand, there is another form of *wilāya/walāya*, which starts from the side of the subject, from bottom to up and is dedicated to those who choose to take this journey to Him. But it is on the basis of the former that the notion of 'discharge' is proposed. It is also likely that the main difference between these two forms is the concept of infallibility, which is distinctively designated to the first group; the second group of *awlīyā* does not benefit from infallibility.
46. "The *imāms* are regarded to be the *qurā'*; whom are blessed by Allah".
47. Kazemi Moussavi rightly observes the incorporation of the "visible towns" into *Shaykhī* thought as a shift of emphasis from theology to "a structured hierarchy within which people are ranked according to their true knowledge and piety" (Kazemi Moussavi, Op.cit, 1996, p. 136), though he

makes a mistake when he discharges Aḥsā'ī of introducing the "visible towns" and the esoteric interpretation of the abovementioned verse, arguing that it was Rashtī who, for the first time, based his argument on this *Qur'ānīc* verse. As noted, Rashtī only followed his master on this issue, but he did give it a structuralized form.

48. As an example, Aḥsā'ī mentions this concept in the second volume of the *Sharḥ* only once. See: Aḥsā'ī 1420 H/1999, vol. 2, p. 217.
49. From this perspective, it seems that there is no difference between the idea of the Fourth Pillar and the notions of *tawallā* (friendship/closeness with God and the Prophet) and *tabarrā* (dissociating oneself from friendship with God's enemies). In the fourth volume of the *Irshād*, Kermānī explains that the Fourth Pillar is the most honorable and respected bond (*'urwa*) of the faith and even stands higher than praying, fasting, alms, *Ḥajj*, and *jihād* and that is why it ought to be obliged and observed (Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 4, p. 68). As Corbin has explained, the two principles of *tawallā* and *tabarrā* are to be the fundamentals (*uṣūl*) of *Shaykhīsm*, whilst, for the mainstream *Shī'īsm*, they are the *furū'* (branches) (Corbin 1346/1967, pp. 91–92).
50. Corbin has shed light on the office of the Fourth Pillar and the gnosis related to it. See: Corbin, 1346/1967, pp. 88–105.
51. *Al-dharr* literally means ant, and its appellation is that since *awlīyā* are the most honorable of all people and the rest of the creatures, everything else is worthless against them. Thus, the whole universe is as big as an ant in their eyes (Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 2, p. 19). *Al-dharr* is the earth of resurrection because it is believed that the world has been generated from *Al-dharr* and will return back to it (Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 2, p. 100), though Kermānī's explanation on the causes of the creation of the universe as well as on the *Al-dharr* is but superstition (Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 2, pp. 46–58).
52. Todd Lawson explains that in *Shaykhīsm*, the *imāms* are neither human nor Divine, "but a different order of being, a separate and distinct species" (Lawson 2005a, p. 138), and the perfect man is not the Prophet (contrary to Sufism), nor is the idea presented by the Prophet and the *imāms* (contrary to the common Twelver *Shī'a* understanding of the term), but rather is "the one who recognizes the spiritual and ontological dignity of these figures. It is Salman and not Muhammad who represents the prototype here" (Lawson 2005a, p. 138).
53. Aḥsā'ī uses the words *taṣāḥub* (to capture) or *taṣarruf* (to possess something/act of disposal) to explain infallibility. *Imāms* are being held or captured by infallibility, in the sense that they do nothing but good, they say nothing but right, etc. (Aḥsā'ī 1430 H, p. 19). By claiming that *Imāms* are not capable of doing sin, he discharges them from any human attribute and

upgrades them to a level which traditionally belongs to the angels. Kermānī's arguments are more fascinating. He not only, following his master, upgrades the *imāms* and the Prophet to the level of the angels, but also, by arguing that they have priority in creation, places them even higher than angels. In this regard, priority in creation results in the superiority in existence. Kermānī goes beyond and claims that their position is higher than that of the Holy Spirit/Holy Ghost, not only because they were created sooner but because they received His grace and His knowledge first. So, the Holy Spirit is their servant, which has been sent to serve and protect them (Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 3, p. 70, 138–139).

54. The Hidden *Imām* is also *ghawth*. It seems that *ghawth* is a modulated status too which starts from the Prophet and ends in the *Shaykhī ʿulemā* including Aḥsā'ī himself. *Ghawth* is a window through which God looks at people, and if the window is closed, there would be no relationship between God and His creatures.
55. The validity of the *ḥadīth* has been called under question by a number of scholars such as Mohsen Kadivar. He believes that it should be treated as an example of *khabar-i wāḥid* (singular tradition) as opposed to *khabar-i mutawāṭir* (traditions with multiple chains of transmissions) and as such could not be regarded as a basis for the fundamental principle of the faith. See: http://kadivar.com/?p=13649, last accessed 5/2/17.
56. Kermānī has famously termed "the Rescued Sect" and "the Honorable Sect" to refer to *Shaykhīsm*. (Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 1, p. 105, 107).
57. The phenomenon is called 'experiential religion' and being constructed on dreams, visions, and mediations. According to Cole, this feature came to make resemblance between *Shaykhīsm* and *Shīʿa* Sufism (Cole 1994, p. 15).
58. All of these events happen during *Jumād al-Awwal* and end in *Muḥarram*, and, as we know, the main *Shīʿa* events occurred during these months. Focusing on these months indicates that *Shīʿa* historiography, and not necessarily eschatology in the exact sense of the term, occupies a central place in this text. The Twelfth *Imām* appears in the tenth day of *Muḥarram* in Mecca, where he establishes a just government which will endure seventy years. In the meantime, the third *Imām* al-Hossein, along with all of his fellows in the battle of Karbala returns to this world. Mahdi is killed by a bearded woman on the seventieth day of his authority. His martyrdom is the beginning of the kingdom of al-Hossein, the repetition of the battle of Karbala, the murder of al-Hossein's killers by his hand, and finally his victory. Even *Imām* Ali is killed when he attempts to help his son. Al-Hossein is the ultimate winner of the event, since he is the *Qāʾim* and the founder of the just government. During his reign, which takes 50,000 years, his father, along with the twelfth *Imām* and the Prophet, return to this world again because each believer enjoys two deaths and two returns. The future return

of the Prophet, who is the last to return, is the beginning of the all-enduring just society and just government (Aḥsāʾī 1430h H, vol. 5, pp. 107–112).

59. The *Shaykhī* eschatology follows the typical paradigm of the *Shīʿa* eschatology. As Hussain has argued, the term al-Mahdi has always had a messianic and eschatological sense in *Shīʿīsm*, and a considerable body among imamite applied the title of al-Mahdi in its messianic sense to each *imām* after his death (Hussain 1982, pp. 14–15). Besides, the normative signs of the *ẓuhūr*, according to Hussain, are common among all *Shīʿa* sects, including the *Shaykhīs*. He mentioned five signs: the rise of *al-Sufyānī* in Syria and his domination for nine months, a rebel called *al-Yamānī* or *al-Qaḥṭānī* heading toward Mecca, the revolt of the Pure Soul (*Nafs-i Zakīyyah*) in Medina, the sinking of *al-Sufyānī* in the vicinity of Medina, and, finally, the outcry in the sky which announces the name of *al-Qāʾim al-Mahdī*. All of these happen within one year (Hussain 1982, pp. 116–117).

60. Aḥsāʾī's ideas on *hūrqalyā* are considered in the following texts:

Risāla fi al-Maʿād-i Jismanī (Treatise on Corporal Resurrection) in *Javāmiʿ al-Kalim* (Comprehensive Words), 1430g H, vol. 5, pp. 525–533.

Risāla fi al-Bayān al-muṣannif fi al-Jism Wa al-Jasad (the Treatise on Body and Corpse) in *Javāmiʿ al-Kalim* (Comprehensive Words), 1430d H, vol. 5, pp. 560–561.

Kermānī has a lengthy debate on this concept and its relation to other concepts such as ascension (*miʿrāj*); see:

Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 1, pp. 128–140. Kermānī goes on by saying that the Prophet and the *Imāms*' bodies "are the face (*wajh*) of God" (Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 1, p. 130).

Irshād al-ʿAwām, 1267 H/1850, vol. 2, pp. 70–95.

Irshād al-ʿAwām, 1267 H/1850, vol. 3, 180–181, where he openly enunciates believers of the close return of the *Imām*.

Risāla fī Javāb-i Baʿḍīʿ Ulemā fī Aḥvāl-i Barzakh wa al-Mulk-i Naghalah (the Response to the Questions of Some Scholars on Ithmus and the Realm of Transition) in *Jawāmiʿ al-Kalim* (Comprehensive Words), 1430e H, vol. 5, pp. 564–566.

Risāla-ya Rashtīyah (Treatise on Rashtī) in *Jawāmiʿ al-Kalim*, 1430c H, vol. 8. pp. 309–457.

61. In his research on the *Shaykhī* doctrines, Vahid Rafati, quoting Muḥammad Muʿīn, shows that the term is derived from the Hebrew term *habal qarnim*, and according to this derivation, the correct pronunciation should be *havarqalyā* and not *hūrqalyā*, as it is common. Aḥsāʾī was not the first to use this term, and according to Muʿīn, the term was first used by Shihāb al-Dīn Yaḥyā ibn Ḥabash Suhrewardī, known as *Shaykh al-Ishrāq* (d. 587 H/1191). See: Rafati, Op.cit, 1979, pp. 106–107. Also, Corbin, on the basis of Suhrewardī's understanding of the term, has set forth an interesting analysis of it. See: Corbin, Op.cit, 1391b, vol. 2, pp. 293–305 & pp. 308–317.

62. For *iqlīm-i hashtum* and its background in the Islamic thought, see: Henry Corbin, Op.cit, 1977 (New Jersey: Princeton University Press), pp. 73–84 & Henry Corbin, Op.cit, 1994, pp. 1–12.
63. Noteworthy that dividing the earth into "seven climes" as well as "several other divisions" has a long history in Islam. For more information, see: Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Science and Civilization in Islam*, 1992 (New York: Barnes & Nobel Inc.), p. 106.
64. Corbin refers to one of the treatises of "the eminent Shaikh Sarkar Agha" (Abul Qāsim Khān Ibrāhīmī, the fifth successor of Aḥsāʾī), when he says that "one must become an inhabitant of the Earth of *Hūrqalyā*, a *hūrqalyāvī*". See: Ibrāhīmī, Op.cit, n.d., p. 725. Corbin adds that by this statement, Ibrāhīmī wants to teach us that the expectation of the *Imām* and his return is not "an outward event to be expected sometime in the far distant future; it is an Event that here and now is taking place in souls and slowly progresses and matures there. … With this conceptualization of eschatology, we come to understand that the whole of history is 'seen in *hūrqalyā*'". See: Ibrāhīmī, Ibid, n.d., p. 723.
65. Aḥsāʾī's viewpoint in relation to *hūrqalyā*, resurrection, and his debate on the two sets of bodies are not clear and sometimes even paradoxical. For example, in his *Risāla fi al-Maʿād al-Jismānī* (Treatise on the Corporal Resurrection), Aḥsāʾī maintains that the second substance and corpus are temporal and belong to this world, while the first set is real and original. In the same text, however, he believes that the first set includes all the physical features, as it is additional and accidental, and the second substance and corpus are real (Aḥsāʾī 1430g H, vol. 5, pp. 525–533). For a better analysis, see: Yāsir Sālārī and Mehdī Afchangī, Hūrqalyā: Rūykardī Intighādī bi Shaykhīyah dar Taṭbīq-i Hūrqalyā bar ʿĀlam-i Mithāl (Hūrqalyā: A Critical Approach to Shaykhīsm and the Shaykhī Identification with the Realm of Ideas), *Research Journal of Islamic Philosophy and Theology of Shahid Beheshti University*, Summer 1391 *shamsī*/2012, 138–161.
66. Aḥsāʾī has described the categories of *jism*, *jasad*, and resurrection in: *Jawāmiʿ al-Kalim*, 1430c H, vol. 8, pp. 375–380, pp. 421–426. Despite having a long history in Islamic philosophy (Corbin 1391b, Vol. 2, 293–305, 308–317), the way *hūrqalyā* is understood and functions as the abode of the living *Imām* is new and innovative. The world of *hūrqalyā* is related to categories of *ajsād/ajsām* and of *taʾwīl*, which is "the hermeneutics of symbols, the exegesis, the bringing out of hidden spiritual meaning" (Corbin 1977, p. 53). Without *hūrqalyā*, there would be no possibility of *taʾwīl* and of "transmuting the material data of external history into symbols, to penetrate to the inner meaning" (Corbin 1977, p. 53).
67. For a later discussion on this category, see Kermānī 1267 H/1850, vol. 4, pp. 70–73.

68. Avicenna's *Risālayi Shāqūl* was published years ago by Rawzanih Publication in Tehran. *Kashkūl,* which is in fact a collection (*jung*) of Shaykh Bahā'ī's favorite poems and prose, was also published many years ago in Tehran.
69. Seyyed Kāẓim wrote *Khuṭba* from *jafr* perspective, a methodology by which he analyzes the position of the Prophet, his daughter, and the whole *Nabawī* household. He especially laid stress on the first *Imām*. This book is published by Lajna-yi Nashr wa Tawzī', Imām Ṣādiq University, Basra, 1421 H/2001.
70. It seems that compared to the first two *Shaykhī* leaders, Kermānī wrote less about this, as there are few examples of the occult sciences in his writings, and unlike Aḥsā'ī or Rashtī, he does not develop argument for the conceptualization of the occult sciences. For example, in the first volume of *Irshād*, he states that these sciences were to help *awlīyā* and the prophets to control the world; therefore, others should be banned from accessibility to them. These sciences are all stepping out of tradition and have miraculous effects. Kermānī, Op.cit, 1267 H/1850, vol. 1, pp. 128–129. There result two conclusions: first of all, he redefines the term 'miracle' by believing that it is not solely a 'Divine gift' donated to the chosen ones but a very human attribute which is being achieved by training, instruction, and practice. Thus, everyone can learn and perform it. The second point is that Kermānī uses *awlīyā* in the broad sense of the term to include himself in it, and therefore being eligible to practice these sciences.
71. According to the Aḥsā'ī, *sīmīyā* is the science of subjugation of triple angels and their adherents; since they are responsible for making images, imaginations, and ideas which are emanating down from sky to man. *Līmīyā* is an art of *ṭālismān* and is concerned with the transformation of evil forces to good forces. *Rīmīyā* is practiced to create illusions of what is seemingly impossible or supernatural by using natural means. *Hīmīyā* is the science of stellar evolution, subjugation of stars and other creatures related to them, and are called the science of subjugations. *Kīmīyā* is the science that teaches how to transform and convert metals and minerals and is called the science of elixir. The interesting point is that Aḥsā'ī, in this text, disapproves witchcraft and other similar magic performances, arguing that all this is forbidden by God, as it is close to polytheism, which is supposed to be bigger and more dangerous than blasphemy. But in the same text, he instructs his believers how to practice austerity to get to this knowledge and perform the occult sciences. Aḥsā'ī, 1430f H, vol. 1, pp. 356–369.
72. This distinction is reminiscent of Najm al-Dīn al-Rāzī's distinction between the 'theophanies or apparitions of Divine lights': those of the Lights of Majesty and the Lights of Beauty. These two refer to the Divine beings, though each manifests one dimension of it. Corbin, Op.cit, 1994, pp. 103–104. Here, power and greatness indicate His Essence, though one of them symbolizes *shams* and another one symbolizes *qamar*.

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CHAPTER 4

The Schools of Tehran and Qum and *Wilāya*

In line with previous chapters, the subject matter of the present chapter is the study and critical analysis of the concept of *wilāya* in Mullā Ṣadrā's legacy, having been flourished in the School of Tehran in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Although the School of Isfahan[1]—the inheritor of the doctrine of *al-ḥikmat al-muta'ālīya*—is regarded as the cultivator of the School of Tehran (exemplified in the famous four *ḥakīms* of Tehran), this new School should be treated as an independent intellectual circle. Moreover, the School of Tehran had a particular distinction; that it was in Tehran "where the Islamic philosophical tradition in Persia encountered Western thought for the first time" (Nasr 2006, p. 236), and from this perspective, a number of *risālas* (apologia) written as responses to the Christian priest Henry Martyn (d. 1224 H/1812), should be regarded as signs of this encounter.[2] However, one more century was needed for 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī's *Uṣūl-i Falsafah wa Ravish-i Ri'ālīsm* (the Principles of Philosophy and Realism) to be published.[3]

The members of the School of Tehran included Mullā 'Abdullāh Zunūzī (d. 1254 H/1838) and his son Āqā 'Alī Mudarris Tehrānī (d. 1307 H/1889), Mīrzā Abul Ḥassan Jilvih (originally Mīrzā Abul Ḥassan Ṭabāṭabā'ī Zavāreyī Nā'īnī) (d. 1314 H/1896), and Āqā Muḥammad Riḍā Qumshi'ī (d. 1306 H/1888). There were two other key figures—or to be more precise, transmitters of, and commentators on the Mullā Ṣadrā tradition—who, because of their geographical distance from Tehran, cannot be

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regarded as the members of the School of Tehran, but as will be observed in the present chapter, heavily influenced the School. These two, namely Mullā ʿAlī Nūrī (d. 1246 H/1830), who was a resident of Isfahan and not Tehran, and Mullā Hādī Sabzivārī (d. 1289 H/1873)—the most influential figure of the *Ṣadrīan ḥikmat* and a native and resident of Sabzivar—contributed to the *Ṣadrīan* legacy in different ways, such as training students, teaching and disseminating the *ḥikmat* in Persia and Persianate societies, and commenting and glossing on the late Mullā Ṣadrā's writings.

Their roles, however, were not merely glossing or commenting, but rather reviving and disseminating *ḥikmat*,[4] *ʿirfān*, and in some cases, the Occult in Persia and beyond. If philosophical activities are stretched further to the early twentieth century, individuals such as ʿAllāmah Muḥammad Hossein Ṭabāṭabāʾī (d. 1360 H/1981) are encountered, whose works are the culmination of a type of philosophical activity which is the marriage of *ʿirfān* and *al-ḥikmat al-mutaʿālīya*. It is important to study the intellectual biography of the founding fathers of the School of Tehran as it demonstrates an uninterrupted (or rather, construction of a continuous) tradition, dating back directly to renowned figures of the Safawid period as well as their attachment to the legacy of Mullā Ṣadrā.

One can find different figures, such as Āqā Muḥammad Bīdābādī (d. 1197 H/1783), Mīrzā Abul Qāsim Mudarris Khātūnābādī (d. 1212 H/1797), Seyyed Ṣadr al-Dīn Dizfūlī (d. 1258 H/1842), Seyyed Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad Nayrīzī (d. 1173 H/1760), and many others who taught and practiced *ḥikmat*, *ʿirfān*, and in some cases, the Occult in Persia over two centuries until the School of Tehran was formed in 1237 H/1821.[5] As Sajjad Rizvi has pointed out, "the twin pillars of the *ḥikmat* tradition in the Qajar period became precisely *ishrāqī* philosophy and a more theoretically minded approach to mystical speculation within the paradigm of 'philosophy as a way of life'" (Rizvi forthcoming, p. 3). This synthesis continued until the early twentieth century, and as will be shown, was manifested in the works and style of ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī.

This chapter begins with an account of the historical context of the intellectual developments of the late Safawid to the early Qajar period. Then, by examining key texts of the *ḥakīms* of the School of Tehran, the conceptualizations of *wilāya*, imamate, and *nubuwwa*, will be studied and critically analyzed. It will be observed how *wilāya* finds a new dimension and becomes connected to ontology.[6] Finally, it will be argued that despite noticeable differences between the School of Tehran and its contemporary school, *Shaykhīsm*, both dealt with concepts such as *wilāya*, *wilāyat*

al-takwīnīya, imamate, and *nubuwwa* in the same manner. It is also important to note that they are dialectically related; as they are all, including *ʿirfān*, regarded as ways of reading and digesting Mullā Ṣadrā, even where they are anxious about rejecting his influence. It is worth noting that one vehicle was through commentary on particular types of text and especially some specific *ḥadīth*. In terms of the research questions, the author seeks to study the innovations of the *ḥakīms* of the two Schools of Tehran and Qum in the conceptualization of *wilāya* (if they had any), as well as the influence of Ibn ʿArabī on these two schools.

4.1 Historical Background

At the time when the *Shaykhī* School was being shaped in the hands of Shaykh Aḥmad al-Aḥsāʾī and his successors in the mid-nineteenth century, the inheritors of the philosophical school of Mullā Ṣadrā were occupied with reviving and disseminating the teachings of their Safawid master. The relative peace and tranquility brought about by the court, as well as the personal interest of the Qajar rulers in philosophical activities, bore fruit in the revival and rebirth of *ḥikmat* in the new capital of Tehran. Isfahan preserved its status, both as the matrix of the School and "a vibrant philosophical center" (Nasr 2006, p. 236), but the establishment of a number of the new *madrasas* in Tehran by notables or courtiers attracted scholars to the capital. The *Marwī* School, which was built in Tehran by Muḥammad Khān Marwī in 1232 H/1821, is one of these new institutions. As Muḥammad Javād Mahdawī Nizhād has discussed, in the thirteenth/nineteenth century, there have been built numerous *masjid-madrasa* all over the country, mainly by courtiers or local governors, and since these buildings were dual-purpose buildings, both mosque and school, one can imagine that the curriculum has been set up to cover the classic religious courses.[7]

This patronage system was actually a well-established mode of interaction between the court and scholars, as courts either supported *madrasas* financially or encouraged figures to write about a particular subject. For example, most of the refutations on Henry Martyn's polemic on Islam and the *Qurʾān* were written at the request of the court. Mullā ʿAlī Nūrī began to write his *Radd-i Pādrī* against Martyn at the request of the Shah and ʿAbbās Mīrzā. At the beginning of Nūrī's book, an entire page is dedicated to Fatḥ ʿAlī Shah and the author praises him profusely for the generous support he provided for the *Muḥammedan* Faith (Nūrī n.d.-b, p. 4).[8]

In fact, it was Fatḥ ʿAlī Shah who invited Nūrī to emigrate from Isfahan to Tehran to teach *ḥikmat* there. The Shah, according to Nasr, wanted Nūrī "to become the central *mudarris* of the newly built school" of Marwī (Nasr 2006, p. 237). Nūrī declined the Shah's offer, but in his stead, sent one of his prominent students, Mullā ʿAbdullāh Zunūzī, whose circles of teaching were regarded as the mark of the transference of intellectual activity from Isfahan to Tehran. Zuhair Ismāʿīl emphasizes the four *madrasas* of *Sipahsālār*, *Ṣadr*, *Dār al-shifā*, and *ʿAbdullāh Khān* as the host of "one of the four founding *ḥakīms* and thereafter their students. Abu-l-Ḥassan Jilvih taught at *Dār al-shifā*; Hossein Sabzivārī taught at *ʿAbdullāh Khān*; Qumshiʾī taught at *Ṣadr*, and ʿAlī Mudarris Zunūzī taught at the *Sipahsālār*" (Ismāʿīl 2014, p. 105). Before turning attention to the philosophical activities of the School, the conceptualizations of *wilāya*, *nubuwwa* and imamate in Mullā Ṣadrā's thought should be discussed briefly. Mullā Ṣadrā is highlighted in order to show the intellectual lineage of his successors, including Nūrī, who came to revive the School of Isfahan.

Mullā Ṣadrā's entire body of work revolves around the elucidation of what is called by Henry Corbin 'the prophetic philosophy'. Although this philosophy accepts the idea of sealing, it also maintains that "the final phase of prophecy (*nubuwwa*) was the initial phase of a new cycle, the cycle of the *walāyah* or imamate. In other words, the necessary complement of prophetology is imamology, and the most direct expression of imamology is the *walayah*" (Corbin n.d. p. 26). The idea of *wilāya* contains the notion of spiritual guidance which is personified in the twelve immune figures of the household of the Prophet. Thus, *wilāya* is a twofold notion: the first one indicates the notion of friendship with God, and the second refers to the functions of *imām* as the spiritual leader (*quṭb*) of the community of believers (Corbin n.d. pp. 26–27).

The office of *wilāya*, however, requires by necessity the esoteric knowledge of the *imāms,* who themselves are the representatives of the esoteric aspect of the Faith. As Corbin stresses, it is only the Faith of *Shīʿīsm* which encompasses both the esoteric (*ḥaqīqa*) and the exoteric (*sharīʿa*) aspects of Islam, and as such is regarded as the manifestation of the unity of the message of Islam as well as the gnosis of it (Corbin n.d. p. 27). In the light of such understanding, prophetology and imamology are inseparable from each other, and "the most direct expression of imamology is the *walayah*" (Corbin n.d. p. 26) which is at the core of the function of *ḥujja*, whose presence and status testify the continuity of the message of Islam after the

death of the Prophet. *Ḥujja* has two main characteristics: it is both pre-existent, taking us back to the gnostic theme of the celestial Anthropos, and transcendent (Corbin n.d. p. 40).

Along with *wilāya*, prophetic philosophy has other components, such as esotericism, which not only defend the idea of the esoteric knowledge of the *imāms* as the continuity of the Prophet's revelation, but also perpetuate the thought that their teachings come to shape the heart of Islam and *Shīʿīsm* (Corbin n.d. pp. 36–38). Since the Prophet's revelation is crystallized in the Book, and "the knowledge of such a Book cannot be grasped by the norms of ordinary philosophy", then it should be "taken back (*taʾwīl*)" to its true meaning by the *imāms* (Corbin n.d. p. 45). *Imām* is the owner of the meaning of the Book and the teaching of Islam and hence is called *qayyim bil kitāb* or *qayyim al Qurʾān*.[9] As will be examined, these notions are repeated over and over again in *Ṣadrīan* texts of the Safawid and post-Safawid eras. It is worth remembering that it is not only the Book that crystallizes "the gnosiology of a prophetic philosophy", but also the collections of the *aḥādīth* of the *imāms* which contain such a gnosis (*maʿrifa*, also *maʿrifat*), and it is here that the three "differing modes of higher gnosis, hierognosis" of *waḥy* (revelation), of *kashf* (unveiling), and of *ilhām* (inspiration), are interrelated (Corbin n.d. pp. 51–53).

Hierognosis has a pair which is hierohistory. Hierohistory signifies that in such a context history no longer "consists in the observation, recording or critique of empirical facts, but derives from a mode of perception that goes beyond the materiality of empirical facts" (Corbin n.d. p. 61). Hierohistory (also meta-history and the sacred history), is a realm to which the *imāms* and the Prophet belong, and "the complete cycle" of such a history—"the prophetic periods and the post-prophetic cycle of the imamate or *walayah* – forms a structure which is not that of some evolutionary process, but which takes us back to the origin", to the Covenant of *Wilāya* (Corbin n.d. p. 62). On the other hand, if the cycle of *wilāya* endures perpetually, then there should be a living *imām* who is the true and the last heir of the office of the imamate, "with whom the pleroma of … [it] is fulfilled". Along with this *kalāmī* understanding, there is also an *ʿirfānī* reading in which the last *imām* is regarded as the seal of *wilāya*,[10] whose status is reminiscent of that of the sealing of prophecy of the Prophet. The notion of the Hidden *imām* is intimately connected to an eschatology whose elements, events and actors are all perceived according to the suprasensible world (Corbin n.d. pp. 68–74).

Both Mullā Ṣadrā's writings and his legacy have much to say about the prophetic philosophy and its components, and are manifested in different styles such as original texts, glosses, comments on a number of *Shīʿa* treasuries of their predecessors, critics, and poetics. Mullā Ṣadrā himself was a prolific writer, and wrote both independent books and treatises, and glossed and commented on several *Shīʿa* books such as Kulaynī's *Uṣūl al-Kāfī*. His glosses on Kulaynī's book manifest the typical understanding of the office of *wilāya*, *nubuwwa*, and imamate in the Safawid era. As mentioned in the previous chapter, it was during this time that the "exaggerated beliefs" about the status of the *imāms* were developed, and Mullā Ṣadrā, among many others, made ample contributions to notions such as *wilāyat al-takwīnīya*, which is "the existential and absolute cosmic authority of the *Imāms*" (Rizvi 2013, p. 2). Regarding the philosophy of *nubuwwa*, Ṣadrā's arguments are backed by a combination of rational approach and *ʿirfānī* perspective and terminology. He argues in favor of the necessity of the existence of a number of intermediaries between God and His people. Prophets—intermediaries—are His proof or *ḥujja*, and if the world needs to remain and people are to be completed, there should be prophets to guide them on the right way (Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī 1366 *shamsī*, vol. 2, pp. 391–395).

In addition to the rational method that he used to study *nubuwwa*, and from a mystical perspective (obviously Ibn ʿArabī's School), Ṣadrā argues that *nabī* is the holder of the office of *khilāfat al-kubrā* and is the manifestation of the comprehensive name (*ism al-jāmiʿ* or *Allah*), by which *fayḍ* (emanation) and help emanate from God. The first emanation is called the *Muḥammedan* Reality which is a double-faceted status, inward and outward, each side having the absolute power to act upon the cosmos. Thus, it is by the *Muḥammedan* Reality that Deity manifests Himself to the cosmos (Ibid., vol. 2, p. 461).

Ṣadrā retains the same perspective on the notions of imamate and *wilāya* which blend together philosophical method with *ʿirfānī* terminology. Narrating *imām* Ali's *ḥadīth* from a Sufi source, he states that the only way to know God and achieve true faith is to know *imām* Ali and his status (Ibid., vol. 2, p. 396, 510ff). Reminiscent of Shaykh Aḥmad Aḥsāʾī's debates on the four stations of gnosis, Mullā Ṣadrā transmits the same *ḥadīth* to develop his argument on imamate: the second station—*maqām al-maʿānī*, or *sirr al-sirr*—"is the reality of the *imāms* insofar as they represent and manifest God in the totality of his essence and his

names" (Aḥsāʾī 1420 H/1999, vol. 1, pp. 42–50). According to Ṣadrā, since knowledge of the pure Essence of God is incomprehensible and therefore outside of the realm of human understanding, the only way to know Him is to know those who are acquainted with Him (*ʿārifūn bi l-llah*). Prophets and His close friends (*awlīyā*) are *ʿārifūn* to His knowledge and His revelation (Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī 1366 *shamsī*, vol. 2, pp. 396–97).

Imām is *qayyim bil kitāb* or *qayyim al-Qurʾān*, which means that he is the only one who knows both the interpretation of the clear passages and also has the ability to clarify the passages in the book which may be unclear. *Imām* is the preserver of the secrets of *āyāt* (verses of the Book),[11] and the light of His indisputable evidence. He is the *ḥujja* after the Prophet and it is incumbent on followers to obey him (Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī 1366 *shamsī*, vol. 2, p. 396ff). In a comparison with human physical characteristics, Ṣadrā argues that as each of the organs of a human body requires an *imām*, whose function is to guide the particular organ on the righteous way, the world also needs someone who demonstrates the difference between the right and wrong. *Imām*—deputy or *khalīfa* of God—is the one who calls people to goodness and justice and it is incumbent for people to obey him, because his obedience is submission to God (Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī 1366 *shamsī*, vol. 2, p. 404).

Imamate and *nubuwwa* are identical and indicate the same and unified reality (Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, vol. 2, p. 500), though *nubuwwa* has a hidden or inward side which is *wilāya*. *Wilāya* will never be interrupted, and it is regarded as the continuity of Divine revelation which comes to an end by the coming of the last *nabī*, while closeness to God or *wilāya* continues to exist until the Day of Judgment (Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, vol. 2, p. 434). *Walī* does not receive revelation, but is connected to Deity by inspiration (Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī 1366 *shamsī*, vol. 2, p. 456). *Wilāya* has a higher status than *ʿaql* (intellect), because it is by the function of the light of *wilāya* that the light of intellect is shone (Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī 1366 *shamsī*, vol. 2, p. 479). *Walī/imām* is the Perfect Man and the true ruler of the Cosmos and it is impossible for any age to be deprived of *imām* (Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, vol. 2, p. 488).

In Mullā Ṣadrā's conceptualization of *wilāyat al-takwīnīya*, the *imāms* are *aʿrāf;* the superintendent and overseer of the Heaven and the Hell, those who see and know *ahl al-nār wa ahl al-janna* (people of the Heaven and of the Hell), and are informed of the status of people in both realms

(Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī 1366 *shamsī*, vol. 2, pp. 540–549). The office of *wilāya* requires that *walī* knows the realities of things as they are, and benefits those who are blind (Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī 1366 *shamsī*, vol. 2, p. 576). The *imāms* are the owners (*awlīyā*) of His cause and the treasurers of His secrets. The "treasurers," or the people of *ḥikmat*, according to Ṣadrā, are those who are able to memorize cognitive images. Metaphorically, the *imāms* are perceived to be the treasuries of His knowledge and are "intellectual substances and luminous essences" which are pure—free from impurity and pollution. Therefore, the *imāms* are intermediaries of His emanation and blessing to people, and they are His words (*kalimat al-llāh*), which never become annihilated or perish. They are pre-eternal essences and natures (Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī 1366 *shamsī*, vol. 2, pp. 616–618).

This brief introduction will hopefully help entry into discussion with the scholars of the School of Tehran, close examination of their texts, and study of their ideas to see how they understood and conceptualized *wilāya*. Regarding the study of the concept of *wilāya*, three questions will be asked: How does *Nūrī* reflect on *wilāya* and conceptualize it? By what method(s) does he approach this reflection? And, finally, has he added anything to the doctrines of Mullā Ṣadrā?

4.2 Mullā ʿAlī Nūrī

A native of Nur/Noor in Mazandaran in northern Iran, ʿAlī ibn Jamshīd Nūrī's educational background can be traced back to Mazandaran and Qazvin and later Isfahan. He studied *ḥikmat* with prominent figures such as Āqā Muḥammad Bīdābādī (d. 1197 H/1783) and Mīrzā Abul Qāsim Mudarris Khātūnābādī (d. 1212 H/1797) in Isfahan. Bīdābādī's circle has been famously known to have "mystical and spiritual practices alongside their *ʿirfānī* orientation in their study of metaphysics" (Rizvi forthcoming, p. 3 citing Kabūdarāhangī). To some extent, Bīdābādī's circle has also been influential in the *Shīʿa* cities of Iraq (Rizvi forthcoming, p. 3 citing *Rāʾid al-ʿIrfān*). Nūrī had other teachers, such as Mīrzā Abul Qāsim Mudarris Iṣfahānī (who taught him *ḥikmat* and *kalām* in Isfahan), and Mullā Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Gulpāyigānī (Suhā n.d. pp. 143–144). Through his teachers and mainly Bīdābādī, Nūrī associated himself with the prominent intellectual scholars of the post-Safawid era, experts in three branches of *ḥikmat* texts, in mysticism, and in some cases, in the Occult. Moreover, they have not only been teachers and masters of *ḥikmat* and mysticism, but rather practiced them (Rizvi forthcoming, pp. 3–6).

Nūrī had two skills that were common among Persian *ḥakīms* at that time: poetic taste and the art of calligraphy. Nūrī has commented on a number of Mullā Ṣadrā's texts, such as *Kitāb-i Ghaḍā wa Ghadar* (the Book of Fate and Determination), *ʿArshīya* (of the Throne), *Shawāhid al-Rubūbīya* (Divine Witnesses), *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb* (the Keys of the Unseen), and *Asrār ul-Āyāt* (the Mysteries of Verses). He also commented on Mīrdāmād's *Nibrās ul-Ḍīyā wa Tiswāʿ ul-Sawā* (the Lamp of Light and the Acceptance of the Rectitude) and glossed on Kulaynī's *Uṣūl al-Kāfī*. Nūrī has written an *ʿirfānī* text entitled *Ḥāshīya ʿalā Qurrat al-ʿUyūn* (Glosses on Solace of the Eyes) and commented on a number of *aḥādīth* and *āyahs* of the *Qurʾān*. He wrote a gloss on *Sharḥ Fawāʿid al-Ḥikamīya* (Commentary on the Theosophical Outcomes) of Shaykh Aḥmad Aḥsāʾī, and a refutation on Henry Martyn's work, entitling both as *Radd-i Pādrī* and *Burhān ul-Millah*. Over fifty years, he trained a number of students, among them Mullā ʿAbdullāh Zunūzī, Āqā Seyyed Raḍī Māzandarānī, Mīrzā Seyyed Abul Qāsim Sharīfī Shīrāzī, known as Rāz-i Shīrāzī (a *Dhahabī quṭb*), Mullā Muḥammad Taqī and his younger brother Mullā Ṣāliḥ Baraghānī and his son Mullā Ḥassan, as well as Nūrī's son Ḥassan, Mullā Muḥammad Bāqir Qumshiʾī, Hāj Muḥammad Jaʿfar Majdhūb ʿAlī Shah Hamidānī, and Ḥāj Mullā Hādī Sabzivārī, who were the most prominent (Suhā n.d. pp. 146–155). Nūrī died in 1246 H/1830 and was buried in Najaf, Iraq.

For research purposes, I have chosen five of his key texts including three glosses on the previous scholars such as *Sharḥ Fawāʿid al-Ḥikamīya* of Shaykh Aḥmad Aḥsāʾī,[12] *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, and *Asrār ul-Āyāt* of Mullā Ṣadrā. I will also study his well-known refutation on Henry Martyn's polemic as it leads to his conceptualization of *wilāya* and the *Muḥammedan* Reality, in addition to one of his comments which has been written on a *ḥadīth* called *Ḥadīth al-Nūrānīya* (the *Ḥadīth* of the Light). The reason for this selection is that these five texts manifest Nūrī's philosophical discourse in its entirety, and all of the main *ʿirfānī/kalāmī* issues such as *tawḥīd*, the *Muḥammedan* Light, *wilāya* and imamate are either discussed via a lettrist methodology, or are debated within the context of the *ḥikmat* rules and terminology.

Nūrī in his gloss on *Sharḥ al-Fawāʾid al-Ḥikamīya* argues for the modulation of *tawḥīd*, starting from the highest station having been designated exclusively to the Prophet, to the *tawḥīd* of the elite, (either *awlīyā*, who are the people of delicacies, or those who are able to realize complexities, or prophets), to *tawḥīd* of the people of imagination and imaginative

images (*aṣḥāb al-wahmīya wa ṣuwar al-khīyālīya*), and finally to *tawḥīd* of ordinary people (Nūrī n.d.a, p. 5). Regarding the *Muḥammedan* Reality/Light, Nūrī has the typical viewpoint of a *ḥakīm*: the *Muḥammedan* Reality is described by a number of names and attributes; it is the greatest and the most comprehensive name (*Ism al-Aʿzam al-Jāmiʿ*), the first emanated, the spirit of the cosmos, the Universal Intellect, the Holy Spirit, Divine Pen, the Perfect Man, and the First Will (Ibid., p. 31). It is the First Will because it is the first thing that has been created[13] by His reality (*bi nafsihī*) and everything else is created by it. It is His light as it is flowing in and illuminating everything (Ibid., pp. 32–37). As an eternal being, *Muḥammedan* Reality is assumed to have the absolute cosmic power and authority, and as such, has five stations: the station of providence (*mashīyya*); that of will (*irāda*); the station of Divine decree or *qadar*; the station of fate or *qaḍā*; and finally the station of execution or *imḍāʾ* (Ibid., pp. 58–59). In this respect, Nūrī transmits a *ḥadīth* from the prophet indicating that "we are His creatures and people are our creatures, and their creation and death stand in our hands" (Ibid., p. 115).

The *Muḥammedan* Reality has two stations: the station of *Muḥammadīya* and of the *awlīyā*, though in practice, Ali and the Prophet have the same attributes and equal status. Ali's status is a double-faceted one: He, as a human person, is the Prophet's son-in-law and cousin, but similar to the Prophet has a pre-eternal reality too, and as such is *Ādam-i Awwal*, the *khalīfa* and the Moon of *Wilāya* for the *Muḥammedan* Sun (Ibid., p. 37). The Prophet and the *imāms* have cosmic roles; they are His hands, His eyes, His ears, and His tongue, and as such, are regarded as His delegates in the act of creation (Ibid., pp. 56–58). Nūrī mixes his *ʿirfānī* perspective with a lettrist one and presents the well-known argument that the status of *wilāya* is the status of *sirr* (the secret), and the status of the truthful integrated limitless point (*nuqṭay-i ḥaqīqīya basīṭah*). It is integrated in the sense that it is indivisible into different parts, and it is limitless as nothing can confine it, but at the same time it is comprehensive and surrounding (Ibid., p. 81).[14]

The second text that is going to be examined here is Nūrī's glosses on *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb* of Mullā Ṣadrā. The main issue which is discussed in this text is the *Muḥammedan* Reality. As mentioned earlier, the status of *wilāya* or *ʿAlawīyat al-ʿUlyā*, which is called Universal Spirit (*Nafs-i Kullī*), is embedded in the *Muḥammedan* Reality or Universal Intellect or *aql-i kullī*. *Nafs-i kullī* and its relation to *aql-i kullī* is equivalent to the relation of Eve to Adam and the Tablet (*lawḥ*) to the Primal Pen (Nūrī 1363

shamsī, p. 697). *Nafs-i kullī*, which indicates the status of *imām* Ali through his marriage to the Prophet's daughter, has been mixed with the Universal Body or *jism-i kullī*. The household of the Prophet, "which is the fruit of the marriage between *nafs-i kullī* and *jism-i kullī*, has the absolute power and authority over the Cosmos" (Rizvi 2013, p. 3).

On *nubuwwa* and the status of the Prophet, Nūrī maintains that the *Qurʾān* is not only his attributes, but also both his reality (*nafsihī*) and the gnosis of his reality (*maʿrifat bi nafsihī*), and since the Prophet's gnosis is equal to His gnosis, then the Prophet's reality (*nafs*) is His reality.[15] Muhammad is His reality because the *Muḥammedan* Reality as the first emanated is the manifestation of His names and attributes (Nūrī 1363 *shamsī*, pp. 702–703). Nūrī goes on to say that the *Muḥammedan* Reality, which is the *Qurʾānīc* Greatest Spirit (*Rūḥ al-Aʿẓam Qurʾānī*), is regarded as Divine knowledge and contains the realities of things and their mysteries (Nūrī 1363 *shamsī*, p. 705). Nūrī classifies the people of the book (*ahl al-kitāb*) (those who read and understand the *Qurʾān*) into four categories: *ahl al-ʿibāra* (people of word), indicating those who are satisfied with the outward face of the book and do not try to dig into it, *ahl al-ishāra* (people of indication) or *ḥakīms* of Divine knowledge who are the people of certainty, *ahl al-laṭāʾif* or *awlīyā* (people of subtlies) and finally, the prophets who were assigned a special mission, or *anbīyāʾi ulul ʿaẓm*. Nūrī argues that each category has its own book and *sharīʿa*, though the last one, or the seal of prophets, enjoys a status in which his book and his laws are universal and comprehensive (Nūrī 1363 *shamsī*, p. 697; Nūrī 1385 *shamsī*, p. 491).

In his glosses on *Asrār al-Āyāt* of Mullā Ṣadrā, Nūrī develops an argument for the conceptualizations of the *Muḥammedan* Light and its nexus with Divine knowledge. The *Muḥammedan* Light (or the Primal Pen, lit. *Qalam Aʿlā*) indicates the reality of the realities of things and *Ism al-Aʿẓam al-Jāmiʿ*, and as such encompasses Divine Cause. Divine Cause is the station of totality (*Jāmiʿīyya*) and entirety, which means that the *Muḥammedan* Reality in this station has the absolute and comprehensive authority to act upon the Cosmos because it has Divine knowledge (Nūrī 1385 *shamsī*, pp. 227–230).[16] Nūrī's understanding of the status of *Muḥammedan* Reality is analogous to the status of the preexistent eternal logos in Christianity that was with God from the beginning of time, a primal force through whom all creation sprang and without whom nothing came into being. *Muḥammedan* Reality is called the most Comprehensive Word (*Kalimaya Jāmiʿa*) and through learning it in pre-eternal time, human

beings came to learn His names and attributes in their entirety. This initial familiarity of man with the Absolute is also famous as the covenant (trust) of *wilāya*. *Nūr-i Muḥammadī* and *wilāya* are two faces of one reality, or His names, His attributes and His gnosis (Nūrī 1385 *shamsī*, pp. 234–244). Muḥammedan Reality is connected to *Qā'im* and his right of rising and getting up to establish "absolute government" (Nūrī 1385 *shamsī*, 305). But who will stand up for absolute *khilāfah* and sovereignty and who is *Qā'im*? Since the *Muḥammedan* Reality (*al-insān al-kabīr*) is a notion representing absolute unity—in contrast to plurality—there should be a number of human manifestations (*al-insān al-ṣaghīr*) or a human person (Nūrī 1385 *shamsī*, pp. 301–305), who stands as the proofs of the fact that the notion of the Perfect Man is personified and multiplied on the earth. The *imāms* are regarded as human examples of the ideal type of the Perfect Man and have legitimacy to claim leadership and authority over their believers.

In his debate on the relationship between politics and religion, Nūrī argues that the former's concern is regulating and organizing daily life, while the latter's interests are both worldly and heavenly affairs (*maʿāsh* and *maʿād*), and the ruling *ḥakīm* (*ḥakīm ḥākim*) who is embellished with wisdom and walks on the path of intellect should be in charge of politics. Religion and legislation, on the other hand, should be at the hands of *ḥakīm mutaʾallih*, who enjoys Divine knowledge and walks on the path of *wilāya* (or the path of love). These two, according to Nūrī, have no relation with one another, like the sky which is far away from the earth (Nūrī 1385 *shamsī*, p. 337). Nūrī is clear enough: the *walī* or prophet is the legislator (*shāriʿ*), whose status is different from that of a politician whose concern is worldly and ordinary affairs.

Walī is *khalīfat al-llāh*, who, by learning Divine names and attributes, knows the nature of things and can act upon the cosmos, and his *wilāyat al-takwīnīya* is prior to his *wilāyat al-tashrīʿīya*, which is the right of guidance and regulation (Nūrī 1385 *shamsī*, p. 341). Transmitting a *ḥadīth* which refers to *imām* Ali's status, Nūrī states that He is *bāb il-llāh* (the intermediary/gate between Him and people), and *sirr al-llāh* (His secret), and His love is blended with Ali's flesh and blood to such a degree that He is *mamsūs fi dhāt al-llāh* (he is fascinated with, or lover of Allah) (Nūrī 1385 *shamsī*, p. 357). The status of intellect and *ḥakīm ḥākim*, who rules with the assistance of intellect, is clearly inferior to the status of love, and of the *walī* who is able to see the substance (essences/*aʿyān*) of things and their natures, because they are images (*ṣuwar*) of His names and shadows

of His attributes, while *ḥakīm ḥākim* is only able to see the outward face of things (Nūrī 1385 *shamsī*, p. 369). By such a distinction, Nūrī recognizes two types of authorities and leaderships: the first one, which is functioned by *ḥakīm ḥākim* can be carried out by everyone who benefits from wisdom, but legislation (*inshāʾ*) should only be occupied by *ḥakīm ilāhī*[17] who is both the cause of creation and of bringing forth laws.

Walī is *al-insān al-kāmil* who has absolute authority upon the cosmos and people and is regarded as His aid in creation. The early understanding of *wilāya*, which was centered around *walī*'s closeness to God due to his piety and his efforts to purify himself on the path of *sulūk*, was replaced by a new image of *walī*; he is no longer the close friend of God but God himself. *Walī* is the one who causes creation and from him everything else is created. Nūrī uses the verb '*badaʿa*' (lit. to descend upon something suddenly and unexpectedly), to discuss why it is rightful for him to legislate and bring forth laws (Nūrī 1385 *shamsī*, p. 404). While Nūrī's distinction between two types of leadership resulted in banishing *ḥakīm al-ilāhī* from any involvement in politics, and even from ordinary life, his contemporary jurists like Narāqī and Kāshif al-Ghiṭaʾ tried to give a greater role to jurists, but this was not possible until jurists became more and more involved in the everyday lives of believers and in politics.

The next text which will be examined here is Nūrī's refutation on Henry Martyn. There exist two versions of his refutation on Martyn, called either *Burhān al-Milla* (Proof of the Faith) or *Radd-i Pādrī* (Refutation on *Pādrī*). They are of different lengths: the longer consists of 204 pages, while the shorter has 176 pages. The first one is used here.[18] The present refutation is "the longest piece that Nūrī wrote in Persian" though "it contains considerable passages in Arabic and hence was written for a scholarly audience" (Rizvi forthcoming, p. 18).[19] In *Radd-i Pādrī*, Nūrī responds to Martyn from a rational perspective and *ḥikmat* training (Rizvi forthcoming, p. 19) and lays emphasis on *wilāya* and *nubuwwa*. His arguments for these two are typical: *wilāya* and *nubuwwa* are identical because both have the absolute power and authority to act upon things. The status of *nubuwwa* requires limitless power, and without it *nabī* no longer functions. *Walī/nabī* can act upon things in two different ways: *aʿdād* and *ījāb*. By the first one, Nūrī believes that *walī* is absolutely able to manipulate things and activate their capacities in order to be eligible to receive Divine *fayḍ*. *Walī* has two faces: one face is turned towards God and the other towards people. His face turned toward people denotes his functions and duties in relation to believers. He exercises the first type of

wilāya, which is *wilāyat-i aʿdādī*. In this phase, *nabī* guides people in the right way and brings *sharīʿa*, while *wilāya/taṣarruf-i ījābī* enables *nabī* to accomplish miracles and *kirāmat* (also *kirāma*). Miracles manifest divine intervention in human and cosmic affairs and *nabī* endeavors to accomplish it because he has another side which is his divine dimension (Nūrī n.d.b, pp. 17–19).

The text entails a typical understanding of the status of the Perfect Man and its human examples (*anmūdhaj-i insānī*). The Perfect Man is highly praised with a number of names such as divine light, *lawḥ-i qaḍā wa qadar* (the tablet of fate and determination), and the column between sky and earth which prevents the cosmos from falling down (Ibid., pp. 47–49). Like *Muḥammedan* Reality, which causes other things to be created by manifesting itself in them, the Prophet—who is one of the human examples of *Muḥammedan* Reality—has manifested himself in previous prophets and *awlīyās*. Therefore, for their existence, these prophets are dependent on the Prophet Muhammad (Ibid., pp. 20, 64–65, 178).[20] In another example, previous Prophets are likened to a mirror reflecting the Prophet's *wilāya* and *nubuwwa*. They are appointed by God to enunciate the coming of the prophet of Islam, and as such their religions are regarded as phases of the Islamic faith (Ibid., p. 178). Nūrī, like other *Shīʿī* thinkers, defends the idea that Ali is the seal of the absolute *wilāya* of the *Muḥammedan* Cause, and as such he is regarded as the authority for all previous prophets and *walīs*. They are but images of Ali's *wilāya*, as he is *sirr al-llāh* and a close friend of God (Ibid., p. 180).

The last text which is considered here is Nūrī's commentary on *Ḥadīth al-Nūrānīya*. There are two accounts of Nūrī's commentary on the *ḥadīth*: the first one is done by Sajjad Rizvi in his lengthy discussion on Nūrī's life and work, and the second one is by Ḥāmid Nājī Iṣfahānī, who has evaluated Nūrī's commentary exclusively. According to Rizvi, Nūrī has a set of Arabic glosses on different *aḥādīth* of *imām* Ali (Rizvi forthcoming, p. 16), including the present *ḥadīth*, which is also called *al-maʿārif bi al-nūrānīya*. Along with Nūrī, Mullā Hādī Sabzivārī has also glossed on the *ḥadīth* (Rizvi forthcoming, p. 17; Nājī Iṣfahānī n.d. p. 2). The commentary focuses on the *Muḥammedan* Reality, the secrets of imamate, the status of the greatest *walī* or *walī al-aʿẓam*, and his relation to God.[21] Rizvi argues that the "text itself … is similar to other material on the divine nature of the *imām*, such as the Expository Sermon (*Khuṭbat al-Bayān*) and the sermon of illumination (*khuṭbat al-nūrānīya*)" and "entails an esoteric taste of the literal sense and only arises once a person

on the mystical path understands the essentially monistic nature of reality" (Rizvi forthcoming, p. 17). In addition, there is an analysis on monism, the "idea of God" and "the proof for the existence of God" from the *Ṣadrīan* perspective (Rizvi forthcoming, p. 17).

The manifestation of *tawḥīd*, the *Muḥammedan* reality or *ḥaqīqat al-ʿalawīyat al-Muḥammadīya*, is purified of any imperfection in material objects and shares attributes of Divine Essence, such as theophany—which is a transcendental station, and therefore, similar to Divine Essence, is capable of manifesting itself in all existential worlds. The *Muḥammedan* Reality appears in three stations: the station of springing (*badʿ*) and creation of the cosmos, through which His Will is manifested in *Muḥammedan* Reality; the station of Universal Intellect or the Primal Pen, or the station of *qāb-i qawsayn*; and the station of Universal Spirit which indicates the reality of Ali and his status. It is the function of Ali's reality to manifest itself in previous prophets and animate them to exist (Nājī n.d., pp. 202–203). *Muḥammedan* Reality has temporal manifestations (*ẓuhūrāt-i nāsūtī*), which are the Prophet and the *imāms*, and since manifestations are regarded as faces of God, these immune holy figures are His face (*wajh al-llāh*) (Nājī n.d., pp. 199–200). Nūrī brings up the archetypal discussion of different stations of gnosis and argues that the gnosis of the Prophet and the *imāms* are the same as the gnosis of God, because they manifest His unity in its entirety. Furthermore, previous prophets are manifestations of *Muḥammedan* Reality (Nājī n.d., p. 201).

In the entire body of his works—even those which are not examined here—Nūrī thought and wrote within the framework of the *Ṣadrīan ḥikmat*. In terms of method, he remained faithful to the principle of combining rational perspective—which culminated in his refutation on Martyn, with *ʿirfānī* terminology, although he added a lettrist viewpoint as well. His gloss on Aḥsāʾī's *al-Fawāʾid al-Ḥikamīyya* is an example of the prevalence of the *ʿirfānī* method and lettrism. With regard to the offices of *wilāya* and *nubuwwa* and Nūrī's conceptualizations of them, one can conclude that he not only did not add anything to the doctrines of his masters, but also, by overstating them, refused to pay attention to other parts of their tradition. He, in fact, reduced the entire *Ṣadrīan* apparatus into a number of concepts that are examined here. It is the author's opinion that the study of Nūrī's works is not by itself of value if they are not observed as a sign of the existence of a trend in the whole intellectual system of the early eighteenth century: the prevalence of theology, mysticism, and lettrism over philosophy and rational thinking. As will be observed in the following, Nūrī was in no way alone on this route.

4.3 Mullā Hādī Sabzivārī

Fortunately our information of the life and works of Ḥāj Mullā Hādī Sabzivārī, the greatest *ḥakīm* of the School of Mullā Ṣadrā and the true reviver of *ḥikmat al-mutaʿālīya* in the post-Safawid era, is sufficient enough to help us shed light on different dimensions of his personal and philosophical life, including his contributions to the *Ṣadrīan ḥikmat* and his pupils. Many biographers and/or historians have written about Sabzivārī, chief among them Manūchihr Ṣadūghī Suhā,[22] Henry Corbin[23] and Seyyed Hossein Nasr.[24] Ḥāj Mullā Hādī Sabzivārī, the son of Ḥāj Mīrzā Mahdī, who himself was one of the great-grandsons of Muḥammad Ṣādiq, a Sabzivārī merchant, was born in 1212 H/1797 in Sabzivar, Khorasan. After staying in Mashhad for ten years, the young Sabzivārī moved to Isfahan, which was at that time the center of intellectual activity and vitality (Dhukāʾī Sāwajī 1372, p. 22). In that city, he attended circles with teachers such as Mullā Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Kalbāsī (or Karbāsī, d. 1261 H/1845), and Shaykh Muḥammad Taqī ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥīm Iṣfahānī (d. 1248 H/1832). These two had studied with prominent figures such as Āqā Muḥammad Bīdābādī (d. 1198 H/1783) and Shaykh Jaʿfar Najafī, *Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ* (d. 1227 H/1812), respectively. His other teachers were Mullā Ismaʿīl Darbkūshkī Iṣfahānī (d. 1268 H/1853) and Mullā ʿAlī Nūrī (Rizvi 2011, pp. 6–7). Suhā, in a quotation from Ḥirz al-Dīn claims that Sabzivārī was also a student of Mīrzā Muḥammad Ridhā Hamidānī, known as Kawthar ʿAlī Shah (Ḥirz al-Dīn in Ṣadūghī Suhā, p. 164). Addressing Sabzivārī's direct and indirect teachers, one can stretch back his intellectual lineage to the main *Ṣadrīan ḥakīms* of the post-Safawid era, though he was not a simple student and follower, but a real reviver of the School of Mullā Ṣadrā.

Sabzivārī was a prolific writer. His body of works consists of forty-six writings in the form of glosses, comments and original treatises (Dhukāʾī Sāwajī 1372, p. 22).[25] Sajjad Rizvi, in his discussion on the life and works of Sabzivārī, divides his works into four categories: "marginalia on the works of Mullā Ṣadrā, original works in philosophy, commentaries on supplications and Persian literature, and works on theology" (Rizvi 2011, p. 12).[26] Sabzivārī, following a few pilgrimage trips to Mashhad and a *ḥajj*, and a one year stay in Kerman, finally settled in Sabzivār for the rest of his life. He died in 1289 H/1872 and was buried in *Darwāza Neyshābūr*. His entire body of works is worth studying, as he not only glossed and commented on his predecessors, but rather, in his original writings, perpetuated

ḥikmat al-mutaʿālīya through developing a rational and *ʿirfānī* approach for the understanding of the essential philosophical notions such as *wujūd*, quiddity, and substantial motion. In order to maintain the focus of this research, attention will be concentrated on those writings which emphasize the conceptualizations of *wilāya*, imamate, and *nubuwwa*. Accordingly, Sabzivārī's *Sharḥ-i Asrār-i Mathnawī* (Commentary on the Mysteries of *Mathnawī*), *Sharḥ al-Asmāʾ* (Commentary on the Names), *Sharḥ-i Duʿāy-i Ṣabāḥ* (Commentary on *Ṣabāḥ* Supplications) and *Sharḥ-i Nibrās al-Ḥudā* (Commentary on the Light of Guidance) will be studied, beginning with a brief introduction to the relevant text.

Sharḥ-i Asrār-i Mathnawī, which is a Persian commentary on difficult verses of *Mathnawī*, the magnum opus of Jalal al-Din Rumi (d. 672 H/1274) was "commissioned by the Qajar prince Sulṭān Murād Mīrzā Ḥusām al-Salṭana, the governor of Khorasan and lithographed in 1285 H/1868 by Āqā Muḥammad Bāqir Tihrānī" (Riḍā Nizhād in Rizvi 2011, p. 15; Cooper 1999, p. 428). As John Cooper has rightly pointed out, "just as the *Mathnawī* was a summa of the knowledge of its time bound together by the spiritual teaching which it was used to set forth, Sabzivārī's commentary is a summa of the knowledge of this nineteenth-century theosopher put to the use of exegesis on the *Mathnawī*" (Cooper 1999, p. 428). In this text, Sabzivārī relates philosophical and mystical issues—and mainly the concept of the Perfect Man to Persian literature. In other words, for Sabzivārī, *Mathnawī* is a mirror through which he looks at *ḥikamī* and *ʿirfānī* themes and explains them. Furthermore, the sources of Sabzivārī are of a "very broad range, including the Hellenic and Islamic Peripatetic philosophers, the Persian Neo-Platonists or *Ishrāqī* philosophers, Arabic poetry (both Pre-Islamic and Islamic), and Persian poetry" (Cooper 1999, p. 428). The text revolves around themes such as the reality of the Perfect Man (or *walī*), which is symbolized in the Prophet and his cousin, His names and attributes and their personifications, *Muḥammedan* Reality, and the notions of *wilāya* and *wilāyat al-takwīnīya*.

The Perfect Man[27] is the True Ruler (*Sulṭān al-Ḥaqīqī*) and the shadow of God, since he presents Divine Beauty and Glory. It is he who knows all Divine names and, since he manifests them by his example, teaches them to everyone and symbolizes *ism al-aʿẓam*, which is Allah. Since *asmāʾ* are the beginning and the end (Sabzivārī n.d., pp. 27–52), meaning that everything generates from them and after completion returns to them, it is *al-insān al-kāmil* who is the material cause of the Cosmos, and as

khalīfat al-llāh has absolute authority to act upon everything: he causes life and death, and as such, is a partner in creation. Sabzivārī continues that the absolute ordinance of *walī* must be obeyed by all, because *walī* is a name of God and as such needs to be manifested and unveiled, and the office of *wilāya* is a perennial and perpetual one and this explains why, unlike *nubuwwa* which is temporary, *wilāya* is an everlasting, universal, and modulated status and contains many stations and qualities (Sabzivārī n.d., pp. 175–199). Although different, these two statuses are faces of the same reality: one side—*wilāya*—turns towards God and the other—*nubuwwa*—turns towards people, and as such the former indicates unity and totality, while the latter refers to multiplicity (Sabzivārī n.d., pp. 466–467).

Al-insān al-kāmil (the *Muḥammedan* Reality) is an independent realm along with *lāhūt* (realm of Divinity), the world of *aʿyān al-thābita* (fixed/permanent archetypes), *Jabarūt* (realm of souls), *Malakūt* (realm of the intellects), and *Nāsūt* (human realm, though it can sometimes be equated with *al-insān al-kāmil*), and therefore is intimately attached to the reality of the Holy Spirit, which is the Universal Intellect (Sabzivārī n.d., pp. 235–239). Here again, the typical understanding of the status and qualities of the *Muḥammedan* Reality is observed; which is the first emanated, or the Primal Will, and is created by His essence, though everything else is created from it (Sabzivārī n.d., p. 391). In interpreting this sentence, '*insān-i kāmil khudāvand-i dil ast*' (the perfect man is the lord of heart), Sabzivārī deploys the famous *qudsī ḥadīth* that "the heavens and the earth cannot burden My immensity and grandeur, but the heart of My faithful servant would do", and argues that the heart of such a servant is His throne (Sabzivārī n.d., p. 345).

As the true servant of God, it is only he who knows deity and has gnosis of Him. When on the Day of Judgment He comes to unveil Himself, it is only the Perfect Man who can shoulder His grandeur and greatness. So, the only way to get to know the Perfect Man is by having true faith in him, as he is God's agent on the earth (Sabzivārī n.d., p. 447), and as such he is in effect the Kingdom of God personified. In understanding "how the true faith is developed in a believer", Sabzivārī maintains that the gate of intellect (*darwāza-yi aql*) is a way towards the sacred sanctuary which is deity (Sabzivārī n.d., p. 451). So, it is only by the assistance of intellect that believers will have both gnosis to Him and to His agent. It is this researcher's opinion that there is *petitio principia* here: in order to know the Perfect Man a believer should have true faith in him, and in order to

develop true faith to get to know him and God, a believer should pass across the gate of intellect which is the *Muḥammedan* Reality or the Perfect Man. It would appear as if everything originates from the Perfect Man and ends in it.

In *Sharḥ al-Asmā*ʾ and from a lettrist perspective, Sabzivārī interprets the name of Muhammad and maintains that the first letter of '*mīm*' indicates the Prophet's authority and dominion, while the second '*mīm*' signifies the realm of *malakūt* or *malakūt al-samāwāt*, which is the Kingdom of Heavens. These two "*mīms* are gifted by Him to His Prophet in order to remind us that the Prophet knows both the secrets of authority and the secrets of the Kingdom and Heavens" (Sabzivārī 1372 *shamsī*, p. 47). In his debate on the *Muḥammedan* Reality, Sabzivārī starts with the typology of being and its trilogy including Truthful Essence (*Ḥaqq al-Mujarrad*), indicating the pure abstract essence of God which is free from any name and attribute; Non-delimited Being (*Wujūd al-Muṭlaq*) or His deeds; and Delimited Being, (*Wujūd al-Muqayyad*) which is what he has created, such as the cosmos. Then he argues that the *Muḥammedan* Reality is the manifestation of His Truthful Essence in His names and attributes, and is also called the Absolute Being (Sabzivārī 1372 *shamsī*, p. 56). *Muḥammedan* Reality also equates to Divine knowledge and/or the Light of Glory which is manifested in the fourteen immune figures (Sabzivārī 1372 *shamsī*, p. 399).

On the notion of the Perfect Man and from an *ʿirfānī* perspective, Sabzivārī states that Ali is the truthful example, the Human Form (*Ṣūrat al-Insānīya*) and the personification of it. Sabzivārī praises him by a number of qualities which are typical in his contemporaries and predecessors as well (Sabzivārī 1372 *shamsī*, pp. 67–68). With a combination of *ʿirfānī* and lettrist methods, he explains that the notion of *ghawth*, which means help and/or aid, is designated to *awlīyā* or men of God, who manifest either His light or His vigor and power. The members of the first group whose beings are illuminated by His light and compassion are not hidden from people and are not prohibited from revealing themselves, while those of the second group whose beings are embraced by His vigor, are to be hidden (Sabzivārī 1372 *shamsī*, pp. 101–102).

On the meaning of *ghawth*, Sabzivārī argues that God has ninety-nine men, and that among them only one is the most prominent; because he knows His knowledge/secrets; he is called *quṭb al-jāmiʿ* (which is *al-Qāʾim*) of the household of the Prophet (Sabzivārī 1372 *shamsī*, pp. 101–103). As the seven great prophets correspond to the septet planets, the household of the Prophet corresponds the twelve astrological

signs too. In the same way, as the previous prophets gain their glory and grandeur from the sun of the *nubuwwa* of the Prophet of Islam, the whole household of the Prophet gains its light from the moon of the *wilāya* of Ali (Sabzivārī 1372 *shamsī*, pp. 104–105 & pp. 550–552 & p. 711). Sabzivārī uses this analogy to conclude that a: the physical world corresponds with the spiritual one and b: the cosmos relies on seven *quṭb* and twelve *walīs* (Sabzivārī 1372 *shamsī*, pp. 105–106).

Wilāya is *fayḍ* and equates to Divine names descending from Him to His servants. He uses the term *infitāḥ* which literally means to open/unlock something to indicate the status of *wilāya*: by the acceptance of *wilāya* a believer exposes himself to Divine *fayḍ* and blessing (Sabzivārī 1372 *shamsī*, pp. 129–130). The status of *wilāya* is different from that of *nubuwwa*, as *walī* is a name of God and has the absolute right and authority to act upon the cosmos. These two are not only different, but *wilāya* is higher than *nubuwwa* because it is perpetual and uninterrupted. The reality of the status of *walī* requires self-abnegation and servitude, in the sense that since *wilāya* and *nubuwwa* are two sides of the same reality, the former indicates the Divine dimension of this reality and the latter the human worldly dimension of it (Sabzivārī 1372 *shamsī*, pp. 276–278 & pp. 552–553). *Walī* is translated with different names, such as the owner, the master, the lord (*rabb*), the help, the giver, the benefactor (*munʿim*), the lover (*muḥibb*), and the partner (*sharīk*) (Sabzivārī 1372 *shamsī*, p. 530).

Awlīyā are divided into six categories: *nuqabā* (leaders, directors) who consist of 300 men and live in Maghrib, *nujabā* (nobles) who are seventy and live in Egypt, *budalā* (substitutes) who are forty men and are inhabitants of Sham, *akhyār* (those who are benevolent) are seven and wandering around the world, *ʿamūd* (pillars) which are four and are scattered at the four corners of the earth, and finally *ghawth* (help, assistant) of which there is only one, who lives in Mecca (Sabzivārī 1372 *shamsī*, p. 550). The *imāms* are the most beautiful names of God (*asmāʾ ul-ḥusnā*), without whose recognition God does not accept any action. Transmitting a *ḥadīth* from *imām* Ali saying that '*ana asmāʾ ul-ḥusnā*', Sabzivārī argues that "name is a sign and these holy figures are the great signs of God". So, there is no difference between the status of His names and attributes and the status of the *imāms*, because their recognition is necessary for Him to be recognized (Sabzivārī 1372 *shamsī*, p. 576 & 715). The *imāms* are the authorized representatives (*umanā*) of God who preserve His covenant, which is *wilāya*, and bear witness upon everything (Sabzivārī 1372 *shamsī*, p. 671). From a lettrist perspective, Sabzivārī correlates the status of the

Prophet to the *Muqaṭṭaʿāt* (lit. abbreviated or shortened), or unique letter combinations of the *Qurʾān*, and argues that these Divine words indicate the status of *al-insān al-kāmil* as *khalīfat al-llāh* and the Pillar of the Light of God (Sabzivārī 1372 *shamsī*, p. 717).

Sharḥ-i Duʿāy-i Ṣabāḥ (or *Miftāḥ al-Falāḥ wa Miṣbāḥ al-Najāt*) is attributed to *imām* Ali and is considered by scholars as an important text.[28] One of the main topics of the text is *al-insān al-kāmil* and its human examples, which are the Prophet and *imām* Ali. *Al-insān al-kāmil* encompasses and manifests the names and the attributes of God. He is the Perfect Ten (*Ashʿara-yi Kāmila*), because God has ten manifestations in the entire spiritual hierarchy and they are all gathered in the Perfect Man (Sabzivārī 1372 *shamsī*, pp. 2–7 & p. 25). Sabzivārī explains the status of *imām* Ali through the term of the Heavens of *Wilāya* (*Falak-i Wilāya*) which contain a number of things, such as the twelve *imāms*, who correspond with the twelve astrological signs (*shams-i wiṣāya*) which is the allegory of the Universal Intellect, and *shams-i qāʾim,* who gains his light from *shams-i wiṣāya*. *Shams-i qāʾim* is the greatest light, the heart of the cosmos, the lord of the stars and the sign of His light (Sabzivārī 1372 *shamsī*, pp. 22–25).

The office of *nubuwwa* is symbolic of a tree, *Shajarat al-Ṭūbā* (the Purified Tree), and refers to the famous *āyah* of the *Qurʾān* that: "God only desires to remove defilement from you, O people of the House, and to purify you completely" (33:33) (Nasr 2015, p. 1029), whose leaves are the community of believers who will return to him on the Day of Resurrection. In this sense, there is an intimate closeness between the reality (*nafs*) of the Prophet and his *ummah* (Sabzivārī 1372 *shamsī*, p. 73). Sabzivārī believes in the immunity of the Prophet even before his *nubuwwa*, and touches upon the topic from a pure *kalāmī* perspective. *ʿIṣma* is a spiritual quality/faculty which prevents its owner from sinning. This quality is invested in the angels, the prophets and the *imāms*. Sabzivārī uses the principle of emanation as the famous principle in the *Shīʿa* theology in order to discuss infallibility for the Prophet and the *imāms*. According to this principle, His kindness and beneficences require Him not only to send prophets and appoint *imāms*, but also to invest them with infallibility (Sabzivārī 1372 *shamsī*, pp. 76–83). The holders of the attribute of infallibility are described as the sturdy mountains (*jibāl al-shāmikha*) of God, His rope (*ḥabl*), and His proofs, whose love and obedience are incumbent for every believer (Sabzivārī 1372 *shamsī*, p. 132).

Regarding the notion of *wilāya* and its modulation, Sabzivārī in *Sharḥ-i Nibrās al-Ḥudā*[29] mentions the hierarchy of *awlīyā* and maintains that

some of them are higher than the others. In analyzing the status of the *imāms*, he believes that, as the owner of *wilāyat al-takwīnīya*, they are the eyes and the ears of God—His intermediaries by which Deity descends emanation to the Cosmos (Sabzivārī 1384, pp. 43 & 146). The status of the absolute *wilāya* contains two offices of *nubuwwa* and *wilāya* (imamate), because the realities of *walī* and *nabī* are the same (Sabzivārī 1384, p. 116). Only these purified figures can reach the station of *ʿirfān-i tām* (the absolute gnosis) of God, because they are the body of *tawḥīd* and the manifestations of Divine names and attributes (Sabzivārī 1384, p. 136). From a lettrist perspective, Sabzivārī argues that the word *ḥamd* in *sūrat al-Ḥamd*, the first *sūrah* of the *Qurʾān*, refers to *al-insān al-kāmil* and its human examples. *Al-insān al-kāmil* has been created according to the image of God, and as such has both the absolute right of authority to act upon the Cosmos (*wilāyat al-takwīnīya*) and the right of lawgiving (or *tashrīʿ*). One of the components of the right of *tashrīʿ* is teaching the names of God to people in order to train them in spiritual conduct (Sabzivārī 1384, pp. 170–171 & p. 351).

4.4 Āqā Mīrzā Muḥammad Riḍā Qumshiʾī

Āqā Mīrzā Muḥammad Riḍā, then known as *Ṣahbā*, the son of Shaykh Abul Qāsim, was born in Qumshih (now Shahriza), in Isfahan, in 1241 H/1825. After preliminary instruction with his father as well as other teachers in Qumshih, Mīrzā Muḥammad Riḍā moved to Isfahan to study *ʿirfān* and *ḥikmat* there. In Isfahan, he attended the classes of notable *ḥakīms* such as Ḥāj Muḥammad Jaʿfar Lāhījī (Langarūdī—also the teacher of Mullā ʿAlī Nūrī and Āqā ʿAlī Ḥakīm Mudarris Tehrānī), Mīrzā Ḥassan Nūrī, the son of Mullā ʿAlī Nūrī, and Āqā Seyyed Raḍī Lārījānī (Mazandaranī), who taught Mīrzā Muḥammad Riḍā rational sciences. Until his departure to Tehran, which was around 1288 H/1871, he taught *ḥikmat* and *ʿirfān* in Isfahan. His fame, both in Isfahan and Tehran, was in teaching *ʿirfān* and especially *Sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* of Qayṣarī, though he was expert in philosophy and *Qurʾān* as well. It seems that his interest in *ʿirfān* was not only a matter of teaching *ʿirfānī* texts or having an *ʿirfānī* taste, but experiencing an *ʿirfānī* lifestyle, in the sense that he was a dervish, having lived *ʿirfān* in practice. He was the worker of miracles (*ṣāḥib-i kirāmat*), and, according to the testimony of one of his students, had the ability of *ṭayy al-arḍ* (folding up of the earth). Qumshiʾī passed away in Tehran in 1306 H/1888 and is buried there (Nājī Iṣfahānī 1378, pp. 19–48).[30]

Qumshiʾī was a prolific writer and composed numerous books on *ḥikamt* and *ʿirfān* which are glosses, comments, or original texts, including a book of poems in Persian under the poetic pseudonym of *Ṣahbā*, and a number of books in Arabic. He has glossed on a number of texts, including Ibn ʿArabī's magnum opus *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, *Khuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* (the Excerpt of *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*) of Qayṣarī, which itself is a commentary on the meaning of *Fuṣūṣ*, *Tamhīd al-Qawāʿid* (Scheming of Regulations) of ibn Turka Iṣfahānī, *Miftāḥ al-Uns* (the Key of Fondness) of Muḥammad ibn Ḥamza Fanārī, and two of Mullā Ṣadrā's books: *Asfār al-Arbaʿi* and *Shawāhid*, and finally *Sharḥ-i Ishārāt wa Tanbīhāt* (the Commentary on Indications and Reminders) of *Khawjah* Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī. He also wrote original texts on a variety of topics such as science, essence, and accidental properties (also accident or *jawhar wa ʿaraḍ*), the Names of the Essence, the Names of the Attributes, and the Names of Acts. He wrote a commentary on some parts of *Duʿā-yi Saḥar* and an original treatise on a *ḥadīth* called *ḥadīth-i zindīq* (the *Ḥadīth* of Heretics). His body of work is composed of eighteen books (Nājī Iṣfahānī, pp. 46–47).[31] In this collection, what is of use and relevance for the research here is his treatise on *wilāya* and *khilāfa* as it contains important points on the Perfect Man, on the *Muḥammedan* Reality, on*wilāya*, and *khatm al-wilāya*.

4.4.1 Wilāya *and* Khilāfa

Qumshiʾī's glosses/critiques on Dāwūd ibn Maḥmūd Qayṣarī's conceptualizations of *wilāya* and *khilāfa* can be found in the latter's comments on *Fuṣūṣ* of Ibn ʿArabī.[32] Qumshiʾī begins with a typology of *wilāya* and divides it into *wilāyat al-kullīya* and *wilāyat al-khāṣṣah* (general and specific *wilāya,* respectively). *Wilāyat al- kullīya* is designated to every believer and emphasizes the right and authority that each of them has over the other. This understanding of *wilāya* is connected to the notion of faith as a modulated reality. The second type of *wilāya* is specified to the people of the hearts (*aṣḥāb ul-qulūb*), the people of Allah or those who are close to Him because of their practices. These people have experienced self-annihilation in God and are the most perfect. On the basis of the four journeys (*asfār al-arbaʿi*) that every believer should take, Qumshiʾī argues that the last journey, which is "the journey in God by God", is specifically gifted to the Prophet, his household and his successors, and is called *wilāyat al-muḥammadīya* or the *Muḥammedan Wilāya*. Previous prophets and

their successors can also experience this type of *wilāya*, but it is only a state, not a station, which means that it is temporary and momentary (Qumshiʾī 1381, pp. 61–62).

Wilāyat al-muḥammadīya (the station) can be either absolute or delimited (*muṭlaqah* or *muqayyadah*, respectively). It is absolute since it encompasses everything and is not limited by any restriction, and it is delimited because it is specified to one name from among the names of God. Qumshiʾī uses the absolute and the general *wilāya* on one hand, and the delimited and particular *wilāya* on the other, interchangeably. These stations are also modulated and each of them has a sealing, because it is possible that one scholar from among Muslim scholars becomes *khātam* of the *wilāyat al-muqayyadah* and one successor from among the successors of the Prophet becomes *khātam* of *wilāyat al-muṭlaqah* (Qumshiʾī 1381, pp. 62–63). Qumshiʾī defines the term 'sealing' in terms of gradation of *wilāya* and closeness of *walī* to God, so the sealing of the absolute and/or constrained *wilāya* means that *walī* enjoys the highest degree of closeness to God. From this perspective, the Prophet is the truthful *walī*, the absolute *khātam* and the manifestation of the name of Allah, which is the most comprehensive name. Qumshiʾī argues that when *wilāya* overcomes a *nabī*, it eclipses *nubuwwa*, which means that his *nubuwwa* becomes concealed under the mantle of *wilāya* (Qumshiʾī 1381, p. 64). *Wilāya* as a Divine attribute or the inward of Divinity, is regarded as *sirr* or the most hidden *sirr*, and as such needs to be manifested and unveiled, and that is why it has become manifest in the most comprehensive name of God—Allah. In terms of its relation to the *Muḥammedan* Reality, Qumshiʾī maintains that Divinity is the inward of the *Muḥammedan* Reality and therefore should be called Divine, absolute *wilāya* (Qumshiʾī 1381, p. 66).

The permanent archetypes (*aʿyān al-thābita*) of the *Muḥammedan* Reality are the same as the permanent archetypes of the *awlīyās* and successors of the Prophet, and as such their *wilāya* is the same (Qumshiʾī 1381, p. 67). In accordance with the typical understanding of the office of *wilāya*, Qumshiʾī emphasizes that *wilāya* is uninterrupted and eternal, while *nubuwwa* is a worldly attribute, and from this perspective, *nubuwwa* is *wilāya* which has become perfect, and the sealing of *wilāyat al-muḥammadīya* is the status which embraces the *wilāya* of previous prophets and their successors. In a concluding remark, Qumshiʾī argues that the sealing of *wilāya* and the sealing of *wilāyat al-muḥammadīya* have the same meaning in terms of time and station, in the sense that the seal of *wilāya* is not only the heir of *wilāyat al-muḥammadīya*, but also a light

(*mishkāt*), through which all previous prophets and their successors reach the Truth. He is the closest one to the prophet and aware of his secrets and therefore of the secrets of all previous prophets. He is the source of emanation and blessing for every *walī* and *waṣī* after him (Qumshiʾī 1381, pp. 67–89).

In terms of method, Qumshiʾī follows a blending of ʿ*irfānī* and rational methodology which is obtained from the Owners of the Taste of Intuition (*Adhwāq al-Mukāshifīn*), and the People of the Path of Truth and Certainty (*Ahl al-Ḥaqq wa al-Yaqīn*). *Khilāfa,* as equivalent to *wilāya*, is a Divine status and all provisions proceed from this status. So, it is incumbent for every prophet, whether the seal of prophets or not, to rule in accordance with the ordinances which are ruled by Divine names and with permanent archetypes. Qumshiʾī maintains that there should only be one seal of the prophets or the *quṭb* of every age because *quṭb* cannot be more than one (Qumshiʾī 1381, pp. 90–91). In his debate on *khilāfa* after the Prophet, Qumshiʾī develops atypical arguments for the conceptualization of the status of *nubuwwa* and its functions, and asserts that the Prophet should declare its cause and invite people to Islam by the use of force, and if people deny this after the proof (*ḥujja*) is brought to them, it is then legitimate to use the sword. It is necessary for the successors of the Prophet to follow the Prophet as an example and to spread and preserve Islam by the sword. The Prophet's successor is the source of knowledge and the only legitimate power-holder. Moreover, Qumshiʾī, unlike other mystics, does not believe in the separation of *khilāfa* between outward and inward—*ẓāhirī* and *bāṭinī*, and/or between the most learned and the wisest (*aʿlam wa aʿqal*). He argues that by such a division, the office of *khilāfa* would be weakened and the community of believers would be dispersed. He adheres to a coherent understanding of the term and functions of *khilāfa*.[33]

We learned several lessons from our examination of the central texts of the philosophers of the School of Tehran. In comparison, Muḥammad Riḍā Qumshiʾī remained more faithful to the spirit and terminology of the mysticism of Ibn ʿArabī. Unlike his predecessors, Qumshiʾī refused to adopt the Occult perspective for reading and interpreting the *Qurʾān*, as well as the doctrines of *wilāya* and *khatm al-wilāya*. As noted, lettrism was an inseparable component of the philosophy of *ḥakīm* Nūrī and Mullā Hādī Sabzivārī. Furthermore, through direct communication in the form of comments and glosses with a number of important texts of the *Akbarīan*

tradition, Qumshi'ī surpassed his peers in the School of Tehran and returned to one of the sources of the *Ṣadrīan ḥikmat*. From this perspective, his philosophy can be regarded as the true heir of *al-Shaykh al-Akbar*.

4.5 The School of Qum and its Historical Background

In the final part of this chapter, study and analysis will be continued of Ibn ʿArabī's legacy as it is flourished in the School of Qum. Before focusing on the texts and authors, however, it is relevant briefly to review historical developments from the Qajars to their successor—the Pahlavis. The decline of the Qajars and the rise of Riḍā Khān Mīr Panj[34] to the throne, as history proves, was a crucial event for Persia. His policies, from his decision to adopt the new solar calendar in place of the lunar Islamic calendar,[35] to the reinstatement of the name of the country to Iran, to the position of women in society, to his ambitions for the modernization of Iran, and lastly, his clash with the clerics, dramatically changed every aspect of the Iranians' life. Although his legacy remains controversial to this day, these changes, whether defended or criticized, have been so major that in all of these aspects, life in Iran has never been the same since.

The research interest here is Riḍā Shah's "programme of radical secularizing, centralizing measures" (Cronin 2007, pp. 71–72), targeted to shake off the position of clerics directly and indirectly. In fact, he clashed with the class of *ʿulemā* on a number of issues including "the implementation of the … conscription" law, reorganizing the "judicial system … along secular lines", and the introduction of "a civil code" and a dress law (Cronin 2007, p. 72). As Stephanie Cronin has shown, the imposition of these measures on the society, and especially on the class of clerics, has been never without reaction and resistance from below, as middle ranking clerics led a number of oppositions in different cities, mainly in Shiraz, Tabriz, and Isfahan against the Shah and his policies (Cronin 2007, p. 72ff).

Although many *ʿulemā* had welcomed Riḍā Khān's appearance on the scene as a hopeful and positive sign for the restoration of the independence of the country, "by 1927 … [they] were aware that the balance of power between themselves and the regime was about to alter decisively to their detriment" and "although on the defensive, they were bracing themselves for a struggle" (Cronin 2007, p. 75ff). With regard to the *ʿulemā's* economic status and social prestige in early twentieth century Iran, their

discontent with the Shah's policies is understandable. The secular orientation of Riḍā Shah's programs aside, his measures, as I mentioned earlier, targeted the *ʿulemā*'s economic and social situation. By *ʿulemā*, I mean those jurists who belonged to the *Uṣūlī* School of jurisprudence, whose activities were mainly centered on *fiqh* (jurisprudence) and its principles and, since the Safawid era, have become one of the twin pillars of political power in the country.

If the birth and later existence of "the *Shīʿa* hierocracy" (Amir Arjomand 2005, p. 21) was the result of Safawid policies, the superiority of the *Uṣūlī ʿulemā* in the pre-Qajar and Qajar eras was mostly due to their victory over their long-lasting rival—the *Akhbārī* School. Pertinent to this is the *ʿulemā*'s relationship with the Qajar court and its impact on their subsequent political activities. The rivalry of the two Schools of *Akhbārī* and *Uṣūlī*, as well as the inconvenient relationship between the state and religion, has been the subject of a number of researches. Addressing the former, as Andrew Newman has pointed out, *Akhbārīsm* actually originated in the Safawid period and, both in and after the decline of the Safawids, attracted attention and animosity within Twelver *Shīʿīsm*. The main disagreement between these two was "on the nature of clerical authority in the community [of believers on one hand] and the permitted scope of the relationship between that authority and the established political institution during the occultation [on the other]" (Newman 2005, pp. 155–156).[36]

During the Qajar period, the *Uṣūlī ʿulemā* defended and became involved in the definition of "the authority of the senior clerics over both the jurisprudential and practical affairs of the community as the representatives of the Hidden *imām* during his absence" (Newman 2005, p. 168). The core of these efforts was the refinement of the concept of General vicegerency (*nīyābat al-ʿāmmah*), "the notion of the senior cleric as the 'general deputy' of the Hidden *imām*, and the notion of a single *mujtahid* with paramount authority among the *ʿulemā*". They argued that "the *mujtahid* should exercise" the judicial punishments (*ḥudūd*) "during the *imām's* absence". The culmination of these scholastic efforts was Shaykh Murtaḍā Anṣārī's (also Shaykh Murtaḍā Anṣārī Shūshtarī, d. 1281H/1864) innovation on matters of both jurisprudence and clerical authority which bore fruit in laying the foundation for the concept of *marjaʿ al-taqlīd*, the supreme exemplar (Newman 2005, p. 168).[37]

ʿUlemā's relationship with the Qajar's court, as is portrayed by Robert Gleave, has been one of "problematic legitimation of state activities by religious authorities" on one hand, and "the influence of religion on the

workings of government, in particular, the institutions connected with the judiciary", on the other. In addition to these, Gleave mentions another reason for the inconvenient relationship between the court and the *ʿulemā*, which was the "growing independence of mind among the religious classes", that, in later years bore fruit in "a number of ulama-led movements which were openly oppositional to the state" (Gleave 2005, p. 4). Gleave concludes that "the *de jure* illegitimacy" which was given to the Qajar state by the *ʿulemā*, especially with regard to the right of defensive *jihād* by the ruler, "was limited and specific" (Gleave 2005, p. 5).

Having said this, there exist a number of factors here: the superiority of the *Uṣūlī ʿulemā* over the *Akhbārīs*, the relative weakness of the Qajar state, especially in their later years, and the *ʿulemā*'s reluctance, or perhaps their caution, in giving legitimacy to the Qajars. All of these should be treated as indications of the *ʿulemā*'s weight and influence in social and political affairs. This situation was sustained until Riḍā Khān came to power in 1299 *shamsī*/1921. In such a context, it is comprehensible that Riḍā Shah's policies, which targeted wealth, social situation, and the *ʿulemā*'s accessibility to sources of power, raised opposition and dissatisfaction. Although the Shah won the battle for a short time and the *ʿulemā* proved not "to be able to arrest or divert Tehran's centralizing drive" (Cronin 2007, p. 92), the ultimate winners were members of the hierocracy who not only after the Shah's departure gained back what they had lost, but for the first time in the life of *Shīʿa* jurisprudence, took control of the main center of political power. As a result, the unfortunate years of Riḍā Shah's presence in power were only a short break in the life of the *Uṣūlī ʿulemā*, as their hegemony, which had endured during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, was sustained after the departure of Riḍā Shah and has continued to the present time (Amanat 1390 *shamsī*, p. 292). Moreover, Riḍā Shah's manipulative policies activated political tendencies among the *ʿulemā* which are visible in the *kalāmī* and juridical texts of this period of time.

The examination of the key texts of the *ʿulemā* and *ḥukamā* of this time demonstrates that notions such as *wilāya*, *nubuwwa*, and *imamate* maintained their centrality, though there seems to be a major shift from the *ʿirfānī* and *kalāmī* conceptualizations of *wilāya* to the juridical ones,[38] a shift which above all confirms this research's former analysis of the importance of jurisprudence. In these texts, as we will see, the question of social leadership of the *Shīʿī* jurist is taken for granted, a dynamic that was absent in the writings of the previous *ʿulemā*. For the first time the *ʿulemā* began

to conceptualize and theorize issues such as the question of governance in Islam, the necessity to establish an Islamic government, the notion of *wilāyat al-ʿāmmah* or a kind of guardianship which should be exercised by the Islamic government, and lastly, the necessity to spread among citizens the teachings of *Shīʿīsm*.[39] Such tendencies, as it will be observed, gain particular prominence in the writings of ʿAllāmah Muḥammad Hossein Ṭabāṭabāʾī of the twentieth century, whose major texts, along with Mīrzā Aḥmad Āshtīyānī's, will be examined here. It should be noted that Āshtīyānī's treatise on *wilāya*, is centered on *wilāyat al-khāṣṣah* instead of *wilāyat al-ʿāmmah* and is very much inspired by Qumshiʾī's glosses on Ibn ʿArabī.

4.6 Mīrzā Aḥmad Āshtīyānī

Ayatollah Mīrzā Aḥmad Āshtīyānī is perhaps better known through his father who was a famous Ayatollah of the Qajar period. Mīrzā Muḥammad Ḥassan Āshtīyānī (d. 1319 H/1901), whose participation in the Tobacco Régie and subsequent protest is well known, was one of the three opponent *mujtahids* who stood against the tobacco treaty and Nāṣir al-Dīn Shah's (1275 *shamsī*/1896) concession which had been granted to Major G. F. Talbot for a full monopoly over the production, sale, and export of tobacco in Persia for fifty years. Along with Mīrzā Muḥammad Ḥassan Shīrazī (d. 1312 H/1894) and Mīrzā Javād Tabrīzī (d. 1313 H/1895), Āshtīyānī sought to repudiate the concession, and in fact, it was from his home in Tehran that the *fatwā* of Mīrzāy-i Shīrazī was declared and became known amongst the people. Nāṣir al-Dīn Shah threatened him with exile, but before the Shah's order was executed, his followers prevented him from leaving the capital.

Mīrzā Aḥmad was Āshtīyānī's youngest son and was born in Tehran in 1300 H/1882. After obtaining preliminary instruction from his father, he continued his studies in rational and scriptural disciplines with other teachers, such as Mīrzā Hāshim Rashtī, Mīrzā Ḥassan Kermānshāhī, Shaykh Muḥammad Riḍā Nūrī, and Seyyed Muḥammad Yazdī, and afterward started teaching at *madrasa-yi Sipahsālār*. From 1340 to 1350 *shamsī* (1960–1970) he lived in Najaf, where he met Mīrzā Muḥammad Hossein Nāʾīnī who granted him *ījāza* of teaching and issuing *fatwā*. After returning to Iran he became involved in teaching, writing, and training students. He passed away in 1395 H/1975 in Tehran and was buried in the shrine precinct of Shah ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm in Rayy, south of Tehran. He was a prolific

scholar and has left many writings—altogether sixty-two, in the form of treatises, comments, exegesis, and original texts in various areas such as jurisprudence, theology, ethics, mysticism, and *ḥikmat*; although many of them are still unpublished. He also used to write poetry under the pseudonym of *Wālih* (lovelorn). Of this lengthy list, two key texts will be examined here, entitled *Risāla-yi Sarmāya-yi Saʿādat* (Treatise on the Asset of Felicity) in Persian and *Risālat al-Wilāya* (Treatise on *Wilāya*) in Arabic (Ostādī 1383 *shamsī*, pp. 9–25).

Āshtīyānī wrote *Risāla-yi Sarmāya-yi Saʿādat* around 1381 H/1961 and by 1389 H/1970 the book has been published five times. It is divided into four sections; *tawḥīd*, *nubuwwa*, imamate, and *maʿād*. In terms of method, Āshtīyānī uses a rational methodology blended with transmitted sources in order to develop arguments for the conceptualization of *nubuwwa* and its status. He maintains that the reasonability of deeds of God requires him to send prophets to guide people on the righteous way to Him—or perfection, which is the desired rational goal of creation. In other words, sending prophets was necessary to achieve perfection (Ostādī 1383 *shamsī*, pp. 137–138). On imamate, Āshtīyānī follows the same method and argues for the status of the *imāms* from the perspective of a *ḥakīm* who believes that the *imāms* are the intermediary of Divine emanation to people and should be appointed by the Prophet and not by people, as people are ignorant and cannot distinguish between good and evil. He also argues that the *imāms* should be the most learned and the wisest (*aʿlam wa afḍal*) of their time. Āshtīyānī concludes that the Prophet not only appointed *imām* Ali as his first successor but also appointed the rest of the *Imāms* (Ibid., pp. 142–147).

Āshtīyānī's detailed discussion of the notion of *wilāya*, its definition and its typology which is presented in his *Risālat al-Wilāya*,[40] is very much inspired by Qumshiʾī. Like Qumshiʾī, he starts with the etymological derivation of *wilāya* which is *walī*, meaning affinity and closeness, followed by the twin of *wilāya* (authority, kingship) and *walāya* (affection and kindness). Āshtīyānī maintains that *wilāya* dominates everything, whether it is contingent or necessary and, like being, is modulated. *Wujūd's* modulation, however, should be understood on the basis of manifestation and the modulation of *wilāya* should be realized on the ground of its affinity and closeness to the Absolute. Āshtīyānī concludes that the more being/existence manifests itself, the more perfect it is, likewise, the closer something or someone is to God, the more it enjoys the attribute of *wilāya*. In interpreting this verse "*Allah u-maʿa kulla shay*ʾ, God is with

everything", Āshtīyānī believes that it is the maxim of the status of *wilāya* and the closest place that a holder of *wilāya* can have. *Wilāya* is also intimately tied with faith, in the sense that the more a believer is illuminated by the light of faith, the more attributes of beauty manifest in him (Ibid., pp. 335–336).

Wilāya could be absolute and delimited—*muṭlaqah* and *muqayyadah,* respectively. It is absolute in as much as it is a Divine attribute and as such is limitless, and it is delimited because it is designated either to a prophet or to a certain *walī*, and from this perspective, their *wilāya* is a part of the absolute *wilāya*. In addition to this, there is another typology of *wilāya* which is the classification of *wilāya* into general and particular. The first type could be designated to any *mu'min* (believer) who believes in God and does good deeds as, according to the intensity of his or her faith to God, the believer enjoys the higher station in the hierarchy of *wilāya*. The second type, however, is specifically allocated to His seekers who have experienced self-abnegation and self-annihilation and they are no longer the cause of their deeds; they have become perpetuated in God. What moves them forward is the love of God and what strengthens them is piety.

Thus, there exist *walī-ya muṭlaq* and *nabī-ya muṭlaq* and the latter is designated to the Prophet of Islam, who is the holder of the office of real *nubuwwa* (*nubuwwat-i ḥaqīqīya*) as a pre-existent and perpetual office. The Prophet has the absolute right to act upon the cosmos and is entitled the Perfect Man, the *Quṭb* of Time, the Great *Khalīfa*, the First/Universal Intellect, and the Primal Man. As for *wilāyat-i muṭlaqah* one can say that it is the inward of such a *nubuwwa* and its holder, who is Ali, and has the same and equal status and authority as the Prophet does. Although Āshtīyānī adds that every *nubuwwa* and *wilāya* is absolute and general because it is an attribute of God and as such should be *muṭlaqah*, he also reminds us that since the offices of *wilāya* and *nubuwwa* are to be designated to a particular *nabī* or *walī,* they are regarded as *muqayyada* as well (Ibid., pp. 337–342). On the difference between *wilāya* and *nubuwwa*, Āshtīyānī brings the typical argument that the status of *wilāya* is pre-eternal, Divine and of more inclusive than that of *nubuwwa*, as *nabī* is capable of being aware of truths and having knowledge only on the basis of his *wilāya*. *Walī* is the one whose face is turned towards his Lord rather than towards this world or people (Ibid., p. 340). Following other *Shī'ī 'ārifs* and *ḥakīms*, Āshtīyānī stresses that the *imāms* are *awlīyā* and the successors of the Prophet who are precedent to creation (Ibid., p. 346).

Āshtīyānī's *Risālat al-Wilāya* has similarities with another important treatise on *wilāya* entitled *Wilāyat Nāmih* (Book of *Wilāya*) by Mullā Sulṭān Muḥammad Gunābādī, known as Sulṭān ʿAlī Shāh (d. 1327 H/1909).[41] Gunābādī was primarily a pupil of the above-mentioned Ḥāj Mullā Hādī Sabzivārī, but after his conversion to Sufism, for thirty-four years maintained the office of the *quṭbīyat* of the *Niʿmatullāhī silsila* known as *Niʿmatullāhī-yayi Gunābādīya*. His conversion to Sufism happened as a result of his fascination with the *Niʿmatullāhī quṭb* of the time, Muḥammad Kāẓim Isfahānī (d. 1293 H/1876), and with the name in the sect as Saʿādat ʿAlī Shah (also known as *Ṭāwūs al-ʿUrafā*, lit. the peacock of the mystics), the thirty-fourth *quṭb* in the line of *Niʿmatullāhī* leaders.[42] Like some of his predecessors, Gunābādī was martyred by a local governor. Both Āshtīyānī and Gunābādī belonged to the same epoch and despite being affiliated with two different blocks; one an *uṣūlī* jurist and a *ḥakīm* and the other a Sufi *quṭb*, they developed similar arguments for the conceptualization of *wilāya* and the office of *wilāyat al-khāṣṣah*. Sulṭān ʿAlī Shāh wrote a number of books, andamong them the above-mentioned *Wilāyat Nāmih* is significant.

The book revolves around the concept of *wilāya*, its reality, its nexus to Divine names and attributes, and its relationship with the doctrinal principles of Islam and of the faith of *Shīʿism*. In terms of etymology, Gunābādī sticks with the old twins of *wilāya* and *walāya*, and argues that the former means rule and reign, while the latter indicates friendship and closeness (Gunābādī 1384, p. 13). *Wilāya* is perennial and pre-existent and is regarded as the inward of *nubuwwa*, and as such is *noor* which has existed since the time of Adam. Along with the allegory of light, *wilāya* is likened to a Divine tree (*shajarat ul-ilāhīyah*) whose fruit, after crossbreeding, is joined with *insān*. Therefore, *wilāya* is a benefaction, a *khayr* (good), having come from the Divine tree which itself has hybridized with *insān* (Ibid., pp. 71–73). Gunābādī calls this type of *wilāya* 'covenant' (also *wilāyat al-taklīfīya*), and argues that by the covenant between God and His servants, the heart of the servant will open to the Faith, whilst there is another type of *wilāya* (the absolute *wilāya/wilāyat al-muṭlaqah*) which is known as Divine Will (*mashīyyat al-muṭlaqah*) and is the main source of His emanations (Ibid., pp. 13–15). As the holder of the status of the absolute *wilāya*, God's essence remains unknowable to His creatures unless He wills

Himself to appear through the mirror of His names and attributes—which, as observed throughout this book, is a classical *Akbarīan* argument to both explain His Essence and creation. In this status, He is light which shines or flows over everything, and as such is unified with them. Thus, *wilāya* in this usage is His deed or *mashīyyat al-ilāhīyah* (Divine Will) (Ibid., pp. 22–31). *Wilāyat al-taklīfīya*, along with prayer, alms, fasting, and *ḥajj*, is a principle of Islam and of the faith of *Shīʿism*, in the sense that by disobeying the *wilāya* of *walī*, a believer steps out of the boundaries of the faith. A believer, Gunābādī maintains, must accept the authority of *walī* (apparently Sufi *quṭb*) and his right to act upon him[43] (Ibid., pp. 34–35).

For Gunābādī, *wilāya* has obvious temporal connotations; *walī* is a ruler who has the right of absolute authority to act upon his people, and by accepting the authority of the ruler, people are secured from suffering and calamity. In the same way, by entering the covenant of *wilāya* a believer is safe from His agony (Ibid., p. 37). Interestingly, Gunābādī excludes women from the referents of the covenant of *wilāya* and of salvation, and as a result, women will remain in everlasting ignorance and suffering, and along with four other groups of people,[44] are not eligible to receive *khayr* and emanation from God (Ibid., pp. 61–63). I interject here that such a belief is in contrast to both the teachings of Islam and of Ibn ʿArabī and his mystical doctrine which has always allocated a room to women. It also bears witness to a development by which *ʿirfān* has increasingly gained a juridical aura. On the other hand, if according to Gunābādī, the faith is the fruit of the covenant of *wilāya*, by excluding women from attaining this fruit he argues against the comprehensive and all-encompassing message of Islam.

Āshtīyānī and Gunābādī's arguments are examples of what German philosopher Jurgen Habermas (d. 1929) has called 'intersubjectivity'. Furthermore, it has already been observed that as a result of Mullā Ṣadrā's synthesis between *ʿirfān*, *Shīʿa* theology and philosophy, particularly Illuminationist philosophy, the boundary between these areas became blurred and terms such as *wilāya* could have been conceptualized by Sufis, *mutakallims* (theologians) and *uṣūlī* mujtahids in the same way. The only difference was determining the referents; for the former the *walī* was the Sufi *quṭb* and for the latter it was the *uṣūlī* scholar.

4.7 ʿAllāmah Muḥammad Hossein Ṭabāṭabāʾī

Seyyed Muḥammad Hossein Qāḍī (Qāzī) Ṭabāṭabāʾī Tabrīzī, later known as ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī, was born in 1321 H/1904 in the village of Shadabad (or Shadagan) near Tabriz in Azerbaijan (Algar 2006, p. 327), of the famous clan of Ṭabāṭabāʾī, who trace their genealogies to the second *Shīʿī imām,* Al-Hassan, and specifically one of his progenies called Ibrāhīm ibn Ismāʿīl al-Dībāj, known as Ṭabāṭabā.[45] From his mother's side, Ṭabāṭabāʾī's genealogy goes back to the third *imām*, al-Hossein. He received his preliminary instructions in Tabriz and then moved to Najaf to complete his education there. He stayed in Iraq for ten years, but due to the poor economic situation, he had to return to Iran and stay in his hometown for ten years. He moved to Qum and resided there for the rest of his life. He passed away in 1402 H/1981 and was buried in the shrine of Ḥaḍrat Maʿṣūma (Fātima bint Mūsa al-Kādhim) in Qum.[46] Ṭabāṭabāʾī was a prolific writer and wrote on a variety of subjects such as metaphysics, Islamic ethics, mathematics (in which he was an expert), government and politics in Islam, *wilāya*, and *nubuwwa*, the School of *Shīʿīsm* (*maktab-i tashayyuʿ*), resurrection and Islamic anthropology. His exegesis on the *Qurʾān*, entitled *al-Mīzān fī Tafsīr l-Qurʾān*, popularly known as *Tafsīr al-Mīzān*, consists of twenty volumes and was originally written in Arabic. For the study and exegesis of the *Qurʾān*, Ṭabāṭabāʾī was inspired by his cousin Seyyed ʿAlī Qāḍī (Qāzī) Ṭabāṭabāʾī,[47] who had trained him in *ʿirfān* and in the works of Ibn ʿArabī. Sajjad Rizvi maintains that Ṭabāṭabāʾī's language in his exegesis "is deliberately theological, and in accord with his method, he rarely cites extra-*Qurʾānīc* material. Thus he deploys arguments and perspectives from his training in philosophy and *ʿirfān* to explicate the text but occludes his sources" (Rizvi 2015, p. 30).

His writings are altogether sixty-three original treatises and books, as well as glosses on different *Shīʿa* texts such as *Kitāb al-Kāfī*, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, *Ḥikmat al-Mutaʿālīya*, and *Kitāb al-Kifāya* (Rizvi 2015, pp. 46–50). His series of discussions with Henry Corbin (d. 1978) on a number of topics such as *Shīʿīsm*, *ʿirfān*, and *ḥikmat* are notable, as they shed light on different aspects of his thought.[48] Besides, Ṭabāṭabāʾī was not unaware of new intellectual trends in the West as he observed in them materialistic perils that could mislead young generations from the path of Islam and *Shīʿīsm*, and for this reason, he wrote *Uṣūl-i Falsafah wa Ravish-i Riʾālīsm* on Islamic Epistemology. He also trained many students, most of them later prominent intellectual and political figures who helped the new

political and theoretical system founded in post-revolutionary Iran. Among them Murtaḍā Muṭaharī, (who commented on *Uṣūl-i Falsafah wa Ravish-i Riʾālīsm*, d. 1357 *shamsī*/1979), Hossein ʿAlī Muntaẓirī (d. 1388 *shamsī*/2009), Muḥammad Hossein Bihishtī (d. 1359 *shamsī*/1981), ʿAbdullāh Javādī Āmulī, Ḥassan Ḥassanzādih Āmulī, and Muḥammad Taqī Miṣbāḥ Yazdī are famous (Ṭabāṭabāʾī 1429 H/2008, pp. 44–45).[49]

In addition to his students who disseminated his thoughts in Iran and other *Shīʿa* societies, his books clearly manifest his ideas on Islamic epistemology, metaphysics in general and Islamic metaphysics in particular, *tawḥīd*, the School of *Shīʿīsm*, and most importantly the notions of *wilāya*, *nubuwwa*, and *imamate*. So, for the purpose of this research, his key texts including *Risālat al-Wilāya* (the Book of *Wilāya*), a very important text on the notion of *wilāya* and related issues such as spiritual conduct (*sulūk*), perfection (*kamāl*), and man's life in this world and in the hereafter, will be examined. This treatise originally in Arabic, is widely translated into Persian, commented is upon by a number of figures and is published under different titles such as *Ṭarīq-i ʿIrfān* (the Path of Mysticism) *Sulūk-i Nafsānī* (Carnal Conduct), and *Wilāyat Nāmih* (the Book of Wilāya).[50] Other texts that will be examined and analyzed here include Ṭabāṭabāʾī's discussions with the French Orientalist Henry Corbin, namely *Shīʿa: Majmūʿi Mudhākirāt bā Professor Henry Corbin* (*Shīʿīsm*: the Collected Conversations with Henry Corbin). There exists another book entitled *Insān az Āghāz tā Anjām* (Man from Beginning to the End), containing Ṭabāṭabāʾī's ideas on *Shīʿa* epistemology and eschatology. The last two, though separate books, are very connected to each other. They discuss the School of *Shīʿīsm* and related issues such as imamate, *nubuwwa* and *wilāya*, and particularly the ways Ṭabāṭabāʾī develops arguments for the conceptualizations of them, in works entitled *Shīʿa dar Eslām* (*Shīʿīsm* in Islam) and *Maʿnawīyat-i Tashayuʿ* (the Spirituality of *Shīʿīsm*).

4.7.1 Wilāyat Nāmih

In his *Risālat al-Wilāya*, Ṭabāṭabāʾī begins with the definition of *wilāya*, which is leadership and authority as well as closeness and affinity to God. In its second definition, *wilāya* is intimately tied with the stations of gnosis, in the sense that the more a believer knows God, the closer he is to Him. Ṭabāṭabāʾī then turns his attention to the typology of *wilāya* and its division into *wilāyat al-ʿāmmah* and *wilāyat al-khāṣṣah* (general and specific *wilāya,* respectively). This division is a typical of the *ḥikmat* tradition

which has already been discussed adequately in this chapter. What is new in Ṭabāṭabāʾī's arguments on the conceptualizations of *wilāya* is that he turns his focus from *wilāyat al-khāṣṣah*[51]—which has traditionally been central in the *ḥikmat* writings, to *wilāyat al-ʿāmmah,* in the sense that it is actually this type of *wilāya* which is more important and has priority over another. This shift is intentional, as Ṭabāṭabāʾī sought to reach out to a larger audience; either ordinary readers or young generation, to expose them to the message of Islam and *Shīʿīsm*. This new development should be understood with regard to societal changes in Iran during the Riḍā Shah era: the literacy rate had been increased, various publishers facilitated the accessibility to ordinary readers of new books which were printed with higher circulation, and women had entered educational establishments such as colleges and universities. Knowledge, here mysticism, was no longer designated to a handful of the elite (*khawāṣṣ,* here the *imāms*), whose status and privileges are believed to be pre-given and pre-exist, but to anyone who sought it.

In Ṭabāṭabāʾī's entire body of work, except for short references to *wilāyat al-khāṣṣah*, one can hardly find detailed conceptualizations for the term, and from this perspective, one can maintain that Ṭabāṭabāʾī's argument reverses the typical understanding and conceptualizations of *wilāya*. *Wilāya* is neither understood in terms of *wilāyat al-takwīnīya*, nor even in terms of *wilāyat al-khāṣṣah*, but only *wilāyat al-ʿāmmah*, which is accessible for every believer. In *Wilāyat Nāmih*, he assures that *wilāya* is a faculty which could be obtained through spiritual conduct (Ṭabāṭabāʾī 1390, p. 179). Again, contrary to most of the *Ṣadrīan ḥakīms* who taught seekers to avoid women as pitfalls on the path to God, Ṭabāṭabāʾī's teachings are devoid of any such misogynist connotations. He addresses Man in general and promises his audiences that by doing *jihād*, which is a righteous deed, everyone is capable of reaching the status of *wilāya* and comprehending the hidden secrets of the Universe. Therefore, the rights of comprehending the secrets are not only designated to the Prophet and the *imāms* (Ṭabāṭabāʾī 1390, p. 180). It is noteworthy that Ṭabāṭabāʾī, unlike his predecessors who used to understand the status of *wilāya* only in terms of *wilāyat al-takwīnīya*, does not use this term at all.

Pertinent to this is the term *mukhlaṣ*. The People of Purity (*Ahl al-Ikhlāṣ* or *mukhlaṣūn*, also *sābiqūn* or *aṣḥāb al-asrār*, lit. the People of Secrets which is *wilāya*),[52] is one of the most frequent words in *Wilāyat Nāmih* and is used interchangeably for *awlīyā*. By this, Ṭabāṭabāʾī refers to those who grasp the true meaning of *tawḥīd* and worship God not according to

their imaginations, but on the basis of their gnosis of God. So, not only is their worship the most purified one, because it is founded on a true basis which is gnosis but also everybody can get to know Him and worship Him in an appropriate manner (Ṭabāṭabāʾī 1390, pp. 209–210). *Mukhlaṣūn* have to walk a number of steps, including repentance, self-assessment, meditation, practicing silence and seclusion, hunger and retirement, and keeping night vigil (*tahajjud*) in order to grasp His gnosis. Since the status of *wilāya* or *ikhlāṣ* requires turning face to God, to reach this goal, *mukhlaṣ* needs to process through all the aforementioned stages of spiritual conduct and become self-abnegated in Him. At the final step, the most beautiful names and attributes of God become manifested in them, and like Him, they enjoy the absolute right of acting upon the cosmos (Ṭabāṭabāʾī 1390, p. 211ff).

In terms of method, Ṭabāṭabāʾī in *Wilāyat Nāmih* uses the transmitted approach, relying mostly on the *Qurʾān* and *ḥadīth*, though in other books he develops rational arguments for the conceptualizations of *wilāya* and *nubuwwa*. For instance, in *Maʿnawīyat-i Tashayuʿ*, Ṭabāṭabāʾī turns his attention to another meaning of *wilāya*, leadership and supervision, and develops a rational argument for the conceptualizations of *wilāyat al-ʿāmmah*. *Wilāyat al-ʿāmmah* is a natural supervision which is both exercised by every believer over another and is the undertaking of the administration of social issues such as guardianship of orphans or the sponsorship of the insane. The referent of *wilāyat al-ʿāmmah*, then, could be both every believer and essential matters which need to be undertaken by a guardian. So, *wilāya* is a comprehensive term indicating both personal and communal leadership and supervision (Ṭabāṭabāʾī 1387a, pp. 70–71).

Here *wilāya* is an axiom (*badīhī*), an evident premise to be accepted as true without controversy. Ṭabāṭabāʾī uses this axiom as a starting point for his reasoning to prove *wilāya*. From this perspective, *wilāya* or leadership in Islam is natural and no one is to abrogate it: "the abrogation of leadership and *wilāya* is the abrogation of Islam and original disposition (*fiṭra*)" (Ṭabāṭabāʾī 1387a, p. 86). But who undertakes the guardianship of social and political matters? According to the classification of Ṭabāṭabāʾī, the issue of the formation of government is embedded in the category of social matters and is assigned to an individual who both holds piety and fear of God (*taqwā*), and has an impressive understanding of current social issues. In terms of the form of the government, Ṭabāṭabāʾī recognizes the consultative form of government (Ṭabāṭabāʾī 1387a, pp. 86–88).

Ṭabāṭabāʾī's doctrine of *wilāya* has been the subject of controversy among subsequent scholars. Muhsin Kadivar has discussed Ṭabāṭabāʾī's ideas on *wilāya* and government in *Shīʿism* in two of his books.[53] According to him, Ṭabāṭabāʾī's conceptualization of *wilāya* is a typical one (Kadivar 1378b, pp. 68–378), though his understanding of the term '*ulu l-amr'* (the guardians of the cause) is different. Kadivar stresses that Ṭabāṭabāʾī in *Tafsīr al-Mīzān* rejects the common but false assessment that by *'ulu l-amr'*, the *Qurʾān* means jurists, *ʿulemā*, *khulafā* of the Prophet, military officers, or even the consensus of the *ummah* (community of believers), because this term refers only to the Prophet and the *imāms* (Kadivar 1378a, pp. 177–178). A similar interpretation is given by Sajjad Rizvi in his above-mentioned article on Ṭabāṭabāʾī, in which he explains how Ṭabāṭabāʾī's conceptualization of *wilāya*, as well as his *Tafsīr al-Mīzān* should be understood as claims to authority, as opposed to the authority of the *fuqahā* (Rizvi 2015, p. 16). On the other hand, Algar holds a completely different opinion and maintains that Ṭabāṭabāʾī has endorsed the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh* "at the very least in its general outline" (Algar 2006, Op.cit, p. 347). According to Ṭabāṭabāʾī, "the individual who excels all others in piety, administrative ability (*ḥusn-i tadbīr*), and awareness of contemporary circumstances, is best fitted for this position [the leadership of society]" (Ṭabāṭabāʾī, *wilāyat wa zaʿāmat*, pp. 91–2 in Algar 2006, p. 346).

Ṭabāṭabāʾī's approach is a 'holistic' one, in which there is an identification between "the study and spiritual practice of philosophy and *ʿirfān* with the very faith of *Shīʿī* Islam" (Rizvi 2015, p. 17), and by this, as it is mentioned earlier, he privileges "his areas of expertise over the main pursuits of the *ḥawza*" (Rizvi 2015, p. 17). This approach is also perceived in his discussion with Henry Corbin, in which he maintains that the faith of *Shīʿism* is centered on the notion of *wilāya*; whether it is understood in terms of leadership and authority of the household of the Prophet, or in terms of closeness and affinity to God, and from both perspectives, the abrogation of *wilāya* or negligence from it will end in the abrogation of *Shīʿism* (Ṭabāṭabāʾī 1387b, p. 51ff). From the viewpoint of the latter, *wilāya* is the path and the inward of *nubuwwa*, without which the status of *nubuwwa* and its functions would be ineffective and futile. In both meanings, *wilāya* is a perpetual and constant status. Along with rational methodology, Ṭabāṭabāʾī also deploys transmitted sources to argue for the right of *imām* Ali and his sons for the succession of the Prophet (Ṭabāṭabāʾī 1387b, p. 268ff).

As society advances from the time of Ibn ʿArabī, his impact on *Shīʿī* philosophers is less tangible, not only because his teachings were wholly incorporated into the *Shīʿa* beliefs, but because of *Shīʿī* scholars' familiarity with other influences such as Western philosophy. Ṭabāṭabāʾī is significant because compared to his peers in the School of Qum and to Āshtīyānī, he appears to be independent and self-assured. *Akbarīan* mysticism is almost non-existent in his *ʿirfān*. However, his familiar title *Wilāyat Nāmih* was used by his predecessors, though the similarity is nominal. Likewise, his *ḥikma* can be singled out from his peers in the School of Tehran. His avoidance of using outdated terms such as *wilāyat al-takwīnīya*, and instead placing his emphasis on *wilāyat al-ʿāmmah,* affirms the fact that we are faced a philosopher who is reluctant to accept anything that is incompatible with intellect and rational criteria. Moreover, his confidence to use unconventional terms including *mukhlaṣūn* for *awlīyā*, makes him a different, albeit unique, *ʿārif* and *ḥakīm*, where several rivers come together to make an ocean.

4.8 Conclusion

We gained some observations from our examination of the conceptualizations of *wilāya*:

Mullā Ṣadrā's legacy flourished in the School of Tehran. The four *ḥakīms* of this school, namely Mullā ʿAlī Nūrī, Mullā Hādī Sabzivārī, Āqā ʿAlī Ḥakīm Mudarris Tehranī, and Āqā Muḥammad Riḍā Qumshiʾī,[54] not only perpetuated 'the prophetic philosophy' in their writings, but also followed Ṣadrā's approach and terminology (a combination of *ʿirfānī* and rational method) to develop reasoning for the components of this philosophy, such as imamology, prophetology, gnosiology, and the concept of the occultation. Along with the *ḥakīms*, who were intermediary links between the School of Isfahan[55] and the School of Qum, there were two other generations of students that were either transmitters of the *Ṣadrīan* philosophy and *Ibn ʿArabīan* metaphysics to the next generation, or were scholars who were to become the teachers of the School of Qum (Rizvi 2014, p. 125).

Ḥakīms came to understand and analyze the *Ṣadrīan ḥikmat* from both philosophical and *ʿirfānī* viewpoints, and they did that through commenting/glossing, "clarifying the meanings of obscure phrases in their works" (Ismāʿīl 2014, p. 132), or developing a tradition based "on its own interpretations and a plethora of works were written" (Ismāʿīl 2014, p. 132).

Therefore, their writings were regarded as either a return to original source material (either philosophical or mystical) or an addition to the existing *Ṣadrīan* tradition through glossing and commenting on them. From this perspective, as Zuhair Ismāʿīl maintains, their works, in general, are important to the understanding of *ḥikma*, as well as to the application of it (Ismāʿīl, p. 132). In terms of their contribution to the conceptualizations of *wilāya*, the *ʿirfānī* reading was dominant, whose culmination, as observed earlier in the chapter, was in the works of Āqā Muḥammad Riḍā Qumshiʾī.

The writings of the *ḥakīms* of the School of Qum, unlike those of their predecessors, do not display the balance between the *ʿirfānī* and philosophical reading, as each of them represents a distinct dimension of *Ṣadrīan ḥikma*. In the works of Ṭabāṭabāʾī, there is a separation among philosophical, mystical, and traditional discussions on one hand, and the dominance of the Periphatetic reading of Ṣadrā without the inclusion of theoretical *ʿirfān*, on the other. In his doctrine of *wilāya*, which is best illustrated in *Wilāyat Nāmih*, Ṭabāṭabāʾī's arguments, in contrast to those of Mullā Ṣadrā who had adopted a cohesive approach, are rooted in the *Qurʾānīc* and *Shīʿa* teachings. In addition, he had earlier shown his interest in Periphatetic philosophy in his two books, *Bidāyat al-Ḥikma* and *Nihāyat al-Ḥikma*, which, as Zuhair Ismāʿīl rightly argues, significantly exposed Islamic philosophy to a wider population (Ismāʿīl 2014, pp. 135–136).

Probably one can refer to this 'exposure' as gaining a social aspect of Ṭabāṭabāʾī's teachings, and as Muhsin Kadivar has argued, his thoughts display a mixture of *Shīʿa* doctrines and social goals of human society (Kadivar 1378a, p. 45). In volume four of *Tafsīr al-Mīzān*, Ṭabāṭabāʾī develops lengthy discussions for concepts such as man and society, Islamic visions of society, and the social nature of human beings (Ṭabāṭabāʾī 1394 H/1974, pp. 92–138). Pertinent to this is his emphasis on personal aspects of the teachings of Islam, such as individual perfection and the concept of *wilāyat al-ʿāmmah*, which is accessible to every believer. These two dimensions, social and individual, are interrelated as individual perfection, in which the status of *wilāyat al-ʿāmmah* is fulfilled only within the Islamic social context. It is also with the figures of the School of Qum that Islamic philosophy gains interaction with Western philosophy, and works such as *Uṣūl-i Falsafah wa Ravish-i Riʾālīsm*, in which Islamic philosophy is presented in a new way, were published. The School maintains this tradition to this day.

There are two more differences between the Schools of Tehran and Qum: for the *ḥakīms* of the School of Tehran, *ḥikma* was an end in itself, but for their successors in the School of Qum, *ḥikma* is a "tool to increase the depth of unrelated researches such as political philosophy in the scheme of *walāyah al-faqīh,* (guardianship of the jurist), *Qurʾānīc* hermeneutics, ethics, and the environment" (Ismāʿīl 2014, p. 138). Moreover, if the *ḥakīms* of the School of Tehran enjoyed the Qajar court's respect and attention, the *ḥakīms* of the School of Qum took advantage of the well-organized social and financial networks of the late Pahlavi era that sustained them to survive the temporary shock of Riḍā Khān's secularism.

The Schools of Tehran and Qum are fascinating subjects for scholarly research, but a study and analysis of the conceptualization of *wilāya* has been lacking. The intention of the author is to contextualize *wilāya* and other related terms to see how the *ḥakīms* contributed to the inherited tradition available to them. Therefore, the perspective of this chapter could be regarded as an addition to the existing research. As will be observed in the next two chapters, it was this network, along with Ayatollah Khomeini's defiance (another prominent figure of the School of Qum with *ʿirfānī* reading), to the existing socio-political order that facilitated the actualization of the *Ṣadrīan ḥikmat* in Iran. In these chapters, it will be shown how the three currents of mysticism, theology, and jurisprudence came together and created a context within which concepts such as *wilāya*, imamate, *nubuwwa,* and vicegerency of the Hidden *imām* are understood and actualized.

Notes

1. The term "school" was first coined by Henry Corbin and Hossein Nasr "to describe a philosophical movement within a specific location, but one should not assume that philosophical activity at a certain time was confined to these areas. Rather, the term denotes a burst of activity that primarily occurred in a certain place" (Zuhair ʿAlī Ismāʿīl, *Between Philosophy and ʿIrfān: Interpreting Ṣadrā From the Qajars to Post-Revolutionary Iran*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Exeter, October 2014, pp. 79–80). Although, as it will be observed further in this chapter, there have been scholars who were not present in a certain place at the time of activity of the School, but significantly contributed to it. For example, the School of Tehran, had two relevant, though geographically distinct scholars, Mullā ʿAlī Nūrī and Mullā Hādī Sabzivārī who did not live in Tehran, but are regarded as members of the School of Tehran.

2. Karīm Mujtahidī in his *Āshināyī-i Iranian bā Falsafihāy-i Jadīd-i Gharb* (Iranians' Familiarity with the New Western Philosophies) has given a historical record of Iranian's intellectual and economic encounters with the West from the Safawid era onward. See:

   Karīm Mujtahidī, *Āshināyī-i Iranian bā Falsafihāy-i Jadīd-i Gharb* (Iranians' Familiarity with the New Western Philosophies), 1388 (Tehran: Sāzimān-i inteshārāt-i Pazhūhishgāh-i Farhang va Andīshiy-i Islāmī & Muʾasasiy-i Muṭāliʿāt-i Tārīkh-i Muʿāṣir-i Iran).
3. *Uṣūl-i Falsafah wa Ravish-i Riʾālīsm* stems from Ṭabāṭabāʾī's lectures in his classes in Qum before 1332/1945, and consists of fourteen treatises divided into five volumes, which discuss pure philosophical issues from an Islamic perspective. By *Riʾālīsm*, Ṭabāṭabāʾī indicates *al-ḥikmat al-mutaʿālīya* against sophism (*safsaṭa*) which is manifested whether in Marxism (Dialectical Materialism), or positivism. He calls these two 'idealism', and argues that the most reasonable philosophical school is that of Mullā Ṣadrā which is a synthesis of the two great philosophical heritages; Greek and Islamic (including Peripatetic and illuminationist trends), and is as old as the history of philosophy itself. Ṭabāṭabāʾī claims that Mullā Ṣadrā could reconcile a 2000-year-old philosophical dispute, which had started from the Greek, and invent a new philosophical school called *al-ḥikmat al-mutaʿālīya*.

   Muḥammad Hossein Ṭabāṭabāʾī, *Uṣūl-i Falsafah wa Ravish-i Riʾālīsm* (the Principles of Philosophy and Realism), introduction and footnotes by Murtaḍā Muṭaharī, two volumes, 1364 (Tehran: Ṣadrā Publication). Murtaḍā Muṭaharī's lengthy footnotes on the book are not descriptions, and as Dabashi emphasizes, in fact tackle the philosophical materialism, "not because of the inherent significance of this school of thought but because it had, through the agency of the *Tudeh* party, targeted the young people for conversion, [and] such intrusions into the intellectual domain of Islamic scholastic learning had to be challenged philosophically". Hamid Dabashi, *Theology of Discontent*, 1993, p. 155. Dabashi certainly maintains that Muṭaharī's endeavour was to question and refute the validity of one of the materialistic premises which was the idea of relativity of the truth. At that time, as Dabashi argues, Marxism could challenge and rob militant *Shīʿīsm* of both "its metaphysical claim to truth and its ideological claim to political mobilization". Hamid Dabashi, *Theology of Discontent: the Ideological Foundation of the Islamic Revolution in Iran*, 2006 (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers), p. 156.
4. *Ḥikmat* (also *ḥikma*), means transcendent wisdom and "divine science that combined gnosis (in particular the sapiential and metaphysical Sufi thought of the School of Ibn al-ʿArabī, q.v.), theosophy, and philosophy" (Nasr 1966, p. 907, in *Isfahan School of Philosophy*, Sajjad Rizvi 2012, p. 122),

and is insisted to have prophetic roots. In the topography of *ḥikmat*, one should notice that it was Henry Corbin (d. 1978) and following him Hossein Nasr (1933–) that for the first time situated the idea of *ḥikmat* within a certain geographical framework and particularly tied it to the 'the School of Isfahan', as representing "the high point of Persian *Shīʿa* civilization" (Rizvi, Op.cit 2012, p. 122).

5. The analytical biographies of these masters are reflected in a number of studies:

   Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islamic Philosophy from its Origin to the Present; Philosophy in the Land of Prophecy*, 2006 (NY, State University of New York Press), pp. 235–259.

   Manūchihr Ṣadūghī Suhā, *Tārīkh-i Ḥukamā wa ʿUrafāy-i Mutiʾakhir*, n.d. (Tehran: Ḥikmat Publication), pp. 141–500.

   There also exist case studies focusing on individual scholars:

   Sajjad Rizvi, *Mullā ʿAlī Nūrī: Inheritor and Reviver of Ḥikmat in Qajar Iran*, in *Qajar Philosophy*, Sabine Schmidtke and Reza Pourjavady (Eds), forthcoming (Leiden: Brill). & Sajjad Rizvi, *Ḥikma Mutaʿālīya in Qajar Iran: Locating the Life and Work of Mullā Hādī Sabzivārī* (d. 1289/1873), Iranian Studies 44.4 (2011), 473–96.

6. In a general comparison, one can mention the writings of Sergei N. Bulgakov, the Russian Orthodox Christian theologian and philosopher (d. 1944) who has discussed the concept of Sophia, the wisdom of God, from this perspective. Sophia is the intelligible basis of the world—the soul of the world, the wisdom of the nature, the intermediary, or a boundary needed between "the Nothing of the Creator and the multiplicity of the cosmos" (Bulgakov 1993, p. xvi). "Sophiology" here has similarity with the conceptualizations of *wilāya* in the writings of the *ḥakīms,* and is a multi-dimensional concept. Probably the one important difference is that Sophia is feminine, but *wilāya*, both as a desirable model of leadership and authority, as well as an ontological status, is masculine. Sophia at once is Divine, but at the same time, is in the world, throughout it, in the form of Divine energies and spiritual beings, as its boundary (Bulgakov, p. xvii). Bulgakov argues that Sophia (the wisdom of God/the nature of God) is inseparable from Ousia (Divine substance), and Ousia is disclosed and manifested as Sophia. There is also another striking figure, Shekinah (the Glory of God/refers to manifestation), "in the midst of which God manifests himself" (Bulgakov 1993, p. 29). Therefore, Ousia, Sophia, and Shekinah are inseparable and refer to one truth which is Deity. See: Sergei N. Bulgakov, *Sophia, the Wisdom of God: an Outline of Sophiology*, 1993 (Hudson: Lindisfarne Press).

7. A few of these *masjid-madrasas* belong to pre-Qajar period, and the rest were built in the Qajar era. See:

Muḥammad Javād Mahdawī Nizhād, Gūni Shināsī-ya Masjid-Madrasahā-ya Dawra-yi Qajar (the Typology of Mosque-Schools of the Qajar Period), *Faṣlnāmay-i Muṭāliʿāt-i Shāhr-i Irānī*, No. 11, Spring 1392, pp. 8–9.

8. For a detailed account of Martyn's job, journey and polemical treatise on Islam and the *Qurʾān*, the *ʿulemā* and Sufi's responses, and the encouraging role of the court in writing refutations against him, see:

   Abbas Amanat, *Mujtahids and Missionaries: Shii responses to Christian polemics in the early Qajar period*, in *Religion and Society in Qajar Iran*, Robert Gleave (ed), 2005 (London and New York: Routlege Curzon), pp. 247–270. & Maḥmūd Riḍā Isfandīyār, *Risālay-i Radd-i Pādrī* (Refutation on Pādrī), 1387 (Tehran: Ḥaqīqat Publication), pp. 4–42.
9. The term *qayyim bil kitāb* (*qayyim al Qurʾān*) is used for the first time by Shaykh Shahāb al-Dīn Yaḥya ibn Ḥabash Suhrawardī (d. 587 H/1191) in his book *Kitāb Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq* (Illuminationist Philosophy). In his discussions on *nubuwwa* and particularly on 'the states of seekers' (*aḥvāl-i sālikān*), Suhrawardī maintains that the one who is eligible to rule and govern is the *sālik* who has the gnosis of the secret (*ḥikmat*) of the book (the book of *ḥikmat al-ishrāq*), because *ḥikmat* as it has become through this book indicates Divine secrets and truths. Therefore, the one who knows *ḥikmat* and arises to implement it is the true *sālik*. Here again, the recurring theme which is inmost being/*sirr* plays a central role, as it is by the virtue of the *sirr* that the seeker is distinguished from peers. See:

   Shahāb al-Dīn Yaḥya ibn Ḥabash Suhrawardī, *Kitāb Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq* (Illuminationist Philosophy), translation into Persian by Seyyed Jaʿfar Sajjādī, 2nd edition, n.d. (Tehran: Tehran University Publication), p. 401.
10. Ostensibly, Mullā Ṣadrā and his followers misunderstood the doctrine of the sealing of *wilāya*, as elaborated by Ibn ʿArabī. In *Akbarīan* mysticism, *khātam al-wilāya* is the one in which *wilāya* comes to perfection and completion, in contrast, by identifying the last *imām* with the *khātam*, the *Shīʿa* philosophers and mystics are in fact misunderstood and believed *khātam* is the one who comes at the end and by whom the cycle of *wilāya*/imamate terminates.
11. *Shīʿī* scholars have described the meaning of the *sirr* and its relation to ontological stations. Mullā ʿAbdullāh Zunūzī maintains that *sirr* is an ecstasy of contemplation (*ḥāl*), between God and His servant, which is hidden from anybody else. In interpreting this *ḥadīth* that "our cause is secret, does not avail it but secret and secret of secret, the secret which is hidden by secret", Zunūzī mentions that in this *ḥadīth*, *sirr* refers to the absolute *wilāya* and the comprehensive *khilāfa* which is Divine side of the cause of God and its human side is *nubuwwa*. The station of *sirr*/*wilāya*, then, is the highest station (Zunūzī 1354, pp. 75–80). In the present

book, *Anwār Jalīyyah* (the Manifest Lights) Zunūzī puts forward that the station of *tawḥīd*, which is *sirr* and unveiling of the *sirr*, is analogous to the station of *wilāya* or invisible/hidden (Zunūzī, pp. 300–301ff). It seems that the extremist understanding of the status of *wilāya*—which was *wilāyat al-takwīnīya*—had so preoccupied scholars of the post-*Safawid* era that they used to analyze everything in terms of it. Zunūzī, as do many of his contemporaries and predecessors, turns *wilāya* into an incomprehensible fact and therefore outside of the realm of human understanding, whose boundaries are blurred with those of *tawḥīd*. In the following pages, Zunūzī stresses that by the Truth, *imāms* meant the absolute *wilāya* which contains all other kinds of *wilāya* (Zunūzī, p. 358). Alongside philosophical understanding of the meaning of *sirr*, there was a pure *ʿirfānī* interpretation of this notion around this period of time that understood *sirr* and *wilāya* the same: "*sirr* is the source of the hidden intuition and the mine of divine knowledge", so, *wilāya* of the *imāms* is their *sirr*. See: Umm u-Salamah Beygum Nayrīzī, *Jāmiʿ al-Kullīyāt; Kullīyāt-i Masāʾil-i ʿIrfānī-ya Shīʿa* (the Comprehensive of Generalities; the Generalities of Mystical and Shīʿa Problems), Mahdī Iftikhār (ed), 1386 (Qum: Maṭbūʿāt-i Dīnī), pp. 172–73 footnotes.

12. Shaykh Aḥmad Aḥsāʾī (d. 1239 H/1826) has two *risālas* entitled *al-Fawāʾid* or *Sharḥ al-Fawāʾid*, and they are published in different volumes of *Jawāmiʿ al-Kalim* (Comprehensive Words). The first one, entitled *Sharḥ al-Fawāʾid*, is published in the first volume of *Jawāmiʿ*, and as a lengthy writing (Aḥsāʾī 1430f H, vol. 1, pp. 275–635) consists of twelve *fāʾida* and is written as an answer to the questions of someone called 'Mashhad ibn Hossein ʿAlī'. On the importance of this *risāla*, Aḥsāʾī himself claims that he writes it because none of the *ʿulemā* or *ḥukamā* prior to him has come to touch upon these questions thus far, and his ability to write it stems from the fact that he is assisted by the esoteric knowledge of the *imāms*. The present *risāla* is mainly on being (or existence or reality, lit. *wujūd*), His being, or *wujūd al-ḥaqq*, and the gnosis to His being and quiddity. For the address of the book, see: *Jawāmiʿ al-Kalim* (Comprehensive Words), vol. 1, 1430f H (Baṣra: al-ghadīr), pp. 275–635.

    The second *risāla* entitled *al-Fawāʾid fi l-Ḥikma* (the Theosophical Outcomes) is published in the second volume of the same book, *Jawāmiʿ al-Kalim* and is shorter than the first *risāla* (Aḥsāʾī 1430f H, vol. 2, pp. 175–221), though it discusses the same issues. For more information see: *Jawāmiʿ al-Kalim* (Comprehensive Words), vol. 2, 1430f H (Baṣra: al-ghadīr), pp. 175–221. Nūrī's gloss seems to be on this particular *risāla*. Aḥsāʾī has three other *risālas* called *al-Fawāʾid al-Salʿa* (Septet Outcomes), (pp. 223–251), *Fāʾida fi l-Istiṣḥāb* (Benefit in Acquiring) (pp. 135–137) and *al-Fawāʾid fī Mabānī al-Uṣūl* (Benefit in the Foundations of Principles)

(pp. 141–173), and they are published in volumes two and six of the same collection, respectively. For more information see: *Jawāmiʿ al-Kalim*, vol. 6, 1430f H (Baṣra, al-ghadīr), pp. 135–137 & 141–173.

13. Sufi contemporaries of Nūrī preferred to use the term 'spring' instead of 'creation' for the appearance of the *Muḥammedan* Reality. They insisted to prove that creation (*khalq*), is both general and is signified to lower levels, not to the *Muḥammedan* Reality which is the highest degree of creation. See: Umm u-Salamah Beygum Nayrīzī, Op.cit, 1386 (Qum: Maṭbūʿāt-i Dīnī), pp. 52–53.
14. Idris Samawi Hamid has discussed Nūrī's commentaries on *Sharḥ al-Fawāʾid al-Ḥikamīya* in his unpublished article *Shaykh Aḥmad Ibn Zayniddīn al-Aḥsāʾī* (Samawi, unpublished article, Op.cit, pp. 35–38). These commentaries could be regarded as an example of interdiscursive dialogue between two significant scholars, that, despite the "strenuous disagreement" between them over some of Aḥsāʾī's criticisms of Mullā Ṣadrā, Nūrī "still considered him at least equal in stature to his then late teacher Āqā Muḥammad Bīdābādī (d. 1197hl/1783ce), another powerful spiritual personality" (Ibid., p. 7). Samawi believes that Nūrī was both an admirer, and a critic of Aḥsāʾī at the same time (Ibid., p. 16).
15. These two *ḥadīth* of *imām* Ali that "I am the *ṣalāt* (prayer) of believers" and "I am the *qibla* of *ʿārifūn* (the prayer direction of the gnostic)" refer to the same point. Nūrī interprets it by saying that since the reality of the essence of *imām* is the reality of the glorification of God (*tasbīḥ*), believers by doing everyday prayer which is His glorification, recalls the reality of *imām* (Nūrī 1385 *shamsī*, p. 339).
16. This prophetic *ḥadīth* which says that: "Ali and I are the fathers of this nation (*ummah*)" (Nūrī 1385 *shamsī*, p. 316), mentions the idea of *wilāyat al-takwīnīya* and the right of *walī* to have the absolute authority over their believers.
17. The status of *ḥakīm al-ilāhī* is shared both by *awlīyā* and prophets (Nūrī 1385 *shamsī*, p. 418).
18. In the Library of *Majlis*, the first one is numbered 2065 and the second is 3958.
19. Henry Martyn was "a chaplain to the military of the East India Company, having served as a missionary in India from 1806 to 1810 and translated the New Testament into *Urdū*" (Rizvi forthcoming, p. 18), *Hindī*, and other local languages of India (Isfandīyār 1387 *shamsī*, p. 14). In India, he became famous as *Pādrī*, and it was there when he started controversial disputes with Muslims. He was known for his negative opinions about Iranians (Isfandīyār 1387 *shamsī*, p. 15), though at the same time, he "turned his attention to a Persian New Testament and visited Iran in 1811" (Rizvi forthcoming, p. 18). He sought to present copies of the Persian translations to Fatḥ ʿAlī Shah and ʿAbbās Mīrzā. In Isfahan, Shiraz and

Tehran he became involved in disputations with some Sufis and a number of *ʿulemā*, but never found a chance to visit the Shah. For a lengthy analysis of Henry Martyn's adventures in the East, See: Maḥmūd Riḍā Isfandīyār's introduction to *Risālay-i Radd-i Pādrī*, Op.cit, 1387, pp. 4–42.

Maḥmūd Riḍā Isfandīyār has listed all of the refutations on Martyn's polemical writing against Islam. They were either written by Sufis or *ḥakīms* such as Nūrī, though the latter apparently does not find mystical responses appropriate and convincing. There exist ten refutations on Martyn altogether, among them Nūrī's treatise is famous. In addition to Nūrī, Mīrzā ʿĪsā Khān Qāʾim Maqām Farāhānī (Mīrzā Bozorg whose refutation is one of the first responses to Martyn), Mullā Muḥammad Riḍā Hamidānī (two *risālas*), Mīrzā Abul Qāsim Gīlānī known as Mīrzāy-i Qumī, Mullā Aḥmad Narāqī, Sayyīd Muḥammad Husseyn ibn Mīr ʿAbdul Bāqī Khātūnābādī, ʿAlī Akbar Izhiʾī Iṣfahānī, Muḥammad Bāqir Bihbahānī, Hossein ʿAlī Shāh Iṣfahānī, and Muḥammad Mahdī ibn Saʿīd Khalkhālī wrote refutations. Martyn's polemic has also received a response from the head of the *Shaykhī* School of Kerman, Muḥammad Karīm Khān Kermānī (d. 1288/1871) entitled *Nuṣrat al Dīn* (Helping the Faith). Nūrī's controversy with Sufis over their responses to Martyn and his attack on them is an example of misunderstanding between the people of *sharīʿa* and those of *ṭarīqa*.

20. It seems that Sufis elaborated more on the issue of the manifestation of the Prophet to previous prophets. For example, the above-mentioned Umm u-Salamah Beygum Nayrīzī in her *Jāmiʿ al-Kullīyāt* stresses that this manifestation happens with the *mithālī* body of the Prophet and is not restricted to manifestation in humans, as it also contains a manifestation in the whole cosmos. By his manifestation, people and cosmos will return to their Permanent archetypes. See: Nayrīzī, Op.cit, 1368, pp. 59–60 & 63.
21. The *ḥadīth* is narrated by ʿAllāmah Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī in *Biḥār al-Anwār* (Oceans of the Lights), vol. 26, pp. 1–7.
22. Manūchihr Ṣadūghī Suhā, *Tārīkh-i Ḥukamā wa ʿUrafāy-i Mutiʾakhir* (History of the Contemporary *Ḥakīms* and Gnostics), Op.cit, n.d., pp. 161–205.
23. Henry Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy,* Op.cit, n.d., pp. 358–362.
24. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islamic Philosophy from its Origin to the Present; Philosophy in the Land of Prophecy*, Op.cit, 2006, pp. 235–259. So is Nasr's entry in the Encyclopædia Iranica under *Hādī Sabzivārī* which is available here http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/hadi-sabzavari, last accessed 01/02/2019.

    More recent works have been published such as Sajjad H. Rizvi's Ḥikma al-Mutaʿālīya in Qajar Iran: Locating the Life and Work of Mullā Hādī Sabzawārī (d. 1289 H/1873), *Iranian Studies*, volume 44, number 4, July 2011.

25. Dhukāʾī Sāwajī's bibliography of Sabzivārī's writings is comprehensive, as contains his published and unpublished works both, and in some cases, mentions the published and unpublished volumes of the same text. He also names works that are about Sabzivārī's life and heritage. See: Murtaḍā Dhukāʾī Sāwajī, Kitāb Shināsīy-i Hāj Mullā Hādī Sabzivārī (Bibliography of Hāj Mullā Hādī Sabzivārī), *Keyhān Farhangī*, Farvardīn 1372, No. 96, pp. 22–28.
26. Sabzivārī "commented on a number of classics such as *Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq* … of Suhrawardī (d. 1191 H/1777), *Shawāriq al-Ilhām* (Roaring of Inspiration) of Lāhījī (d. 1071 H/1661), *Zubdat al-Uṣūl* (Gist of Principles) of Shaykh Bahāʾ al-Dīn ʿAmilī (d. 1030 H/1621), *Sharḥ Alfīya* (the Commentary on One Thousand) of ibn Mālik … of Jalāl al-Dīn Suyūtī (d. 910 H/1505), and *al-Abḥāth al-Mufīda* (the Fruitful Discussions) of ʿAllāmah Hillī (d. 725 H/1325)" (Rizvi 2011, p. 12). He also commented on the important writings of Mullā Ṣadrā, such as *al-Asfār al-Arbaʿi*, *al-Mabdaʾ wa-l-Maʿād* (Beginning and Resurrection), *al-Shawāhid al-Rubūbīyya* (Divine Witnesses) *Mafātīh al-Ghayb*, and *Asrār al-Āyāt*. Among Sabzivārī's commentaries on supplications and literature, one can name *Sharḥ al-Asmāʾ* (Commentary on the Names) *Sharḥ-i Duʿāy-i Ṣabāḥ* (Commentary on the *Ṣabāḥ* Supplications) and *Sharḥ-i Asrār*. He had poetic talent and "composed verse under the pen-name *Asrār*" (Rizvi 2011, pp. 12–15). He taught and trained a large number of students who were all active in disseminating his heritage both in Persia and Persianate territories (Suhā n.d., pp. 161–205). Addressing his contributions, he is regarded as "one of the four axial philosophers of the Qajar period who represented the major tendencies in philosophical and rational mystical speculation" (Suhā n.d., p. 22). Although Sabzivārī never resided in the capital, but studied with scholars such as Āqā ʿAlī mudarris Zunūzī (known as *Ḥakīm-i Mudarris*, d. 1307 H/1890), Āqā Muḥammad Riḍā Qumshiʾī (d. 1306 H/1889), and Mīrzā Seyyed Abul Ḥassan ibn Muḥammad Ṭabāṭabāʾī Jilvih (d. 1314 H/1896) and therefore he is enlisted as a member of the School of Tehran. The only exception to this is Henry Corbin, who has classified him as a member of the School of Sabzivār (Corbin n.d., pp. 358–362).
27. John Cooper in his article on Rūmī and *ḥikmat* has mentioned the attributes of the Perfect Man. The Perfect Man is the Supreme Sign of the Truth and of the Supreme Theophanic Exposition, and he is an all mirror and illustration of both types of Divine Attributes, the transcendent and the immanent. It is a mirror of harmony, forming the temple of Divine Unity. See: John Cooper, *Rūmī and Ḥikmat: Towards a Reading of Sabziwārī's Commentary on the Mathnawī*, in *The Heritage of Ṣūfism; Classical Persian Ṣūfism from its Origins to Rūmī* (700–1300), vol. 1, Leonard Lewisohn (Ed), 1999 (Oxford: Oneworld), pp. 409–433.

28. This is the second writing of Sabzivārī after *Sharḥ al-Asmāʾ* and was finished in the Ramadhan of 1267, and Sabzivārī himself has commented on it. This text is divided into several parts and for each part the author gives a detailed explanation of the literary meaning of the sentences, then he describes the sentence and finally interprets it. According to each sentence, Sabzivārī discusses philosophical, theological and mystical topics (Sabzivārī 1372 *shamsī*, pp. 7–9).
29. A collection of juridical and mystical themes which has been composed and commented upon by Sabzivārī has a poetic style, and is composed of 1700 verses, by which the author tried to present juridical problems, as well as to explain the *ʿirfānī* secrets behind them. The text should be treated as a juridical book which is divided into parts (called *maḥāfil*), such as purification, prayer, alms, fasting, *ḥajj* and marriage. In terms of method, he does not use rational argument, but rather employs *ʿirfānī* terminology (Sabzivārī 1384, pp. 11–13).
30. One can trace Qumshiʾī's intellectual lineage back to the *ḥikmat* scholars of the post-Safawid era, the very dark years of the devastation of the seminaries of Isfahan as a result of the assault of Maḥmūd Afghān. His first teacher, Muḥammad Jaʿfar Lāhījī, was the son of Mullā Muḥammad Ṣādiq, who himself was the teacher of philosophy in Isfahan and commented on *Mashāʿir* of Mullā Ṣadrā. His son, Muḥammad Jaʿfar, was the student of *ḥakīm* Mīrzā Abul Qāsim Mudarris Khātūnābādī (d. 1202 H/1787) and Mullā Miḥrāb Gīlānī (d. 1217 H/1802) (Jalal al-Dīn Humāʾī in Nājī Iṣfahānī 1378, p. 21). Addressing the former, Mīrzā Abul Qāsim was a member of Khātūnābādī clan and they themselves were the children of ʿAllāmah Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī. In philosophy, Khātūnābādī was the student of Mullā Ismāʿīl Khawjūyī and Shaykh Āqā Muḥammad Bīdābādī, and in jurisprudence the student of Seyyed Baḥr ul-Ulūm.

    The intellectual genealogy of Bīdābādī merits attention as well. Āqā Muḥammad Bīdābādī (d. 1198 H/1783), was originally from Gilan and his father's ancestors went back to Shaykh Zāhid Gīlānī (d. 700 H/1300). His father moved to Isfahan and settled down in Bidabad, a district in the north west of the city of Isfahan, where he got his family name. His son, Āqā Muḥammad was born and studied in Isfahan. Along with his fame in rational and scriptural sciences, he was a pious *ʿārif* and an expert in the Occult as well. His intellectual activities as a teacher coincided with the devastation of Isfahan in the aftermath of the Afghān assault. He was a reviver of *ḥikmat* in the seminaries of Isfahan in the eighteenth century, and used to teach a number of disciplines such as jurisprudence, *ḥikmat*, *ʿirfān*, ethics, and *ḥadīth*. He was the most prominent student of Mullā Ismāʿīl Khawjūyī (d. 1173 H/1759), Mīrzā Muḥammd Taqī Almāsī (d. 1159 H/1746) of the Majlisī family and Seyyed Quṭb al-Dīn Nayrīzī Shīrāzī (d. 1173 H/1759). For more information about his life and philosophical activities see:

ʿAlī Karbāsī Zādih Iṣfahānī, *Ḥakīm-i Mutaʿallih Bīdābādī; Iḥyāgar-i Ḥikmat-i Shīʿa dar Gharn-i Dawāzdahum*, 1381 *shamsī* (Tehran: Pazhūhishgāh Ulūm-i Insānī wa Muṭāliʿāti Farhangī). The second teacher of Qumshiʾī was Mīrzā Ḥassan, the son of Mullā ʿAlī Nūrī, and I have discussed Mullā ʿAlī's life, intellectual contribution and lineage in detail earlier in this chapter. Qumshiʾī's third teacher was Āqā Seyyed Raḍī Lārījānī (d. 1270 H/1853), who was a practicing *Sufi* and also observed the Occult, and a student of Āqā Muḥammad Bīdābādī, Mullā Muḥammad Jaʿfar Ābādiʾī and Mullā ʿAlī Nūrī (Suhā, Op.cit, n.d., pp. 261–264 & Nājī Iṣfahānī, p. 26).

31. For a lengthy biography of Qumshiʾī see these sources:

    Manūchihr Ṣadūghī Suhā, Op.cit, n.d., pp. 259–319.

    Ḥāmid Nājī Iṣfahānī, *Majmūʿi Ashʿāri Ḥakīm Ṣahbā, Hamrāh ba Zindigīnāmay-i ʿĀrif-i Ilāhī Ḥakīm Āqā Muḥammad Riḍā Qumshiʾī* (the Book of Poetry of Ṣahbā, Along With the Biography of the Ḥakīm Āqā Muḥammad Riḍā Qumshiʾī), 1378 (Tehran: Kānūn Pazhūhish).

    Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Op.cit, 2006 (NY, State University of New York Press), pp. 242–246.

32. Qaysarī's book is called *Sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*.
33. Qumshiʾī's understanding of the office of *khilāfa* is reminiscent of Jean Bodin's conceptualization of sovereignty as an indivisible, coherent, concept. Jean Bodin (d. 1596), the French jurist and political philosopher, is best known for his theory of sovereignty; he was also an influential writer on demonology.
34. On 21 February 1921, Riḍā Khān entered Tehran with Cossack Brigade, seizing control of the capital in the coup d'état, became prime minister in 1302 *shamsī*/1923 and accessed to the throne in 1304 *shamsī*/1925.
35. From now on, I try to give dates of the years in *shamsī* (solar calendar) as well.
36. We have discussed the topic in the previous chapter, Sect. 3.2, pp. 20–21.
37. Abbas Amanat has evaluated the anti-*Bābī* and *Shaykhī* sentiments of the *Shīʿa ʿulemā* of the mid-Qajar era as a sign of the further intervention of the *Uṣūlī ʿulemā* in public affairs, and argued that as a result of the generation of concepts such as *marjaʿ al-taqlīd*, which gave *ʿulemā* confidence and strength, they began encroaching on socio-political affairs. Pertinent to this, is the relative weakness of the Qajars that fostered *ʿulemā*'s further presence in a number of socio-political turmoils such as the four *Bābī* upheavals, the Tobacco Régie protest of 1891, and the Constitutional Revolution of 1907. It is worth mentioning that the *Uṣūlī* jurists operated with the help of a vast and organized supportive network of financial aid, master-student relationship, religious endowments, and private investments (Amanat 1390 sh/2011, pp. 291–293).

38. Though aswill be observed in the following, with the exception of ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī.
39. Such a tendency is remarkable in the works of ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī.
40. Recently, Muḥammad Jawād Rūdgar Kūhpar has commented on *Risālat al-Wilāya* and translated it into Persian. See:

    Muḥammad Jawād Rūdgar Kūhpar, *Sirr al-Sulūk* (the Mystery of Wayfaring), 1387 *shamsī* (Tehran: Āyat-i Ishrāq).
41. Shaykh Āqā Buzurg Tihrānī (d. 1348 *shamsī*/1970) in the volume twenty-five of his voluminous, encyclopedic book, *A-Dharīʿa ilā Taṣānīf al-Shīʿa* (the Compendium of *Shīʿa* Compositions) provides us with a full(?) list of all the *Wilāyat Nāmihs* up to his time, however, the list cannot be regarded as complete because lacks both Āshtīyānī's and Gunābādī's texts.

    The books is accessible here https://www.noorlib.ir/View/fa/Book/BookView/Image/22624, last accessed 01/03/2019.

    Shaykh Āqā Buzurg Tihrānī, *A-Dharīʿa ilā Taṣānīf al-Shīʿa* (the Compendium of *Shīʿa* Compositions), Volume 25, n. d. (Beirut: Dār al-Aḍwāʾ), pp. 142–145.
42. Both Gunābādī's *Wilāyat Nāmih* and the website below have discussed his conversion.

    http://www.majzooban.org/fa/index.php/2016-01-20-18-31-19/6206-2016-01-19-09-34-38 last accessed 3/8/17.
43. Needless to remind that this is the idea of *wilāyat al-takwīnīya* which has been discussed extensively throughout this thesis.
44. Chapter four of *Wilāyat Nāmih* (the Book of wilāya) focuses on the Classes of People (*aṣnāf-i mardum*) and their advantage or disadvantage from *wilāya*. The first class is children, women and some men who are not mentally mature and eligible to benefit from *wilāya*. *Wilāya* is not for them and they never have accessibility to it. The second class is composed of the majority of people who are imitators and followers of their ancestors' religion. The third class is agnostics who do not believe in any religion, and the last one is misguided people who accept their religion as the most perfect one. Gunābādī maintains that these four types of people are deprived of benefiting from *wilāya* (Gunābādī, pp. 62–63).
45. For the family and the progenitors of Ṭabāṭabāʾī, see: Hamid Algar, ʿAllāmah Seyyed Muḥammad Hossein Ṭabāṭabāʾī: Philosopher, Exegete and Gnostic, *Journal of Islamic Studies* 17:3 (2006) pp. 326–327.
46. Ṭabāṭabāʾī's legacy in teaching, writing, and training students is rich and significant, though before turning attention to it, it is probably better to take a look at his teachers in Najaf (Ṭabāṭabāʾī 1429 H/2008, pp. 13–42). He started his education in Iraq attending the classes of authorities such as Ayatollah Abū Ḥassan Iṣfahānī, Mīrzā ʿAlī Īravānī, Ayatullāh Mīrzā ʿAlī Asghar (Malikī), and Muḥammad Hossein Gharavī Iṣfahānī Kumpānī

(Algār 2006, p. 328). Then for eight years he was the student of Ayatollah Nāʾīnī (d. 1355 *shamsī*/1936), who taught him complementary studies in jurisprudence. For *ʿilm-i rijāl* (science of narration), he studied with Ayatollah Kūhkamaraʾī and for Islamic Philosophy he attended the classes of Ayatollah Seyyed Hossein Bādkūbiʾī (d. 1358 H/1939). Sajjad Rizvi evaluates his studies in philosophy with Bādkūbiʾī (himself a student of Seyyed Abu-l-Ḥassan Jilvih (d. 1314 H/1896) an Avicennan critic of Mullā Ṣadrā), important and determinant. He believes that Bādkūbiʾī "developed his logical and analytic skills, and in order to hone them, directed Ṭabāṭabāʾī to study Euclidean mathematics with Seyyed Abu-l-Qāsim Khwānsārī" (Rizvi 2015, p. 11). Rizvi also gives an account of the sources Ṭabāṭabāʾī studied with Bādkūbiʾī. See: Rizvi, Op.cit, 2015, pp. 10–11.

The list of the books that Ṭabāṭabāʾī studied with Bādkūbiʾī shows his basic familiarity with, and later proficiency in *Ṣadrīan ḥikmat*. He also attended the classes of astronomy and mathematics of Seyyed Abul Qāsim Khwānsārī. Ṭabāṭabāʾī's other teachers in Najaf included Shaykh Aḥmad Āshtīyānī, Mīrzā ʿAlī Āqā Tabrīzī, Seyyed Muḥammad Ḥujjat, and his cousin Seyyed ʿAlī Qāḍī (Qāzī) Ṭabāṭabāʾī, who had a profound impact on him.

For the significance of Qādhī and the attachment of Ṭabāṭabāʾī to him, see: Hamid Algar, Op.cit, 2006, p. 329ff.

He obtained *ījāza* of teaching and issuing *fatwā* from seven individuals, including his master Mīrzā-yi Nāʾīnī (Ṭabāṭabāʾī, pp. 42–43), and was recognized in Najaf as a *mujtahid* (Rizvi 2015, p. 10). Algar explains that even though he attained the rank of *ijtihad* while in Najaf, but "disinclined by temperament to extensive social involvement, he never sought to become a *marja' al-taqlid*" (Algār 2006, p. 329).

47. Qādhī himself had promoted a method of exegesis which was called '*tafsīr al-Qurʾān bi-l-Qurʾān*', and "was supposedly the foundation of Ṭabāṭabāʾī's method in *al-Mīzān*" (Rizvi, Op.cit 2015, p. 11), and was used by himself to author a commentary on a famous supplication *Duʿāʾ al-Simāt* (Ibid.).
48. These discussions are mentioned in some sources and are published in:

Hādī Khusrushāhī (ed), *Risālat-i Tashayuʿ dar Dunyāy-i Imrūz; Guftugūyī Dīgar bā Henry Corbin* (the Mission of Shīʿīsm in the Contemporary World: Dialogues with Henry Corbin), 1387 (Qum: Būstān-i Kitāb).

Hādī Khusrushāhī (ed), *Shīʿa: Majmūʿi Mudhākirāt ba Professor Henry Corbin* (Shīʿīsm: the Collected Conversations with Henry Corbin), 1387 (Qum: Būstān-i Kitāb).

There is also another version of it, entitled: Muḥammad Amīn Shāhjūyī (ed), *Shīʿa: Muṣāḥibāt-i ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī bā Henry Corbin* (Shīʿa: the Dialogues of ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī and Henry Corbin), n.d. (n.p.).

These discussions were also translated into Arabic: *al-Shīʿa: Naṣ al-Ḥawār maʿa Mustashriq Curban,* translator: Tawfiq Khālid, n.d. (Beirut: Umm al-Qurāʾ Institute). For an analysis of the scholarly encounter between these two figures, see: Hamid Algar, Op.cit, 2006, pp. 341–346.

49. There is also another biography of him by his student Ayatollah Ḥassan Ḥassanzādih Āmulī which is published in: Muḥammad Badīʿ (ed), *Maʿnavīyat-i Tashayuʿ be Ḍamīmay-i Chand Maqālay-i Dīgar*, 1387 *shamsī* (Qum: Tashayuʿ), pp. 13–28.
50. These books are published as:

    Muḥammad Hossein Ṭabāṭabāʾī, *Ṭarīq-i ʿIrfān* (the Path to Mysticism), translated into Persian by Ṣādiq Ḥassanzādih, introduction by: Ayatollah Ḥasan Ḥassanzādih Āmulī, 4th edition, 1390 *shamsī* (Qum: Ishrāq).

    Muḥammad Hossein Ṭabāṭabāʾī, *Sulūk-i Nafsānī* (Carnal Conduct) translated into Persian by Mīrzā Aḥmad Asadī, 1st edition, 1389 *shamsī* (Qum: Ishrāq).

    Muḥammad Hossein Ṭabāṭabāʾī, *Wilāyat Nāmih* (the Book of *Wilāya*), translated into Persian by Humāyūn Himmatī, 1387 *shamsī* (Tehran: Rivāyat-i Fatḥ).
51. This type of *wilāya*, as mentioned earlier, is designated to the Prophet and the *imāms* who, in this position, enjoy a number of qualities such as being *aʿrāf,* witness, and conveyers of blessing and emanation to people, and/or being emanation per se. For more information see:

    Muḥammad Hossein Ṭabāṭabāʾī, *Insān az Āghāz tā Anjām* (Man from Beginning to the End), translated into Persian by Ṣādiq Lārījanī, 1388 *shamsī* (Qum: Būstān-i Kitāb). This book is originally in Arabic and is entitled: *Insān wa al-ʿAqīda* (Man and Belief), n.d. (Qum: Bāqīyāt).
52. He stresses that '*mukhlaṣ*' should be distinguished from '*mukhliṣ*', those who are still at the beginning of the path, while the former have already abnegated them in Him and reached the status of *wilāya* (Ṭabāṭabāʾī 1390, pp. 209–211).
53. The first one is the typology of the theories of government in *Shīʿa* jurisprudence, and the second book is the classification of *wilāya*. These two are entitled:

    Muhsin Kadivar, *Naẓarīyahāy-i Dawlat dar Fiqh-i Shīʿa* (the Theories of State in the Shīʿa Jurisprudence), 3rd edition, 1378b (Tehran: Nay Publication).

    Muhsin Kadivar, *Ḥukūmat-i Wilāyī* (Divine Government), 3rd edition, 1378a (Tehran: Nay Publication).

54. Once again I should emphasize that Sabzivārī, both is and is not regarded as a member of the School of Tehran. He is regarded as a member, because he was a *Ṣadrīan ḥakīm*, and in fact the most influential one, and a figure "who would later become the most important traditional philosopher of the Qajar period" (Rizvi 2011, p. 475). On the other hand, he is not regarded as a member because he did not live in the capital. Besides, scholars such as Mullā ʿAbdullāh Zunūzī, the student of Nūrī and the father of Āqā ʿAlī Ḥakīm Mudarris Tehrānī, as well as Mīrzā Abu al-Ḥassan Jilvih are not studied here because their writings were not relevant to the purpose of this research.
55. For a discussion of the School of Isfahan, see: Sajjad Rizvi's entry in Encyclopaedia Iranica, online version which is published in 2007. http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/I%E1%B9%A3fah%C4%81n-school-of-philosophy last accessed 5/5/2017.

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CHAPTER 5

Khomeini, *Wilāya*, and the Influence of Ibn ʿArabī

The subject matter of this chapter is the study and critical analysis of Ayatollah Khomeini's key texts concerning the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh*. In line with previous chapters, the author seeks to analyze Khomeini's mystical writings to study his conceptualizations of *wilāya* as well as his contribution to both *Ṣadrīan* philosophy and *Akbarīan* mysticism. After all, as will be discussed, Khomeini was a student of the School of Mullā Ṣadrā, and the mark of *Akbarīan* mysticism on his *ʿirfān* was in large part due to the sages of the School of Tehran; among them, Āqā Muḥammad Riḍā Qumshiʾī was notable. Parallel to his inspiration from the School of Tehran, Khomeini was largely stunned by *al-Shaykh al-Akbar*'s mysticism—which was the dominant form of *ʿirfān* in *Shīʿa* Iran—directly and through Ibn ʿArabī's disciples and exponents who had written commentaries and glosses on *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*. Therefore, Khomeini's familiarity with, and specialization in, *Akbarīan* mysticism became possible through two channels: the School of Tehran and Ibn ʿArabī's non-*Shīʿī* expositors. He not only glossed on Sharaf al-Dīn Dāwūd Qayṣarī's (d. 751 H/1350) commentary on *Fuṣūṣ,* but also wrote commentaries on both *Miftāḥ al-Ghayb* (the Key of the Unseen) of Ṣadr al-Dīn Qūnawī (607or 605 H/1207–673 H/1274) and *Miṣbāḥ al-Uns bayn al-Maʿqūl wa al-Mashhūd* (the Lamp of Fondness Betwixt the Sensible and Evident) of Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ḥamzah al-Finārī (d. 834 H/1430), itself a commentary on *Miftāḥ al-Ghayb*.

L. Chamankhah, *The Conceptualization of Guardianship in Iranian Intellectual History (1800–1989)*, Palgrave Series in Islamic Theology, Law, and History, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-22692-3_5

In the following, a brief introduction to the genealogy of the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh* will be given, and then attention will be turned to Khomeini's glosses on Qayṣarī's text entitled *Taʿlīqah ʿalā Sharḥ al-Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* (Glosses on the Commentary on *al-Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* and *Miṣbāḥ al-Uns*). A study and analysis of the conceptualization of *wilāya*, *nubuwwa*, and imamate in his mystical text will be done subsequently. And finally, Khomeini's doctrine of the Four Journeys, with regard to its roots in both *Ṣadrīan* philosophy and *Akbarīan* mysticism, will be studied.

5.1 Genealogy of the Theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh*

The theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh* is the official theory of governance and statecraft in post-Revolutionary Iran, and it is based on the four epistemological and anthropological assumptions of guardianship, Divine appointment, jurisdiction, and absolutism. This theory defends the unconditional right of just jurists, as the general vicegerents of the Hidden *imām*, to wield political power over the community of believers. The idea of vicegerency along with the notion of *marjaʿ* and reference to the *ʿulemā*, when the *imām* is not accessible, appears for the first time in the *aḥādīth* belonging to the fourth century when the *ʿulemā* were vested with some of the *imām's* authority as his vicegerent in the *Shīʿa* community. However, the *marjaʿ*, "as a referential model for his followers, is peculiar to the thirteenth/nineteenth century *Shīʿa* community" (Kazemi Moussavi 1994, p. 280).

Kazemi Moussavi has studied the evolution of the notions of *taqlīd* and *mujtahid* (a scholar who is qualified to perform *ijtihād*) and has shown how the former 'in its rudimentary form' can be found in the *aḥādīth* of the fourth century of Hegira, in its technical sense or following the 'the speculative opinion of a *mujtahid* in the absence of a specific legal rule' appears in the post-Mongol era with the *Shīʿa* School of *Ḥillah*, which provided new definitions for both *taqlīd* and *ijtihād* (Kazemi Moussavi 1994, p. 280). He also discusses "the juxtaposition of *taqlīd* with *marjaʿ* and the advent of the concept of *marjaʿīyyat al-taqlīd* in *Shīʿa* juridical thought" (Kazemi Moussavi 1994, p. 280), which are regarded as developments of the nineteenth century "during which the *Uṣūlī* structure of the religious hierarchy proposed the obligation of following both the legal opinions and rulings of the most learned *mujtahid* as a referential model" (Kazemi Moussavi 1994, p. 280).[1]

From this perspective, there existed two intertwined trends during the thirteenth/nineteenth century: the mandate of the office of *fiqāhat* (also *fiqāha,* but not the authority of a single individual *faqīh*) over the community of believers as the only legitimate heir of the legacy of the Prophet and the *imāms*, and the birth of the idea of 'the monarchy of the *Shīʿī* king'. Later in the century, the conceptualization of '*wilāyat-i intiṣābī-yi ʿāmma-yi fuqahā*' was engendered (Kadivar 1378a, p. 12, footnote no. 3).

According to this conceptualization, the Prophet and the *imāms* are directly appointed by God to the office of *wilāya* to rule over the *ummah* (community of believers) and to execute *sharīʿa* and the Divine laws. On the basis of both transmitted and intellectual sources, in the time of the occultation of the *imām*, the just jurists are appointed by God to exercise authority and guardianship over the community of believers. So, the Lawgiver is the one who confers *wilāya*, the just jurists are the *awlīyā* and the people are the ones under the guardianship (Kadivar 1378b, pp. 80–81). The theory of '*wilāyat-i intiṣābī-yi ʿāmma-yi fuqahā*' is the predecessor of the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh*, and it is believed that the *Uṣūlī ʿulemā*, as general vicegerents, are in charge of worldly interests and the daily religious life of believers. Mullā Aḥmad Narāqī and Shaykh Jaʿfar Kāshif al-Ghiṭā are the representatives of this narration of the role and responsibilities of the *ʿulemā*. According to Kadivar's classification of *Shīʿa* political thought,[2] the theory of '*wilāyat-i intiṣābī-yi ʿāmma-yi fuqahā*' should be treated as the dominant discourse of the second age (thirteenth/nineteenth century), and it was in this time that the idea of the political *wilāya* of jurists was invented (Kadivar 1378a, pp. 13–14).

Mullā Aḥmad Narāqī's formulation that the *Shīʿa* jurisprudence, which "could assume the *imām's* authority in its full sense" (Kazemi Moussavi 1996, p. 37), is known as '*wilāyat-i ḥākim*' (the guardianship of ruler). This should be understood in the historical and intellectual contexts of nineteenth-century Persia, as well as in the power competition between the Qajar court and the *Uṣūlī ʿulemā* on one hand, and the *ʿulemā* and other tendencies such as *Akhbārī* School, *Shaykhīsm*, popular Sufism, and *Bābīsm* on the other. In nineteenth-century Persia, the authority of the *ʿulemā* and their learned hierarchy were challenged by their *Akhbārī*, *Shaykhī*, Sufi, and *Bābī* rivals, as all of them proposed several alternative positions, such as *walī, quṭb*, *rukn-i rābiʿ* (this doctrine is discussed in Chap. 3), and finally *bāb*, "whose occupancy required an esoteric initiation which hardly fit into *fiqh*" (Kazemi Moussavi 1996, p. 105). In terms of their uneasy relationship with the Qajars, and despite the fact that the

ʿulemā were reluctant to give fully fledged legitimacy to the court (Gleave 2005, pp. 41–71), they also did not aim at "furthering the legitimacy of jurisprudents at the expense of weakening the ruling government's power" (Kazemi Moussavi 1996, p. 155). Therefore, one can conclude that the favorable situation for them was a controlled court, crushed rivals, and a powerful hierocracy.

Given the above, Narāqī's theory of '*wilāyat-i intiṣābī-yi ʿāmma-yi fuqahā*' is widely regarded as the background of Ayatollah Khomeini's conceptualizations of *wilāya* and the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh*.[3] There are, however, a number of differences between these two: first, Narāqī believed in general guardianship and Khomeini in an absolute one. Second, Narāqī's theory is not ambitious enough to assume the political authority for the vicegerent, while the role of *faqīh* in Khomeini's theory is political with his authority embracing political affairs as well. This theory, to be more precise, was invented to be stretched into the political sphere. Third, Narāqī believes in the collective office of the vicegerency. Fourth, Narāqī does not take the bold step of his successor in interpreting the controversial *Qurʾānīc* phrase of '*ulu-l-amr*' (the guardians of the cause) as the *Shīʿī* jurists; though both of them use the same *aḥādīth* and argumentations to prove *wilāyat al-faqīh* on one hand and believe in the Divine and immediate legitimacy of the *Shīʿī faqīh* on the other (Kadivar 1378b, p. 48).

Having said this, the present chapter will proceed with a review of the intellectual genealogy of Khomeini with particular emphasis on his teachers, his education, and his writings on mysticism. Khomeini's 'interest' in *ʿirfān,* which has so far been a topic of interest for many scholars, needs to be defined and clarified: this interest was not limited to writing *ʿirfānī* texts and training interested students. More than that, Khomeini lived an *ʿirfānī* lifestyle and since *Shīʿa* mysticism after the School of Mullā Ṣadrā has been tightly intertwined with philosophy, both mysticism and *Ṣadrīan ḥikma* gave Khomeini a wide and rich perspective about Man, his place, and his spiritual journeys in this world. It is this 'mystical and philosophical outlook' that makes him "perhaps the greatest, or at least the most influential, Muslim political leader of the twentieth century" (Knysh 1992, p. 632). Furthermore, as Ridgeon ascertains, for Khomeini, as for his master Shāhābādī, *ʿirfān* had significant political implications and was a medium to express socio-political discontent (Ridgeon 2014, p. 215).

5.2 Khomeini's Intellectual Background

Rūḥullāh Khomeini's (d. 1368 H/1989) interest in writing flourished when he was a student. *Sharḥ-i Duʿāy-i Saḥar* (the Commentary on the Dawn Prayer), which was his first work in *ʿirfān*, was written when he was twenty-seven years old and attending the classes of Ayatollah Mīrzā Muḥammad ʿAlī Shāhābādī (d. 1369 H/1950) in Qum,[4] himself an influential teacher and master who had a great impact on the development of the young Khomeini's personality.[5] Before finding Shāhābādī, Khomeini had other masters in *ʿirfān*, such as Mīrzā ʿAlī Akbar Mudarris Ḥikamī Yazdī[6] who taught him *Sharḥ-i Manẓūmih* (the Commentary on *Manẓūmih* of Mullā Hādī Sabzivārī).[7] After the death of Yazdī, Khomeini continued his studies in *ʿirfān* with Mīrzā Javād Āqā Malikī Tabrīzī[8] who passed away immediately after Yazdī (Moin 1999, p. 42). Khomeini's presence in Shāhābādī's classes lasted five or six years.[9] Together they would read a number of key *ʿirfānī* texts such as the above-mentioned *Miftāḥ al-Ghayb* (the Key of the Unseen) of Qūnawī,[10] *Sharḥ-i Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* (the Commentary on *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*) of Dāwūd Qayṣarī,[11] and *Manāzil al-Sāʾirīn* (the Abodes of Travelers) by Khāwja ʿAbdullāh Anṣārī.[12] According to Knysh, he also studied Ṣadrā's *Kitāb al-Asfār al-Arbaʿi* (Book of Four Journeys) with Shāhābādī (Knysh 1992, p. 634).

Even a cursory look at his studies in *ʿirfān* and the texts he read (all of them key mystical and philosophical compositions) shows that from an early age Khomeini was committed to a serious training in *ʿirfān* and metaphysics. Ironically, *ʿirfān* "had always been to some extent frowned upon by orthodox Islam, as with its supposition of individual union with God and, in its more extreme form of pantheism, the presence of God in all things, it undermined the orthodox concept of divine transcendence" (Martin 2007, p. 33), but many clerics like Khomeini and Shāhābādī preferred to start their career with it. Mysticism, due to "it's more purely spiritual manifestation" (Martin 2007, p. 33), has always been able to challenge both orthodox Islam and the state. The case of Najm al-dīn Kubrā (d. 618/1221) and after him ʿAlāʾ al-Dawlah Simnānī of the late seventh and the early eighth centuries are notable examples of this regard. For these figures, so for Shāhābādī and his student, *ʿirfān* was not only a matter of self-empowerment, but also social responsibilities. Therefore, *ʿirfān* was seen "as a means of assuming the hardest responsibilities and duties" (Martin 2007, p. 34).

However, after the Revolution of 1979, Shāhābādī became famous as 'the Philosopher of Nature' (*fīlsūf-i faṭrat*) (Shāhābādī 1386, p. 21). A number of his writings including *Rashaḥāt al-Biḥār* (Trickles from the Oceans), *Rashaḥāt al-Maʿārif* (Trickles of Gnosis), *Shadharāt al-Maʿārif* (Golden Particles of Gnosis), and *Sih Risāla-yi Uṣūlī* (Three Treatises on Principles of Jurisprudence) have been published, and there have been a few books written about him and his contribution to the *Shīʿa ʿirfānī* and *kalāmī* heritage (Shāhābādī 1386, p. 23).[13] Shāhābādī moved to Tehran, though, Khomeini's interest in *ʿirfān* and *Ṣadrīan* philosophy continued and bore fruit in his practice of *ʿirfān* and adopting a Sufi lifestyle (Knysh 1992, p. 635; Ridgeon 2014, *passim*). Finally, Khomeini emerged as an expert in theoretical mysticism[14] (Ḥāʾirī 1381, p. 58).

Another decisive turning point in the intellectual life of Khomeini was his acquaintance with Shaykh ʿAbdulkarīm Ḥāʾirī Yazdī (known as Ayatollah *Muʾassis*, d. 1276 H/1959). He became a student of Ḥāʾirī when he was studying in the *ḥawza* of Arak, which was re-established by Ḥāʾirī in 1333 H/1915.[15] Ḥāʾirī was followed from Arak to Qum by most of his students, including Rūḥullāh Khomeini—then twenty years old (Algar 2002, p. 6). In Qum, Khomeini continued *saṭḥ* (intermediate level of the *ḥawzawī* schooling)[16] with Ayatollah Seyyed ʿAlī Yathribī Kāshānī (d. 1379 H/1959),[17] Āqā Mīrzā Muḥammad ʿAlī Adīb Tehrānī (d. 1369 H/1949),[18] and Ayatollah Muḥammad Taqī Khwānsārī (d. 1371 H/1951),[19] and after five years started *khārij* with Ayatollah Ḥāʾirī. Once he found Ḥāʾirī, Mahdī Ḥāʾirī claims, he did not attend any other scholar's class (Ḥāʾirī 1381, p. 52).[20] After completing three steps of religious education, by the early 1930s, Khomeini became a *mujtahid*.[21]

As an expert in theoretical mysticism, he wrote extensively on *ʿirfān* and metaphysics. Along with the aforementioned *Sharḥ-i Duʿāy-i Saḥar*, which will be discussed in the following, he wrote other *ʿirfānī* texts, such as *Ādāb al-Ṣalāt* (the Rituals of Prayer), *Taʿlīqāt ʿalā Sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam wa Miṣbāḥ ul-Uns* (the Glosses on the Commentary on *Fuṣūṣ* and the Lamp of Fondness), *Tafsīr-i Sūray-i Ḥamd* (the Commentary on the Sūrat al-Ḥamd), *Tahzīb-i Nafs* (Self-Refinement), *Jihād-i Akbar* (the Greater *Jihād*), *Miṣbāḥ al-Hidāya ila-l-Khilāfa wa-l-Wilāya* (the Lamp of Guidance toward Vicegerency and Guardianship), and *Chihil Ḥadīth* (Forty Ḥadīth).[22] Khomeini's entire body of sixty works can be divided into seven fields: philosophy and mysticism, theology, principles of jurisprudence, ethics, commentary on the *Qurʾān*, literature and poetry, and

politics and statecraft.[23] His conceptualizations of *wilāya* and *nubuwwa* are cited both in *ʿirfānī* texts (comments, glosses and original texts) and juridical books. From among his *ʿirfānī* writings, *Sharḥ-i Duʿāy-i Saḥar*, *Sirr al-Ṣalāt* (the Mystery of Prayer), *Ādāb al-Ṣalāt*, *Tafsīr-i Sūray-i Ḥamd*, and *Miṣbāḥ al-Hidāya* (the Lamp of Guidance) are analyzed here to discuss his arguments for the conceptualization of the perfect man, of the office of *wilāya* and its relation to that of *nubuwwa* and the doctrine of the Four Journeys.

5.3 *Taʿlīqah ʿalā Sharḥ al-Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam wa Miṣbāḥ al-Uns*

Taʿlīqah ʿalā Sharḥ al-Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam is the product of Khomeini's classes with his favorite master Shāhābādī in Qum, written in 1355 H/1935, when he was thirty-five years old.[24] The book has two sections: first is Khomeini's glosses on Qayṣarī's commentary on *al-Fuṣūṣ*, and the second his glosses on al-Finārī's commentaries on Qūnawī's *Miftāḥ al-Ghayb*. The fact that he wrote glosses on one of the main products of *Akbarīan* philosophy is itself a witness to his fascination with, and inspiration by, this type of philosophy. The book revolves around typical *Akbarīan* themes: *waḥdat al-wujūd*, *aʿyān al-thābita* (permanent archetypes); two kinds of emanations, *fayḍ al-aqdas* and *fayḍ al-muqaddas*, *ḥaḍarāt al-khams* (the Fivefold Presences); the doctrine of the names and attributes (one of Khomeini's favorite topics, on which he is an expert); and the status of *al-insān al-kāmil* as the culmination of all names which are reflected in *al-ism al-jāmiʿ*—Allah. In terms of the method, he blends transmitted sources (including *Shīʿa ḥadīth* traditions) with examples of classic Persian poetry, and from this perspective, he is an heir to the legacy of prominent figures such as Shaykh Maḥmūd Shabistarī and the above-mentioned Mullā Hādī Sabzivārī (Chap. 4, Sect. 4.3, pp. 130–136).

Khomeini asserts his skill and in-depth knowledge of the intricacies of *Akbarīan* mysticism throughout the text, but since the task at hand is the conceptualization of *wilāya* in Khomeini's writings, particular emphasis is given to his arguments for the status of the perfect man and its nexus to the doctrine of Divine names and attributes. His arguments are classic: *insān* (Man) is the manifestation of *al-ism al-jāmiʿ*, *umm al-kitāb*, itself the full theophany of *ḥaḍrat-i wāḥidīyya* or Divine Essence which stands beyond Man's capacity to grasp. It is called *umm al-kitāb* because it is the

intermediary of both creation and destruction (*khalq wa al-inʿidām*), and since creation and destruction occur continually and uninterruptedly, every moment, by means of *al-ism al-jāmiʿ*, and particularly the two names of *raḥmān* (the Merciful) and *qahhār* (the Subduer), *insān,* who is the manifestation of this name, lives in a never-ending process of annihilation and renewal. From a mystical perspective, Khomeini argues that every creature including *insān* is regarded as *umm al-kitāb* because it encompasses Divine commandments such as *khalq wa al-inʿidām*. One of the main sources used by Khomeini in the *Taʿlīqah* is *Duʿāy-i Saḥar* (upon which he had written his first *ʿirfānī* commentary), from which he brings sentences to sustain his arguments for the status of the names and their *zurwa* (lit. pinnacle), *al-insān al-kāmil.*

The synthesis of Ibn ʿArabī's mysticism with philosophy and *Shīʿa* theology which had started with Mullā Ṣadrā and continued into its fully fledged Persianization in the writings of Iranian sages like Shabistarī and Sabzivārī now culminates in Khomeini's glosses on these two important texts. He may not have been innovative and his arguments look old and even reproduced, but they neither detract from the value of his work nor question his expertise in *Akbarīan* mysticism. His commentaries on *Duʿāy-i Saḥar* and his symbolic exegesis of *ṣalāt,* having been conducted from a *Shīʿa* perspective, are indicative of his immersion into the deep ocean of mysticism that provided him with the competencies to look into his *Shīʿa* tradition from a new viewpoint. In the following, and in the study of Khomeini's conceptualization of *wilāya*, Ibn ʿArabī's influence on his thought will be discussed.

5.4 *Walī* and the Office of *Wilāya* in the *ʿIrfānī* Texts

As observed, Khomeini's fascination by the 'rationalizing interpretation' of Ibn ʿArabī's teachings (Knysh 1992, p. 636) bore fruit in his *Taʿlīqah ʿalā Sharḥ al-Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam wa Miṣbāḥ al-Uns.* In addition, he was attracted by *al-Asfār al-Arbaʿi* (the Four Journeys) of Ṣadrā as his first exposition to the *Ṣadrīan* metaphysics. His *ʿirfānī* texts are written from this perspective and should be treated as an addition to these two traditions. *Sharḥ-i Duʿāy-i Saḥar*, which is written in Qum in 1347 H/1928 (Khomeini 1388, Introduction), is a summary of "Khomeini's philosophical studies and spiritual labors" (Knysh 1992, p. 636). The *Duʿā* upon

which this commentary is written is famous among *Shīʿas* and is also known as *Mubāhila* (lit. to curse or take away mercy from someone who engages in falsehood or lie). It is believed that it contains Divine wisdom and meanings as a spiritual tie between the lover and the Beloved. Khomeini, like his predecessors, believed that Divine names and attributes bridge the gap between Deity and creation, and this is the main reason behind his decision to comment upon *Duʿāy-i Saḥar* because the *Duʿā* contains the greatest name (*al-ism al-aʿẓam*) and the full theophany of God in this name.

Shāhābādī's presence is clearly observable throughout the text, as Khomeini shows his respect and devotion to him and praises him as "the perfect mystic" and "our master" (Khomeini 1388, pp. 2–3). The other figure who is mentioned occasionally is Khomeini's second teacher in *ʿirfān*, the above-mentioned Mīrzā Javād Āqā Malikī Tabrīzī (Khomeini 1388, p. 21). Khomeini's concern in this text is to demonstrate 'the compatibility of the *sharīʿa* with Irfan', as well as his debt to Ibn ʿArabī and his inspiration by the *Akbarīan* doctrine of the perfect man (Ridgeon 2014, p. 214). He deploys transmitted sources (the *Qurʾān* and *ḥadīth*) to develop his argument for the status of *insān* and his identification with God. As Deity encompasses the names of both Beauty and Glory (*ṣifāt-i jamāl wa jalāl*), His *khalīfa*/perfect man, due to his closeness to God, contains antithetical attributes such as *luṭf* (beneficence) and *qahr* (wrath), and therefore the office of *khilāfa* is an all-encompassing one (Khomeini 1388, pp. 26–27).

His other major *ʿirfānī* book is *Miṣbāḥ al-Hidāya ila-l-Khilāfa wa-l-Wilāya*, in which Khomeini discusses *asmāʾ wa ṣifāt* (Divine names and attributes) and their nexus to the doctrine of *khilāfa*. It seems that the book was written immediately after *Sharḥ* in 1349 H/1930 when he was only twenty-eight years old, and therefore suffers from a number of features which are "common to many others early, but not yet mature" texts (Knysh 1992, p. 636). In terms of the form and writing, as Knysh maintains, the book lacks a

> compositional perfection which in Khomeini's case is the disparity of the parts constituting the discourse, an unnecessary repetition of rather trite metaphysical propositions, and the absence of a clearly defined approach. The impression of immaturity is reinforced by constant references to the Muslim thinkers whose writings determined the course of Khomeini's reasoning and his overall attitude toward religion. (Knysh 1992, p. 636 & 648)

One of these Muslim thinkers who is often mentioned and his impact on Khomeini's thought is clearly visible is Āqā Muḥammad Riḍā Qumshiʾī, the *ḥakīm* of the School of Tehran whose ideas are discussed at length in the previous chapter (Sect. 4.4, pp. 136–140). In different places, Khomeini praises him and quotes from "his noble words" (Khomeini 1360, p. 57ff). As Qumshiʾī's conceptualization of *wilāya*, *khilāfa*, and *nubuwwa* was noted, he argued in favor of a coherent understanding of the term and functions of *khilāfa*, and that's why he was compared to the French thinker Jean Bodin. Following him, Khomeini, both in the present text and his other mystical writings, develops arguments for a coherent, indivisible office of *khilāfa* whose authority cannot be divided among any other sources of authority. To be more precise, there are no other sources to claim authority and hegemony over believers; it is *walī* on one side, who rules on behalf of God, and the cosmos on the other. In a long quotation from Qumshiʾī, who is called 'our perfect mystic', Khomeini argues for the role and duty of the perfect *walī* after he returned from his fourth journey to warn people of and forbid them from evil-doing (Khomeini 1360, pp. 87–88).

Using transmitted sources, mainly *ḥadīth Qudsī,* Khomeini argues that the philosophy behind the appointment of *khalīfa/walī* by God is His desire to be known and loved by people,[25] and therefore *al-insān al-kāmil* is signified to be the locus of all Divine names and their secrets, and as such, the permanent archetype of him (of *al-insān al-kāmil*) has authority over other permanent archetypes. He is the full manifestation of *al-ism al-aʿẓam* (or *al-ism al-jāmiʿ*, the Greatest Name), and since this name encompasses all other names and attributes, the status of *khilāfa* is total and all-encompassing (Khomeini 1360, pp. 29–61).

Linked to the doctrine of the permanent archetype(s) (*ʿayn/aʿyān al-thābitah*) are other important notions in Islamic mysticism such as *fayḍ* (emanation) and its two manifestations of *fayḍ al-aqdas* (the Most Holy Emanation) and *fayḍ al-muqaddas* (the Holy Emanation). One can summarize Khomeini's theory on the permanent archetype and its nexus to two typologies of emanation as follows: it is through *fayḍ al-aqdas* that the permanent archetypes come into existence. In other words, the first sign of creation of the permanent archetypes in the presence of Divine knowledge happens through *fayḍ al-aqdas*, whereas it is by *fayḍ al-muqaddas* that the permanent archetypes find external existence in the real world. The difference between these two types of emanation is that the former (the Most Holy Emanation) helps the internal existence of the permanent

archetypes be possible, while the latter (the Holy Emanation) externalizes it (Khomeini 1360, pp. 68–69). The existence of the permanent archetype of the perfect man depends on *fayḍ al-aqdas*, and that's why it is the most important of all permanent archetypes, because it is externalized and multiplied through *fayḍ al-muqaddas* (Khomeini 1360, p. 70).

Drawing upon the legacy of the School of Tehran, both through Mullā Ṣadrā and his metaphysics and via the above-mentioned commentaries on *Fuṣūṣ,* Khomeini develops his argument in the context of the synthesis of *wilāya*[26] and *wujūd* (*ousia*), both of them modulated (*mushakkak*) entities. As it is observed in the previous chapter, the nexus between *wilāya* and *ousia* was one of the main concerns of the philosophers of the School of Tehran, and the literature was developed out of the commentaries on the *faṣṣ* of Seth (*faṣṣ Shaythī*) in Ibn ʿArabī's *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*. The *faṣṣ* discusses "*wilāya* as the expiration of the 'Breath of the Merciful' (*nafas-i raḥmānī*)" (Rizvi 2005, p. 118). It is on this ground that Khomeini articulates his doctrine of the greater vicegerency (*Khilāfa*). *Khilāfat al-kubrā* is under the rule of the name of Allah, and since Allah is a comprehensive name, encompassing both the names of Beauty and Glory, *khilāfat al-kubrā* is all-encompassing too. *Khilāfat al-kubrā* is identical to the eternal individuality of the perfect man, and as such, the relationship between it and other eternal individualities is the same as the relationship between the Great Name—Allah—and other Divine names.

The reality of *wilāya* is embedded in the comprehensive status of the *Muḥammedan Khilāfa* (*Khilāfat al-Muḥammadīyah*) and as such, enjoys a number of qualities like closeness, love, *wilāyat al-takwīnīya*, and absolute authority. From this perspective, the status of both *wilāya* and *khilāfat al-kubrā* has the same authority and absolute power to act upon the cosmos. Khomeini calls this 'to command and to create' (*inshāʾ al-amr wa al-khalq*), referring to the well-known *āyah* 'Be, and it is' that occurs several times in the *Qurʾān*. The *Muḥammedan Khilāfa* is a double-faceted status in the sense that the office of *wilāya* is *bāṭin* (inward), while the office of *nubuwwa* is *ẓāhir* (outward) (Khomeini 1360, pp. 13–38). The *Muḥammedan Khilāfa* has a status in which all Divine realities and hidden names are aggregated (Khomeini 1360, p. 51) and is manifested in the office of *nubuwwa*. In other words, these realities and names are hidden as long as *nabī* does not exist, but once he is appointed by God, he will make them manifest. Since *wilāya* is the inward of *nubuwwa*, *walī* (here *imām* Ali and other *imāms* from the household of the Prophet) is regarded as the manifestation of Divine secrets (Khomeini 1360, pp. 53–61).

Before taking leave of *Miṣbāḥ al-Hidāya*, it is necessary to remember that in this text, Khomeini shows his disagreement with Qayṣarī's interpretation of Ibn ʿArabī. However, his arguments and reasoning are nothing but a "slight reformulation of Ibn ʿArabī's favorite themes" which had been stated several centuries ago (Knysh 1992, p. 643). Khomeini's other *ʿirfānī* texts, including *Ādāb al-Ṣalāt*, *Sirr al-Ṣalāt* and *Tafsīr-i Sūray-i Ḥamd* focus more on the theory of the perfect man. *Ādāb al-Ṣalāt*, which was written in 1361 H/1942 in Qum, contains Khomeini's ideas on spiritual mysteries of the daily prayer. The book has a pair which is *Sirr al-Ṣalāt* and is written for the elite (those who have knowledge of *ʿirfān*), but *Ādāb al-Ṣalāt* targets a wider audience among ordinary people in order to teach them the spiritual meanings of the daily prayer in simple language. The book contains Khomeini's *ʿirfānī* anthropology and his instructions for the seeker who attempts to reach the station of the perfect *walī*. He makes an argument which is typical of a *Ṣadrīan* scholar and a jurist: mankind, according to his original disposition (*fiṭra*) is able to be the manifestation of Divine names and enjoys the right of authority and power to act upon the cosmos. He is superior to angels due to his ability and eligibility to learn God's names and to reach the status of the name of Allah, which rules over the eternal individuality of the perfect man (Khomeini 1378a, p. 206).

Referring to the famous *Qudsī ḥadīth* which concerns the status of the Prophet, "I take oath that I created the cosmos because of you",[27] Khomeini concludes that the creation of the cosmos is a prelude to the creation of the perfect man. When a seeker reaches the station of self-annihilation, he becomes *walī* and therefore *wilāya* is the final step, the last journey, in a seeker's travel to God (Khomeini 1378a, pp. 262–263). At the end of this path, the seeker is able to breach veils and understand whatever has been forbidden to be seen before, such as the secret laws of the Day of Judgment (*Ɣawm al-Dīn*) (Khomeini 1378a, p. 272). Along with the Prophet, Ali is the only one who has reached such a station (Khomeini 1378a, p. 298). To enlarge on this and the Four Journeys, a *sālik* endeavors to reach the station of *wilāya* in the following way. Addressing the office of *nubuwwa* and *wilāya* of the Prophet, Khomeini argues that due to the exalted status of the *Muḥammedan* Reality, the religion of the seal of the prophets is the most perfect and the most comprehensive one, and not only encompasses the previous religions, but also reveals them in their best manifestations (Khomeini 1378a, p. 309). In explaining the office of *wilāya*, Khomeini uses the verb *kashf* (to unveil)

and indicates that *walī* (the Prophet and the *imāms*) is an individual who, due to his closeness to God, can approach all that is exclusively apparent to God, and as such participate in Divine knowledge. Enjoyment of the right of *kashf* endows *walī* with the right of absolute authority to act upon the cosmos (Khomeini 1378a, p. 343ff).

Sirr al-Ṣalāt, which is Khomeini's sixth book, was published in 1358 H/1939 (Naqvi 2015, pp. XIV–XV). Recently, Amjad Shah Naqvi has provided an elegant introduction as well as a translation of the book. Naqvi locates the text in the context of the intellectual developments of Iran's early modern period, and rightly believes that it should be treated as the outcome of Khomeini's personal interest in mysticism, *ḥikma*, and theology on one hand, and "the end of a venerable set of religious and scholarly traditions" on the other (Naqvi 2015, p. XX). *Sirr al-Ṣalāt* is also important as it sheds light on the formulation of Khomeini's political theology through the questioning of prayer and "its link to one's journey within reality towards God" (Naqvi 2015, p. XXI), and demonstrates "his concern with *askesis* and what Faucault called 'care for the self' – and 'technologies of the self'-, as the ways in which humans mediate experience and make" (Naqvi 2015, p. XXI).

The text draws on an expansive variety of sources from the *Qurʾān* and *ḥadīth* compilations, to poetry and theology, to ethics and philosophy (Naqvi 2015, pp. XXII–XXIII). It is a treatise on the inner meaning and dimension of prayer, particularly indebted to two similar works, one by Zayn al-Dīn ibn ʿAlī al-Āmilī known as *al-Shahīd al-Thānī* (the Second Martyr, d. 911 H/1506) and the other by the aforementioned Qāḍī Saʿīd Qumī (Naqvi 2015, p. XXIX). *Sirr al-Ṣalāt* revolves around *wujūd* and its degrees and contains Khomeini's *ʿirfānī* anthropology which is intimately connected to the modulated stages of reading, comprehending, and interpreting the *Qurʾān*. He classifies five types of reading (*qirāʾa*), including the reading of ordinary people (*ʿāmmah*), the reading of the privileged (*khāṣṣah*), the reading of the people of knowledge (*aṣḥāb-i maʿrifa*), the reading of the people of the heart (*aṣḥāb-i ghulūb*), and finally of the people of *wilāya* (*aṣḥāb-i wilāya*). The last one is the most perfect reading and designated to *awlīyā* who have reached the station of unification with God. Each of them also has inner stages, though Khomeini does not mention them (Khomeini 1390, pp. 80–81).

The last *ʿirfānī* text, *Tafsīr-i Sūray-i Ḥamd* (the Commentary on the *Sūrat al-Ḥamd*), contains similar arguments for the offices of *wilāya* and *nubuwwa*, the theory of the perfect man, spiritual conduct, and the nexus

of Divine names and the status of the *Muḥammedan* Reality. The text is composed of four sections, each of them is written at a different time. The first part which is a concise exegesis of the *sūrat al-Ḥamd*, the first *sūrah* of the *Qurʾān*, was written in 1358 H/1939. The second part could be regarded as a more detailed exegesis of the same *sūrah* and was written three years later in 1942. The third part contains Khomeini's lectures on *tafsīr al-Qurʾān* which were broadcast on Iranian TV in 1980, and the last part is a collection of his remarks about different *sūrahs* which had been disseminated in his other books and treatises (Khomeini 1378b, *shamsī*, p. 3). *Tafsīr-i Sūray-i Ḥamd* is an *ʿirfānī* and *ḥikamī* exegesis and revolves around the importance of Divine names and attributes and their relationship to the status of *insān*. He deploys names to explain the problematic of unity and its relationship to multiplicity, and this method, as we know, belongs to both the *ḥikmat* and Sufi traditions, and not that of theologians.[28]

Addressing the status of *al-insān al-kāmil*, he is the pivot of the cosmos (a typical argument which is guided by using transmitted sources), and His *khalīfa* on earth and turning face toward *insān* is equivalent to turning face toward Allah, because *insān* is annihilated in Him. Once again, Khomeini uses the names to explain the issue of sin which is an important question in Islamic mysticism. Addressing these two questions that 'if *insān* is *khalīfat al-llāh*, why does he commit sin'? and 'how one can explain him being sinful', Khomeini argues that the secret of *insān* committing sin is because he becomes amused with the multiplicity of the names and his inability to see oneness in all names. Paying attention to the multiplicity of the names (*kathrat-i asmāʾī*) is the Tree of Evil (*Shajarat al-Munhīya* or *Khabītha*) as opposed to the Tree of Good (*Shajarat al-Ṭayyibah*) from which Man has been warned (Khomeini 1378b, pp. 18–27).

As mentioned previously in Chap. 2 (Sect. 2.2, pp. 28–35), Ibn ʿArabī invented the doctrine of names and attributes and their relationship to the Essence for the first time in the history of Islamic mysticism in order to explain the problematic of *badʾ* (spring, creation in the terminology of the mystics). Dealing with this vital question of 'how one (*wāḥid*), with regard to the fact that His Essence is unknowable and will remain so, can create countless things in the real world', Ibn ʿArabī sought to approach it by the doctrine of unity vs. multiplicity. The theory has been used extensively by his successors to describe the gap between deity and people (*khalq*). All Khomeini's *ʿirfānī* texts which were examined here are written from this perspective. As observed in the discussion of Khomeini's glosses on Qayṣarī's commentary on *Fuṣūṣ*, he deploys the doctrine of names and attributes to elucidate the status of Man in the cosmos, and his relation to

Deity. For Khomeini, it is a doctrine that can also explain the question of sin committed by Man, the *khalīfat al-llāh*: he commits sin because he gets stuck in the darkness of multiplicity.

Khomeini's fascination with *Akbarīan* mysticism is more apparent when he tries to interpret the word *al-raḥmān* (the Merciful) in the phrase '*bism i-llāh-i raḥmān-i raḥīm'*. Khomeini quotes *al-Shaykh al-Akbar* in his book *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkīyah* (the Meccan Revelations) in which he says "the cosmos (*al-ʿālam*) appears by *bism i-llāh-i raḥmān-i raḥīm*" (Khomeini 1378b, p. 81). Or, quoting Qayṣarī in his commentary on the *Fuṣūṣ,* Khomeini maintains that *al-raḥmān* is *rabb ul-awwal* (the Primal Lord) which is the station of totality as opposed to the station of particularity and belongs to the word *al-raḥīm* (the Compassionate). *Al-raḥīm* is *nafs-i kullī* (the Universal Self) (Khomeini 1378b, p. 84).

In overall assessment of Khomeini's *ʿirfānī wilāya* and the status of *walī*, one can say that he does not mention *wilāyat al-ʿāmmah* which was very prominent in ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī's writings. The importance of this and also its contrast to *wilāyat al-khāṣṣah,* which is Khomeini's concern, will be emphasized when we discuss Khomeini's doctrine of the Four Journeys, as well as the identification of the individual who finishes the last journey. With regard to the centrality of the conceptualization of *wilāyat al-khāṣṣah* and the absence of *wilāyat al-ʿāmmah* in Khomeini's thought, one can safely conclude that he is the faithful disciple of the scholars of the School of Tehran.[29] *Wilāyat al-ʿāmmah*, as it is elaborated by Ṭabāṭabāʾī, is innovative and unique in the sense that he not only switched the center of gravity from *wilāyat al-khāṣṣah* (the specific *wilāya*, which is signified to the elite; the Prophet and the *imāms*) to *wilāyat al-ʿāmmah* (the general *wilāya* which is accessible by any believer), but also founded his entire philosophical system on this concept. It is no longer *wilāyat al-khāṣṣah* which is at the heart of his philosophy, but the type of guardianship that is signified to every believer through his or her deeds and efforts. Besides, *wilāya* is not a Divine gift endowed exclusively to the *imāms* and the Prophet, but an attainable virtue which is gained by the good deeds of believers.

5.5 The Four Journeys

Khomeini's discussion of the Four Journeys is a different reformulation of the idea of Ibn ʿArabī; though the latter's influence is undeniable. It is called 'a different reformulation', because, *al-Shaykh al-Akbar* only mentions the first two journeys and his conceptualization of them is different

from Mullā Ṣadrā's interpretation which became the dominant reading of the Four Journeys and influenced later scholars, among them Khomeini (Ḥassan Zādih 1390, pp. 11–13). There are two points here: what Khomeini had inherited from his predecessors was through the commentaries of ʿAfīf a-Dīn al-Ṭilmisānī (d. 690 H/1291), ʿAbd al-Razzāq Kāshānī (also Qāshānī, d. 736 H/1335), and Sharaf al-Dīn Dāwūd Qayṣarī (d. 751 H/1350). It was these figures who elaborated on Ibn ʿArabī's idea (and not theory) of spiritual journeys and turned it into a coherent doctrine of the Four Journeys of the seeker. Mullā Ṣadrā's reading was perpetuated in his book entitled *al-Asfār al-Arbaʿi*. The second point is that, compared with other themes and concepts, Khomeini's conceptualization of the Four Journeys is brief and scattered through his *ʿirfānī* texts.

Miṣbāḥ al-Hidāya ila-l-Khilāfa wa-l-Wilāya is one of the main texts containing Khomeini's doctrine of the Four Journeys. The book was written in 1309 *shamsī*/1349 H, two years after *Sharḥ-i Duʿāy-i Saḥar,* when Khomeini was twenty-nine years old. The political implications of the text, as well as Khomeini's discussion of the *asfār al-arbaʿi,* have been emphasized by scholars like Lloyd Ridgeon who gives a lengthy account of Khomeini's reading of the doctrine and its political consequences (Ridgeon 2014, pp. 213–232). Before starting on an analysis of the text, it is worth remembering that *Miṣbāḥ* is the only text in which the *asfār* is discussed in full and, in this book as in *Sharḥ-i Duʿāy-i Saḥar,* Qumshiʾī's influence is evident. In fact, Khomeini's conceptualization of the Four Journeys is a restatement of Qumshiʾī's theory. Qumshiʾī is praised as 'the perfect gnostic' and 'our great *shaykh*'. The first journey (*min al-khalq ila l-ḥaqq*), during which three veils of the carnal soul (*nafs*), intellect (*ʿaql*), and his spirit (*ruḥ*) are breached, starts from leaving creation/people (allegory of worldly attachments) for the delimited Truth (*ḥaqq-i muqayyadah*). *Fanā* (self-annihilation) and confession to servitude (*iqrār bi ʿubūdīyat*) are gained at the end of this journey (Khomeini 1360 *shamsī*, pp. 205–206).

The second journey (*fi al-ḥaqq bil ḥaqq*), which is a "traveling from the Truth towards the Truth by means of the Truth" (Ridgeon 2014, p. 215), becomes possible for the traveler because he has reached the status of *wilāya* as the result of the first journey. The status of *wilāya,* Khomeini maintains, is an expression of the traveler's *fanā* in terms of his total dissolution of personal identity (*dhāt*), attributes (*ṣifāt*), and doings (*afʿāl*), as well as a journey from delimited Truth to absolute Truth (Khomeini 1360 *shamsī*, p. 206). The third journey (*min al-ḥaqq ila l-khalq bil ḥaqq*),

which is the station of total sobriety and traveler's voyage in Divine presences (Khomeini 1360 *shamsī*, p. 206), results in the office of *nubuwwa*, though the traveler does not enjoy the right of lawgiving (*tashrīʿ*). The fourth journey (*fi al-khalq bil ḥaqq*), or the journey from creation to the creature by the means of the Truth, bares fruit in bringing religion and law to the traveler, in informing people of God and of His names and attributes (Khomeini 1360 *shamsī*, p. 207), and in making "exoteric commands pertaining to the body and, esoteric laws pertaining to the heart" (Ridgeon 2014, p. 216).

Khomeini's outlook that only the fourteen infallible figures are capable of reaching subsistence with God and finishing the fourth journey which is emphasized in this text (Khomeini 1360 *shamsī*, pp. 211–212) is in fact a culmination of the *Shīʿa* interpretation of *Akbarīan* mysticism and, at the same time, a deviation from the entire Sufi tradition which never restricted spiritual conduct to any specific person. One of the historical reasons for the attraction of Sufism was its exposure to everybody, from any rank, through its emphasis on character building and the hope that every individual can reach *fanā fi al-llāh* and become a *walī* by austerity and detachment from world. Quoting Shāhābādī, another influential figure in his *ʿirfān*, Khomeini maintains that along with the Prophet, Ali was also eligible to bring a new law, but since the Prophet preceded him and brought Islamic *sharīʿa,* Ali follows his law (Khomeini 1360 *shamsī*, p. 212).

The second text in which the doctrine of the Four Journeys is discussed is the above-mentioned *Sharḥ-i Duʿāy-i Saḥar*, although Khomeini's conceptualization of it is brief. Shāhābādī's influence is visible throughout the text and is Khomeini's main source when he discusses the Four Journeys, Shāhābādī is the main source (Khomeini 1388, footnote, p. 2). Quoting his master and skipping the first two journeys, Khomeini mentions that at the end of the third journey, it will become possible for the *ʿārif* to recognize what makes people good and helps them to be closer to God. Since the ways to reach God are equal to the number of people, the *ʿārif* will be have to be able to distinguish between these paths and recognize which is the right path for every person. It is also in this station that the *ʿārif/walī* can legislate (*tashrīʿ*). Here again, Khomeini clarifies that it is only the first *imām* and his sons who have reached this station and are able to bring laws, but since Ali is the successor of the Prophet and has come after him, he has to follow the Prophet's *sharīʿa* and submit to it (Khomeini 1388, footnote, p. 2).

As Khomeini proceeds with the text, he expands on Shāhābādī's idea and discusses the journeys a traveler should make in order to reach self-annihilation and subsistence with God. In terms of method, he deploys a vast range of *ʿirfānī* as well as Islamic sources (the *Qurʾān* and *ḥadīth* tradition) to explain the Four Journeys, although, unlike *Miṣbāḥ al-Hidāya,* the journeys are not discussed separately and in an orderly manner. The last station is *ḥaḍrat-i aḥadīyat* (the Presence of Divine Unity) in which other presences, multiplicities (*kathrāt*), and concrete determinations (*taʿayyunāt*) are annihilated. It is the status of sobriety or 'the Absolute Will' (*mashīyyat-i muṭlaq*),[30] wherein the traveler is able to observe the unity behind the multiplicity of names and attributes. Khomeini identifies the individual—the Prophet—who has completed the last journey when Adam "was between water and clay"[31] (Khomeini 1388, pp. 12–16).

Khomeini's discussion of the Four Journeys in *Sirr al-Ṣalāt* is a dialogue of the symbolic value and meaning of daily prayer (*ṣalāt*) and its importance in the spiritual mission of the seeker. The mystery of prayer is to reach God and by breaching the veils (*kharq-i ḥijāb*), the traveler becomes annihilated in Him (Khomeini 1390, Introduction, p. 12). In *Sirr al-Ṣalāt,* all journeys are mentioned, albeit briefly and, the author seeks to connect every journey to one of the rituals of the prayers. For example, prostration (*sujūd*) symbolizes total disappearance (*ghayb-i muṭlaq*) from the world, while *tashahhud* (lit. to witness or to testify) stands for sobriety (*ṣaḥw*) when the traveler returns to the world after being in the station of *ghayb* (Unseen). At the end of *tashahhud*, the traveler testifies to the *nubuwwa* and *wilāya* of the Prophet and his household and finishes the *ṣalāt. Salām* (lit. peace) which is the last step of *ṣalāt* symbolizes unity vs. multiplicity (or the station of totality) and stands for the last journey (*min al-khalq il al-khalq*) (Khomeini 1390, p. 114). The present text is the only writing of Khomeini in which he raises the possibility for every believer finishing the spiritual journeys (Khomeini 1390, pp. 114–115). In other texts, he restricts the Four Journeys to the fourteen illuminated figures. In another text, the aforementioned *Tafsīr-i Sūray-i Ḥamd,* he briefly mentions the Four Journeys without elaborating on them, and maintains that the perfect man, who is 'the Most Beautiful Name' (*asmāʾ ul-ḥusnā*) and 'the Greatest Name' (*ism-i aʿẓam*), is able to reach the last stage or *tawḥīd* which is subsistence (*baqā*) with God (Khomeini 1378b, p. 19).

Ādāb al-Ṣalāt is the last text in which Khomeini discusses the doctrine of the Four Journeys. He distinguishes between two groups of seekers, both of whom have carried out the journey to God (*safar-i ila l-llāh*),

although the first group never returns to the world and to people because it dies after finishing the journey. Transmitting the famous *ḥadīth al-qudsī* that "My friends are hidden under my mantle (*qibāb*, *ḥijāb*), no one knows them except for Me" (Introduction, pp. 3–4), Khomeini argues that the first group will remain hidden under God forever. The second group includes those who return to the world in order to guide people on the righteous path and to restore cities (*takmīl-i ʿibād wa taʿmīr-i bilād*) (Khomeini 1378b, pp. 347–348). This phrase has caused commentators, such as Muṣṭafā Muḥaqiq Dāmād, to interpret it as Khomeini's intention (as a political *ʿārif*) of rising against the status quo to establish an Islamic government (Muḥaqiq Dāmād n.d., p. 2).[32] Khomeini, however, does not elaborate further on this idea to provide his reader with a more accurate understanding of what he means by this phrase. In addition, there is no convincing evidence to prove that Khomeini referred to himself as the *walī* who, after returning to creature from God, wants to guide people on the righteous path.

Likewise, there exists no direct indication of 'restoring cities' being stated in any other source. It seems that the lens through which Muḥaqiq Dāmād and others are reading this phrase, as well as Khomeini's intention of having political ambitions to stand for government, is an a posteriori one based on subsequent socio-political developments in the Iranian milieu after the Revolution of 1979. Another example is Fakhr al-Dīn Ḥijāzī (d. 1386 *shamsī*/2007), whose flattering statements at the dawn of the Revolution and in Khomeini's presence, have been renowned for years. He goes far beyond Muḥaqiq Dāmād's scholastic reading and asks for a global, just government by Khomeini. Verbalizing what many others had in mind but dared not say, Ḥijāzī calls Khomeini 'the Suleymān of the time and Dāwūd of the Age', and asked him to rise up to establish a global kingdom and to administer justice all over the world. Khomeini responded to Ḥijāzī by saying that "I fear that if I believe Mr. Ḥijāzī's statements about myself, they may result in bringing arrogance and personal decline (*inḥiṭāṭ*) to me. I shall take refuge in Almighty God".[33] Khomeini's reaction shows that he obviously did not imagine any role and/or responsibility for himself other than rising up against the Shah, of course more as a *faqīh* than as an *ʿārif,* and establishing an Islamic government.[34]

To sum up Khomeini's theory on the *asfār,* there are two points here: there exists no connection between having a Sufi, or perhaps it is better to say, a spiritual lifestyle on one hand and being an *insān al-kāmil* on the other. The first one does not necessarily result in the second. Khomeini

had followed a spiritual path all his life.[35] His interest in *ʿirfān* was not limited to reading mystical texts or having a mystical training, but rather to declaring that being an *insān al-kāmil* is not easy to prove. Secondly, Knysh's analysis that "very probably Khomeini's four-stage venture is simply a further particularization of Ibn Arabi's vision of an exemplar human destiny and self-fulfillment" (Knysh 1992, p. 647) does not seem plausible, because Ibn ʿArabī himself is brief about the Four Journeys and only mentions the first two, and Khomeini's outlook, compared with his other ideas such as *wilāya*, *nubuwwa*, the perfect man and, most importantly, the doctrine of names and attributes, is short. As for the identity of the individual who completes the journeys, in all his texts examined here, with the exception of *Sirr al-Ṣalāt,* Khomeini leaves no doubt that only the *awlīyā* (the Prophet and the *imāms*) have been able to complete this spiritual venture.

5.6 Conclusion

There are some lessons from this survey of Khomeini's mysticism and its roots in the *Akbarīan* tradition. First and foremost, Ibn ʿArabī and his apparatus had gained a *Shīʿa* aura by the time of Khomeini, and the process of adjusting Ibn ʿArabī's mysticism to the *Shīʿa* creeds, had in fact started with figures such as ʿAbd al-Razzāq Kāshānī, Seyyed Ḥaydar Āmulī, ʿAlāʾ al-Dawlah Simnānī, and continued with Shaykh Maḥmūd Shabistarī as well as *Shīʿa ʿirfānī* orders. During the Safawid period, as it was observed, the role of Mullā Ṣadrā and his students, particularly Qumshiʾī, in the process of making the *Akbarīan* School *Shīʿa,* was undeniable. The *ʿirfānī* conceptualization of *wilāya* (and other related concepts), however, remained immutable and unchanged, and it is from this perspective that Knysh evaluates Khomeini's *ʿirfānī* writings as "timeless, in so far as they could have been written three, four, or five centuries ago" (Knysh 1992, p. 649).

With regard to the forms and content, there is no major difference between his writings and the writings of the *ḥakīms* of the Schools of Tehran and Qum, with the only exception of ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī, who, as it was observed in the previous chapter (Sect. 4.7.1, pp. 149–153), switched the center of gravity from *wilāyat al-khāṣṣah* to *wilāyat al-ʿāmmah.* Another development, which had started with Ibn ʿArabī and had been firmly established by the time of Khomeini, was the analogy between the

humane and the Divine, having been crystalized in the theory of the perfect man. The personality of the perfect man is the consummation of the Divine plan, "combining in himself both the traits of God, and the features of the engendered universe, [by which] he rises to such a preeminence that he becomes invested with divine 'deputyship' (*nayāba*) and vicegerency" (Knysh 1992, p. 649). As it will be discussed in the next chapter, Divine deputyship, here through the channel of the Hidden *imām*, will play an important role in Khomeini's juridical theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh*.

Perhaps as important as Ibn ʿArabī's influence on Khomeini's mysticism is the reconciliation of the two sources of authority (mysticism and jurisprudence) in his thought and personality, each representing a distinct form of authority, although reinforcing each other in different ways.[36] The former emphasizes qualities such as purity of the heart of the leader, piety, and devotion, while the latter is an expression of the qualities of justice, knowledge, and wisdom. How did our scholar reconcile these two, when jurisprudence carried a heavier weight and influence than mysticism? One can look for the answer in Khomeini's charismatic personality, the sociopolitical circumstances of Iran in 1960s and 1970s, and developments in *Shīʿa* jurisprudence which had begun in the early nineteenth century. At the same time, mysticism had not undergone significant changes, particularly in terms of the theory of *wilāya*. Before reading Khomeini's juridical texts and contextualizing them, both intellectually and from a sociopolitical perspective, one cannot reach a final answer to these questions, and this is what the author will do in the next chapter.

However, before turning our attention to juridical *wilāya* in Khomeini's writings, it is worth remembering the research questions propounded in the Introduction (B. p. 13). With respect to these questions, in this chapter, the author sought to study how *wilāya* has been conceptualized in Khomeini's *ʿirfānī* texts and how his inspiration by *Akbarīan* mysticism influenced his outlook. It was questioned whether *wilāya* had undergone any changes during the eighteenth to the twentieth century, and whether its conceptualization in the writing of our scholar—who stands at the end of this timeline—displays any difference from those of his predecessors. His arguments and the method he deploys, as discussed above, look ageless. Pertinent to this is his gloss on a number of original *ʿirfānī* texts that can be ranked as genuine additions to the exiting scholarship on *Akbarīan* mysticism, though at the same time, remain classic and typical.

Notes

1. Moussavi has discussed *taqlīd*, *ijtihād*, *marjaʿ*, as well as the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh* in other articles/books as well. See:

   A New Interpretation of the Theory of Vilayat-i Faqīh, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.28, No.1, January 1992, pp. 101–107.

   The Establishment of the Position of Marjaʿīyyt-i Taqlīd in the Twelver-Shi'i Community, *Iranian Studies*, Vol. XVIII, No. 1, Winter 1985, pp. 35–51.

   Religious Authority in Shīʿa Islam: From the Office of Mufti to the Institution of Marjaʿ, 1996 (International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization: Kuala Lumpur).

   And two more sources that have discussed the topic in length:

   Todd Lawson (ed), *The Attitude of the Ulama towards the Government in Nineteenth-Century Iran*, in *Reason and Inspiration in Islam: Theology, Philosophy and Mysticism in Muslim Thought* (Essays in Honour of Hermann Landolt), 2005 (London and New York: I.B. Tauris Publishers & the Institute of Ismaili Studies), pp. 522–536.

   Abbas Amanat's article entitled, From Ijtihād to Wilāyat-i Faqīh: The Evolving of the Shi'ite Legal Authority to Political Power, *Logos*, 2.3, Summer 2003, discusses the subject in detail.

2. Along with Kadivar's classification of the *Shīʿa* political thought which is used here, Ahmad Kazemi Moussavi, in his book entitled *Religious Authority in Shīʿa Islam: From the Office of Mufti to the Institution of Marjaʿ*, has also classified the stages of the development of the *Shīʿa* jurisprudence, but the emphasis is on jurisprudence and not the *Shīʿa* political thought, though the former can include the latter as well. See:

   Ahmad Kazemi Moussavi, Op.cit, 1996, Chapter 1, pp. 7–44.

3. There are a number of scholars who regard Narāqī as the forerunner. For example:

   Mashaallah Ajudani, *Mashrūṭa-yi Īrānī*, 1997 (London: Faṣl-i Kitāb).

   Ahmad Kazemi Moussavi, Op.cit, 1996.

   Saïd Amir Arjomand, *III: Shīʿīsm in History; the Pahlavi Era*, in *Expectation of the Millennium*, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Hamid Dabashi and Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr (eds), 1989 (New York: State University of New York Press), p. 231.

   Hamid Dabashi, Op.cit, 1993, pp. 11–12.

   In addition to these scholars, Muhsin Kadivar, in his books, and particularly in *Ḥukūmat-i Wilāyī* (Divine Government) and *Naẓarīyahāy-i Dawlat dar Fiqh-i Shīʿa* (The Theories of the Statecraft in *Shīʿa* Jurisprudence), traces the intellectual genealogy of the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh* back to the developments of the nineteenth century and indirectly points to Narāqī as a pioneer figure.

4. Shāhābādī was the son of Shaykh Muḥammad Javād Bīdābādī from Bīdābād, Isfahan; though he is famous as Shāhābādī due to his residence in Shāhābād, a city district of Tehran which is now famous as Jumhūrī Eslāmī Avenue.
5. Shāhābādī's political and mystical influences on Khomeini are mentioned in a number of sources. See:

   Baqer Moin, *Khomeini: the Life of the Ayatollah*, 1999 (I.B. Tauris Publishers: London & NY), pp. 43–44.

   Asghar Seyed-Gohrab, Khomeini the Poet Mystic, *Die Welt des Islams* 51 (2011) 438–458, p. 441.

   Alexander Knysh, 'Irfan' Revisited: Khomeini and the Legacy of Islamic Mystical Philosophy, *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 46, No. 4 (Autumn, 1992), p. 633.

   Idris Samawi Hamid, Al-Qurʾān wa al-ʿItrah: a Treatise from the Rashaḥāt al-Biḥār of Mīrzā Muḥammad ʿAlī Shāhābādī, *International Journal of Shiʿi Studies* 2(1), 2003, 121–158.
6. Alexander Knysh mentions 'Mīrzā ʿAlī Akbar Ḥakīm' which is obviously not correct (Knysh, Op.cit, 1992, p. 633).
7. Āqā Mīrzā ʿAlī Akbar Mudarris Ḥikamī Yazdī (d. 1344 H /1925) was the master of *ḥikmat* and *ʿirfān* of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. He was the student of Mīrzā Jahāngīr Khān Qashqāʾī and Āqā Muḥammad Riḍā Qumshiʾī, both the renowned *ḥakīms* of the School of Tehran. It seems that Yazdī was one of the key figures who attached Khomeini to the teachings of Mullā Ṣadrā via the mediation of the School of Tehran. According to the brief note of Khomeini in the introduction of Yazdī's book entitled *Rasāʾil al-Ḥikamīya* (the Theosophical Treatises) during the years of studentship in Qum, both he and other young students were very content with the coming of Yazdī to Qum and teaching philosophy and *ʿirfān* there (*ʿulūm-i bāṭinī* in his words), because at the same time Shaykh ʿAbdulkarīm Ḥāʾirī Yazdī taught *uṣūl* and jurisprudence (*ulūm-i ẓāhirī*) and therefore the students had the opportunity to learn both the *ẓāhirī* and *bāṭinī* sciences at the same time (Ḥikamī Yazdī 1372 *shamsī*, p. 13). Before the Qum years, when Ḥikamī Yazdī was living in Tehran and taught at *Madrasay-i* Shaykh ʿAbdul Hossein, figures such as Hossein Qumī Ṭabāṭabāʾī and Ḥāj Mīrzā Aḥmad Āshtīyānī attended his circle (Ḥikamī Yazdī, Ibid., p. 17). Yazdī's book is published in Tehran in 1372 *shamsī* by the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance (*Wizārat-i Farhang wa Irshād-i Islāmī*).
8. Mīrzā Javād Āqā Malikī Tabrīzī was born in Tabriz and when he was young moved to Najaf to study in the *ḥawza*. He studied jurisprudence with Ayatollah Ḥāj Āqā Riḍā Hamidānī, *uṣūl* with Mullā Muḥammad Kāẓim Khurāsānī, and *ʿirfān* and ethics with Mullā Hossein qulī Hamidānī. After

returning home from Najaf, he moved from Tabriz to Qum to assist Shaykh Ḥāʾirī Yazdī to establish the *ḥawza* of Qum. He died in 1343 H/1924 and buried in the *Shaykhān* cemetery in Qum. Malikī Tabrīzī, 1372, pp. 3–4. His book entitled *Asrār al-Ṣalāt* (the Mysteries of Prayer) was published in Tehran in 1372 by *Payām-i Āzādī* publication.

9. According to Moin, seven years. See: Baqer Moin, Op.cit, 1999, p. 43.
10. In Moin's book, it is *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb* (the Keys of Unseen) which is not plausible. Khomeini read *Miftāḥ al-Ghayb* of Qūnawī and wrote a commentary on it which is known as *Miftāḥ al-Ghayb wa Miṣbāḥ al-Uns* (the Key of Unseen and the Lamp of Fondness). For more elucidation on the particular commentary and his impact on Khomeini, see: Knysh, Op.cit (1992, p. 635).
11. Knysh believes that this work and the commentary on the *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* (the Bezels of Wisdom), written by Qayṣarī's teacher, ʿAbd al-Razzāq Kāshānī, "are probably the most influential and widely read elucidations of Ibn ʿArabī's masterpiece" which had "a profound and lasting effect on Khomeini's outlook in general and his metaphysical views in particular" (Knysh, Op.cit, 1992, p. 635).
12. In this book, which in fact is an *ʿirfānī* exegesis of the *Qurʾān*, Khawja relates *Qurʾānīc* themes and concepts with one of the spiritual stations in *ʿirfān*. The point is to show that the Path (*ṭarīqa*) and the laws (*sharīʿa*) are identical. For more information see:

    Mahdī Mutīʿ and others, Jilvihāy-i Tafsīr-i ʿIrfānī-yi Qurʾān dar Bāb-i Akhlāq-i Manāzil al-Sāʾirīn (the Dimensions of the Mystical Exegesis of the Qurʾān on the Ethics of the Abodes of Travelers), *the Journal of Tafsīr wa Zabān-i Qurʾān*, No. 1, Fall and Winter 1391, pp. 99–114.
13. Shāhābādī started his education with his father Shaykh Muḥammad Javād Bīdābādī, himself a student of Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥassan Najafī (d. 1228 H/1813) known as Ṣāḥib al-Jawāhir and Shaykh Murtaḍā Anṣārī (d. 1281 H/1864). In 1320 Hegira, Shāhābādī moved to Najaf and stayed there for seven years, where he studied with Ākhund Mullā Muḥammad Kāẓim Khurāsānī (d. 1329 H/1911), Shaykh Fatḥullāh Sharīʿat (known as *Shaykh ul-Sharīʿa*), and Ayatollah Mīrzā Muḥammad Ḥassan Khalīlī. After the death of Khurāsānī, Shāhābādī moved to Samarra and attended the classes of Mīrzā Muḥammad Taqī Shīrāzī (d. 1338 H/1919) who granted Shāhābādī the *ījāza* of teaching and issuing *fatwā*. Along with Shīrāzī, nine more *mujtahids* issued Shāhābādī the *ījāza*, including the above-mentioned *Shaykh ul-Sharīʿa*, Seyyed Ismāʿīl Ṣadr, and Mīrzā Khalīl Tehrānī (Shāhābādī 1386, pp. 31–33). Before turning his attention to Shāhābādī, Khomeini had another teacher in *ʿirfān* and *ḥikma*, and unlike Knysh's opinion, he learned *Asfār al-Arbaʿi* with Seyyed Abu al-Ḥassan Rafiʿī Qazvīnī (d. 1354 *shamsī*/1976) in Qum, himself a student of ʿAbdulkarīm Ḥāʾirī Yazdī. See:

http://fa.wikishia.net/view/%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%AF_%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%B3%D9%86_%D8%B1%D9%81%DB%8C%D8%B9%DB%8C_%D9%82%D8%B2%D9%88%DB%8C%D9%86%DB%8C, last accessed 2/17/17.

14. Murtiḍā Muṭaharī in his *ʿUlūm-i Islāmī* (Islamic Sciences, two volumes) has elaborated on the theoretical mysticism and practical mysticism—*ʿirfān-i naẓarī wa ʿamalī*, respectively. In volume two of the present book, Muṭaharī explains that the practical mysticism refers to spiritual conduct (*sulūk*), and the way masters initiate young novice in order to help him to access the station of unity with God. So, *ʿirfān-i ʿamalī* talks about a process which ends in self-annihilation or subsistence—*baqā*—with God. On the other hand, *ʿirfān-i naẓarī* is about the explanation or interpretation of existence (*wujūd/hastī*) and elaborates on the elements of the existence such as God, the cosmos and Man. See:

    Murtiḍā Muṭaharī, *ʿUlūm-i Islāmī* (Islamic Knowledge,), vol. 2 (*Kalām, ʿIrfān, Ḥikmat-i ʿAmalī*), 6th edition, 1368 (Tehran: Ṣadrā Publication), pp. 81–96.

15. Ḥāʾirī himself was the student of Mīrzā Muḥammad Ḥassan Shīrāzī (known as *Mīrzāy-i Shīrāzī* and *Mīrzāy-i Mujaddid*, d. 1194 H/1814) and other principal teachers, such as Mīrzā Ibrāhīm Maḥallātī, Shaykh Faḍlullāh Nūrī, Mīrzā Muḥammad Taqī Shīrāzī, and Seyyed Muḥammad Fishārakī Iṣfahānī, all of them Mīrzā Ḥassan Shīrāzī's associates (Algar 2002, p. 3). On the death of his mentor, Ḥāʾirī left Samarra for Najaf to study under the celebrated Ākhund Khurāsānī. After returning to Iran, he resided in Arak for some eight years (Algar 2002, p. 4) and then moved to Qum to establish the *ḥawza* of that city (Algar 2002, p. 6). Algar believes that it was the "matchless" efforts of Ḥāʾirī which turned Qum to an elevated city as a "position of centrality in the religious life of Persia, almost if not fully competitive with the shrine cities of Iraq" (Algar 2002, p. 6). There is also another account for Ḥāʾirī's studies and administration. See:

    Muḥsin al-Amīn, *Aʿyān al-Shīʿa* (the *Shīʿa* Figures), VIII, 1403 H/1983 (Beirut: Dār ul-Taʿāruf lil Maṭbūʿāt), p. 42.

16. A young student of *ḥawza* has three levels to go through to become a *mujtahid* or a *faqīh*. These are as follows:

    Muqaddamāt (introductory level), *saṭḥ* (intermediate level), and *khārij* (advanced level). It would normally take seven years to complete *muqaddamāt*, which consists of the following books: *Jāmiʿul Muqaddamāt* (the Comprehensive of Introductions, fourteen small volumes in Persian and Arabic) that includes Arabic grammar, syntax, logic, method of reading, and exercises, which are taught in conjugation. The objective of the course is to teach introductory Arabic syntax to the students and to prepare them for learning the subsequent courses. Along with that, students

study *Suyūṭī*, which is mostly on syntax. *Ḥāshīyah* (Gloss) is on basic logic and the new book used in the field is *al-Manṭiq* (The Logic). There is also *Muṭawwal* (Detailed, or a summary of it) which teaches rhetoric and speech. The new books used for the course are *Balāghat* (Eloquence) and *Jawāhir ul-Balāgha* (the Jewelry of Balāgha). After *Muqaddamāt*, students are promoted to *satḥ* and are taught theology and jurisprudence. It takes eight years to finish this level. Sources include texts such as *Maʿālim ul-Uṣūl* (Guides of Principles), *Qawānīn* (Laws) by Mīrzāy-i Qumī on theology, *Lūmʿah* (Spangle) by *Shahīd Thānī*, *al-Makāsib* (Transactions) by Shaykh Murtiḍā Anṣārī, *Rasāʾil* (Treatises), *Kifāyat ul-Uṣūl* (Adequacy of Principles) by Mullā Muḥammad Kāẓim Khurāsānī, *Manẓūma* and *Ishārat* (Indications) both on philosophy and mysticism, *Bidāyat ul-Ḥikma* (Beginning of Wisdom) and *Nihāyat ul-Ḥikma* (Extremity of Wisdom) on philosophy, *Asfār* (Four Journeys) of Mullā Ṣadrā, *Sharḥ-i Tajrīd* (Commentary on *Tajrīd*), *Maqāmāt-i Ḥāʾirī* (Stations of Ḥāʾirī), and *Maqāmāt-i Hamidānī* (Stations of Hamidānī) on Arabic literature. After mastering these two levels, students start *khārij* with the objective of becoming *marjaʿi taqlīd*. In the advanced level, other courses are also taught including: *Rijāl*, *Dirāya*, history of Islam, ethics, interpretations, and astronomy.

http://www.islam-laws.com/howzasystem.htm, last accessed 2/17/17.

For a socio-anthropological study of the *ḥawza* of Qum in pre-Revolutionary Iran, see: Michael M. J. Fischer, *Iran: From Religious Dispute to Revolution,* 2nd edition, 1980 (Cambridge & London: Harvard University Press), pp. 31–42 & 77–86. And for the levels of studying and curriculum of the *ḥawza* of Najaf in the early twentieth century, see:

Chibli Mallat, *the Renewal of Islamic Law; Muhammad Baqer Sadr, Najaf and the Shi'i International*, 1993 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 39–50.

17. Born in Samarra, studied in Kashan and Najaf, he moved to Qum in 1341 H/1922, and when he was studying with Ḥāʾirī, founded an independent *ḥawza* for himself. Along with Khomeini, his other students were Ayatollah Marʿashī Najafī and Ayatollah Dāmād. He finally re-settled in Kashan and was buried there.

    http://www.tebyan.net/newindex.aspx?pid=37928, last accessed 2/17/17.

18. Moin brings in Adīb Khurāsānī which is not plausible. It is Ayatollah Āqā Mīrzā Muḥammad ʿAlī Adīb Tehrānī, who was born in Tehran and studied under Shaykh ʿAbdulhusseyn Rashtī. Both in Arak and Qum, Adīb Tehrānī attended the classes of Ḥāʾirī and after leaving Qum and settling in Tehran, taught *uṣūl* and jurisprudence there. He was famous in literature.

http://www.hawzah.net/fa/Book/View/45232/17329/8-%D8%A2%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%A2%D9%82%D8%A7-%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%B1%D8%B2%D8%A7-%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF%D8%B9%D9%84%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D8%AF%DB%8C%D8%A8-%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86%DB%8C, last accessed 2/17/17.

19. Born in Khwansar, he moved to Najaf to continue his studies with Ākhund Khurāsānī and Seyyed Muḥammad Kāẓim Ṭabāṭabāʾī Yazdī (1248–1337 H). After their deaths, he started learning *uṣūl* with Ayatollah Muḥammad Hossein Nāʾīnī (1276 H/1861–1355 H/1936). He had the *ījāza* of *fatwā* and transmission of *ḥadīth* from Ayatollah Zīyā ʿArāqī. After returning to Iran, he resided in Qum and started teaching and training students in the *ḥawza*. When Ḥāʾirī died, along with Ayatollahs Ḥujjat and Ṣadr, he played an important role under their tripartite leadership to protect the *ḥawza* from governmental threat.

    http://www.hawzah.net/fa/Mostabser/View/3200, last accessed 2/17/17.

20. I had access to the book through this website:

    http://honarvarnet.blogspot.com/2010/07/1_22.html, last accessed 2/17/17.

21. See also Baqer Moin, *Khomeini, Ruhollah al-Musavi*, in the *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World*. Oxford Islamic Studies Online, http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t236/e0457, last accessed 2/17/17

22. The lengthy list of his *ʿirfānī* books is available in: http://www.noorlib.ir/View/fa/CreatorList?SearchText=%D8%AE%D9%85%DB%8C%D9%86%D8%8C%D8%8C%20%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%AD%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87%20(%20%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A8%D8%B1%20%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%82%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%A8%20%D9%88%20%D8%A8%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86%20%DA%AF%D8%B0%D8%A7%D8%B1%20%D8%AC%D9%85%D9%87%D9%88%D8%B1%DB%8C%20%D8%A7%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%20%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86)&SearchKind=Creator, last accessed 2/17/17.

23. http://en.imam-khomeini.ir/en/n3120/Biography/Immigration_to_Qom, last accessed 2/17/17.

24. Vanessa Martin has discussed the subject in detail. See:

    Vanessa Martin, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*, 2007 (New York: I. B. Tauris), pp. 34–45.

25. The actual *ḥadīth* reference is: "I was a hidden treasure, I loved to be known, therefore I created people in order to be known". The *ḥadīth* is not transmitted by any *Shīʿa ḥadīth* compilation, and in Muḥammad Bāqir

Majlisī's *Biḥār al-Anwār* (the Oceans of Lights) is mentioned as *khabar-i wāḥid* (a *ḥadīth* which is transmitted only by one transmitter and it lacks a chain of transmitters), indicating its unreliability; though it is a famous *ḥadīth* in Sufi literature and has always been used by Sufis. See: http://www.islamquest.net/fa/archive/question/fa8094, last accessed 2/20/17.

26. For an adequate explanation of the perfect man in Khomeini's writings and its nexus to imamate, see: Furūgh al-Sādāt Raḥīm Pūr (ed), *Imamate wa Insān-i Kāmil az Dīdgāh-i Imām Khomeini* (Imamate and the perfect man in *Imām* Khomeini's Thought), 3rd edition, 1387 (Tehran: Muʾasasay-i Tanẓīm wa Nashr-i Āthār-i Imām).
27. For the *ḥadīth* and its *Shīʿa* background, see: http://fa.wikishia.net/view/%D8%AD%D8%AF%DB%8C%D8%AB_%D9%84%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A7%DA%A9, last accessed 2/20/17.
28. Knysh maintains that Khomeini has hardly had sympathy with 'Muslim speculative theologians', as he mostly took sides with Sufis and sages (Knysh, Op.cit, 1992, p. 641).
29. His closeness to, and inspiration by, Qumshiʾī is already mentioned.
30. The Absolute Will is also called 'the Holy Emanation' (*fayḍ al-muqaddas*), 'the All-encompassing Mercy' (*raḥmat-i wāsiʿa*), 'the Greatest Name' (*ism-i aʿẓam*), and 'the Absolute *Muḥammedan wilāya*' or '*maqām-i ʿalawī*' or '*quṭbīyat*' (Khomeini 1388, p. 16).
31. Referring to the famous *ḥadīth* that 'I was prophet when Adam was between water and clay'. Khomeini transmits the *ḥadīth* from *Asrār ul-Sharīʿa wa Aṭwār ul-Ṭarīqa wa Anwār ul-Ḥaqīqa* (the Secrets of *Sharīʿa*, the Alterations of the Path and the Lights of the Reality), pp. 46 & 92 in Khomeini 1388, p. 16.
32. I am grateful to the author Muṣṭafā Muḥaqiq Dāmād who supplied me with a copy of his unpublished article years ago when I was still in Tehran. The article entitled wilāyat-i Insān-i Kāmil az Didgāh-i Imām Khomeini (the Guardianship of the Perfect Man in Imām Khomeini's Thought) and a copy of it entitled *ʿIrfān wa Shahrīyārī* (Mysticism and Kingdom) are published in *Dīn*, *Falsafa, Qānūn* (Religion, Philosophy, Laws), Muṣṭafā Muḥaqiq Dāmād, 1378 (Tehran: Sukhan publication), pp. 125–141.
33. Fakhr al-Dīn Ḥijāzī's statements and Khomeini's reaction are to be found in this one-minute YouTube clip at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66DRInZGH7I, last accessed 5/10/17.
34. Ridgeon in his article *Hidden Khomeini* points to his email correspondences with Hamid Algar, in which the latter supports the same perspective: "the assertion that Imam Khomeini believed that he had completed the four journeys and therefore, attained the status of insan-i kamil is, I think, unwarranted". See:

Lloyd Ridgeon, *Hidden Khomeini: Mysticism and Poetry,* in *A Critical Introduction to Khomeini,* Arshin Adib-Moghaddam, (ed), 2014 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 217.

35. Ridgeon has expanded on this in *Hidden Khomeini*, Ibid., 2014, p. 215.
36. Ridgeon calls it "the juxtaposition of Khomeini as a faqih … with that of the mystic who is able to commune with the divine …" (Ridgeon 2014, p. 213), while Martin calls the former (mysticism), "a subtle unseen authority" which acts behind the visible, "manifest one" (Martin 2007, pp. 202–203).

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CHAPTER 6

Khomeini as the Jurist and *Wilāya*

Our study of the journey of *wilāya,* as conceptualized by Khomeini, will not be complete unless we examine the juridical dimension of this term in the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh* on one hand, and its further conceptualizations in the writings of Khomeini's students, chief among them Husayn ʿAlī Muntaẓirī and Muhsin Kadivar, on the other. Therefore, the present chapter seeks to study and analyze the juridical *wilāya*, as well as the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh*, from the perspective of socio-political developments in early twentieth-century Iran. The author argues that the changes that can be explained as 'radical *Shīʿīsm*' (including, but not limited to, the politicization of Qum seminary, the birth of the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh*, and the emergence of Ayatollah Khomeini as a combatant *faqīh*) were not only greatly influenced by transformations in the political arena, but were also reactions to them. The author seeks to explain how the conceptualization of juridical *wilāya* underwent a tremendous shift from being purely juridical, to having a political reading. The jurisdictional changes that had started with Constitutional jurisprudence, now, and in the mid-twentieth century, came to bear fruit in assuming a political role and responsibility for the *Shīʿī faqīh*. Therefore, unlike the *ʿirfānī wilāya* which has remained stagnant and unchanged, its juridical conceptualization displays the vitality of the *Shīʿa* jurisprudence during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Riḍā Khān's coup of February 1921 was a turning point in the history of Iran. His policies profoundly transformed the face and fate of the country from a politically disintegrated and economically poor society to a unified

L. Chamankhah, *The Conceptualization of Guardianship in Iranian Intellectual History (1800–1989)*, Palgrave Series in Islamic Theology, Law, and History, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-22692-3_6

nation with a centralized political system. The state had a multi-dimensional policy that spanned all aspects of people's lives, including stabilizing the country, building a strong army, enforcing dress code for both men and women, reforming the language, implementing new party politics, changing the name of the country from Persia to Iran, reorganizing the fiscal system, and last but not least, implementing legal and judicial reforms. Having centered on 'secularizing' and 'centralizing' as the essence of these policies, the state became the agent of authoritarian, radical, change in the post-Qajar era.[1]

These policies, which symbolized the era, started two or three years after the stabilization of the new dynasty (Cronin 2003, p. 6). Addressing the state and the clerics, Riḍā Shah's Westernizing and secularizing policies—which went hand-in-hand with implementation of centralizing policies—affected the whole of the hierocracy. The policies which targeted the hierocracy's autonomy and financial power included the state's intrusion into the judicial domain, the abolishment of the *mujtahids*' civil courts and their replacement with a state-controlled judiciary, the confiscation of charitable endowments (*awqāf*),[2] and the establishment of modern education institutions (which grew in number from the mid-1920s) that rivalled traditional *madrasas*. These developments undermined the *ʿulemā*'s social status and affected their economic influence (Amanat 2003, p. 8). It was not only the state's policies that shook the hierocracy, but also the growth of the secularized or semi-secularized middle classes, and also the popularity of a variety of religious and ideological challenges that negatively affected them. Amanat describes the clerical community of that time as "demoralized and shrunken" and that sought to "reorganize the *madrasa* and to solidify its network at the national level" (Amanat 2003, p. 8; Martin 2007, pp. 15–17).

The emergence of a tendency toward a centralized *marjaʿīyyah* under Ayatollah Muḥammad Husayn Burūjirdī (d. 1340 *shamsī*/1961) should be regarded as a "belated, albeit inevitable, response" (Amanat 2003, p. 8) to the state's intrusion into the hierocracy's domain.[3] The goal of having a 'centralized *marjaʿīyyah*', however, would not have been attainable without first fixing the financial affairs of the *ḥawza* of Qum (a legacy of ʿAbdul Karīm Ḥāʾirī). To this aim, Burūjirdī followed a disciplined policy of strengthening the economic and financial foundations of the *ḥawza*, concurrently with increasing the number of students (*ṭullāb*). In addition, in order to organize more effectively the revenues of the *ḥawza*, he "had a register drawn up of" (Algar 1989, p. 6; Akhavi 1980, p. 125) all his

wukalā (lit. agents, those who were involved in gathering the religious taxes), as opposed to the *ḥawza's* voluntary way of organizing financial affairs which had been prevalent before. Another "administrative innovation" (Algar 1989, p. 6) of Burūjirdī that helped to reinforce the centrality of Qum and the office of *marjaʿīyyah* "was his institution of a register of correspondence, permitting the [*ʿulemā*] at the *ḥawza* to build up a further network of contacts throughout the country" (Muṭaharī n.d., p. 248, in Algar, p. 6).[4]

Other initiatives may be added to this list, such as building new *madrasas* to "demonstrate the compatibility of Islamic commitment with the acquisition of modern knowledge" (Algar 1989, p. 7), promoting a *Shīʿa*-Sunnite rapprochement and sending representatives to Muslim and non-Muslim countries. All these, together with maintaining "an almost unwaveringly quietist stance", helped him to remain "more or less neutral in the stormy political contests of the postwar period" (Algar 1989, p. 8). Along with the centralized *marjaʿīyyah* and reorganization of the traditional education institutions, the hierocracy underwent another significant shift, a moving away from the duality of the state-*ʿulemā* alliance toward fresh sources of raising money and strengthening social solidarity, namely the *bazaar* community and a new class of urban and urbanized poor. These three, "offered a pool for clerical recruitment and an enthusiastic mosque congregation" (Amanat 2003, p. 8).

The withdrawal of the jurists, mainly Ayatollah Burūjirdī and earlier his peer Ayatollah ʿAbdulkarīm Ḥāʾirī (d. 1355 H/1937), into the stronghold of political quietism is also mentioned by Saïd Amir Arjomand. He maintains that during Riḍā Shah's reign, the clerics were "too surprised and stunned to react effectively" (Amir Arjomand 1988, p. 84), and hence they tried not to altercate with the Shah. This perplexity, and at the same time caution, is reflected in a number of political writings, including Khomeini's *Kashf al-Asrār* (the Unveiling of the Secrets) which was written immediately after the abdication of the Shah. As will be observed in the following, Khomeini wavered between adhering to Constitutionalism and instigating his notion of the ideal of Islamic government. His belief in Constitutionalism, however, meant belief in the second article of the amendment of the constitution (approved 1285 *shamsī*/1906), according to which a council must be formed composed of five jurists to ensure that the legislation of the *majlis* (the Parliament) is not contradictory to the Islamic *sharīʿa*.[5] Amir Arjomand believes that the hierocracy maintained its hostility toward Constitutionalism (Amir Arjomand 1988, p. 85), even

in subsequent years, probably because the jurists did not perceive Constitutionalism as something of their own, and their adherence to it was in fact an act of necessity.

In addition to the state's attacks on the hegemony of the hierocracy, the jurists monitored another threat which was the emergence of secularist tendencies among the society. By 'secularist tendencies', reference is especially made to Ahmad Kasravi, whose polemical writings on Persian poetry and literature, as well as on *Shīʿīsm*, had caused uproar among many Iranians, including the hierocracy. For the clerics and mainly Khomeini, Ahmad Kasravi was not a person, but the representative of "the general secularising trend of the times" (Ridgeon 2006, p. 9), whose critiques on the Sufi and *Shīʿa* heritage of Iran had raised the need to defend these two pillars of Iranian identity. As Lloyd Ridgeon ascertains, "his steadfast rejection of superstitious beliefs (including Sufism and *Shīʿīsm*) and his opposition to the wholesale absorption of Western culture into Iran struck a chord with many Iranians" (Ridgeon 2006, p. 9). The danger of Kasravi's anti-Islamic views (which, compared with his anti-Sufi critiques seemed to be more important) caused the radical *Shīʿa* group of *Fadāʾīyān-i Islam* (Devotees of Islam) to shoot him dead in 1946 (1324 *shamsī*) "during the last session of the preliminary hearings of the heresy charges brought against him" (Ridgeon 2006, p. 9). Yet, it was not only Kasravi who was treated brutally by the hierocracy. To a lesser extent, ʿAlī Akbar Ḥikamī Zādih (d. 1366 *shamsī*/1988), a disciple of Kasravi, was also pilloried by Khomeini. The above-mentioned *Kashf al-Asrār*, which will be analyzed shortly, was written as a response to Ḥikamī Zādih and his 'assaults' on Islam and *marjaʿīyyah*.

6.1 *Kashf al-Asrār*: A Political Manifesto

Kashf al-Asrār (Unveiling of the Secrets), written in 1321 *shamsī*/1942–1943 as a response to *Asrār-i Hizār Sālih* (One-Thousand Years of Secrets) by ʿAlī Akbar Ḥikamī Zādih, should be treated as Khomeini's first step into the world of politics.[6] At that time, he was forty years old. *Kashf* has a polemical tone, and in it, the boundary between politics and jurisprudence is blurred since political issues are discussed from a juridical perspective and vice versa. In 1321 *shamsī*/1942–1943, ʿAlī Akbar Ḥikamī Zādih published a short treatise (forty-nine pages) in which he propounded thirteen questions from "Muslim scholars and the People of Knowledge" (*ʿulemāy-i Islām wa ahl-i maʿrifat*), and by doing that,

challenged them to reply to him. Ḥikamī Zādih never received any response from the *ʿulemā* and therefore published the questions and his own answers. Although Khomeini's long treatise (341 pages) was not sent to him, the work is apparently regarded as Khomeini's response to Ḥikamī Zādih. The treatise is dateless; though from the content, it can be presumed that it was written circa 1321 *shamsī*/1942–1943 (Khomeini n.d. p. 2).

Khomeini's *Kashf* contains a number of theses and presuppositions, including the following:

First, Ḥikamī Zādih and writers like him are accused of breaking community cohesion by creating division and schism, as well as destroying the "foundations of belief of the people" (Khomeini, n.d., p. 2). Even if the author is anonymous to the reader, from this very first phrase, it would be clear that the author has *ʿirfānī* and juridical concerns. As previously mentioned, unity with God, with nature, and with the cosmos is one of the main concerns of a Sufi. The concept of *waḥdah* (unity) is a central concept around which major mystical ideas are shaped, though since the human reason cannot grasp the reality of God let alone unite with Him, and if humanity ever hopes to know God, Deity has to grasp humanity. In Islamic mysticism, the idea of God 'coming down' into the cosmos is prevalent, and it is only in this way, which is "the heart's imagination", and not through intellectual efforts, that Man "draws near this God", and becomes one with Him (Singh 2003, p. 103). On the other hand, jurists were conceived of as the only legitimate preservers of the community of believers, as well as aides in the prevention of dispersion of the community. By such a treatise, Ḥikamī Zādih, in Khomeini's view, has created schism in the unity of Muslims.

Second, Khomeini makes an argument for the defense of hierocracy,[7] that is, jurists, and maintains that the *Shīʿa* hierocracy is equal to Islam, and imitation of a jurist (*taqlīd*) is essential for the survival of the Faith (Khomeini, p. 2 & 4).

Third is Khomeini's terminology in terms of the frequency of concepts such as nation, Iranian *Shīʿīsm*, fatherland, and national solidarity (Khomeini, p. 55ff), and from this perspective, his emphasis on nationalism is in line with the Constitutionalist *ʿulemā* and is inspired by the political discourse of the time and particularly Riḍā Shah's measures to unify Iran. Khomeini internalizes Riḍā Shah's nationalistic literature.

Fourth, Khomeini's role in this text is ambivalent between a reformist clergy who speaks about nation (both as a large group of people united by

common descent, history, culture, or language, and as religion), the importance of the revival of Persian as the Iranian national language, notions such as countrymen and women, and the necessity of reformation (Khomeini, p. 74)[8] on one hand, and a combatant *faqīh* who advocates the notion of 'the Government of Islam' (and not the Islamic Government), as one of the referents of 'the guardians of the cause' (*ulu al-amr*), on the other (Khomeini, p. 109). He is careful not to refer to *fuqahā* and their role as the founders of such a government, although for the first time Khomeini uses the term government of Islam (*ḥukūmat-i Islām*). He borrows the rhetoric of both intellectuals and advocates of monarchy to sustain his arguments.

From the former, among them Ahmad Kasravi, he borrows ideas such as 'pure brothers' (*barādarān-i pāk*) and 'faithful co-religionists' (*hamkīshān-i dīndār*) as well as 'our Persophone Friends' (*dūstān-i pārsī zabān-i mā*). After stripping them of their true meaning, Khomeini uses them for his own purpose to deride Ḥikamī Zādih and other 'impure seeds' including Kasravi and his followers (Khomeini, p. 74).

Fifth, he makes a classic argument according to which belief in the Hidden *imām* and his recognition are fundamental principles of *Shīʿīsm*, and since the twelfth *imām* is in the Occultation, the establishment of government is indisputable and self-evident (Khomeini, p. 181ff). Considering the necessity of having a government in the time of Occultation on one hand, and the idea of 'the government of Islam' on the other, Khomeini plays an ambivalent pendulum-like role, moving between a modern clergy, which believes in the classical separation of politics and religion when the *imām* is absent, and his interest in the notion of '*ḥukūmat-i Islām'*, which violates such a duality.

Accepting the former, he argues that "the intention of the *ʿulemā* of Islam is not to destroy the foundation of the monarchy, but rather they disagree with a certain person who, according to their understanding, acted in contrast to the interests of the country" (Khomeini, p. 186, 232ff). He maintains that "even every wise person knows that the best government is the one which is founded on the basis of divine rule and justice", but since the idea was viewed with suspicion by the Monarchy, the *fuqahā* had to compromise with "this half-government" (*nīm-i tashkīlāt*) and the corrupt system (Khomeini, p. 186) of the Pahlavis. Regarding the importance of establishing a government during the Occultation and Khomeini's arguments for it, one can come to the conclusion that, unlike his genuine fondness for the Islamic Government,

and not merely the Government of Islam, he remains a Constitutionalist and defends the supervisory role of jurists, the one that had been predicated in the amendment of the Constitution of 1285 *shamsī*/1907. Khomeini maintains that when the structure is Islamic, he can deal with the content—the Shah.

An analysis of the *kashf* will provide a better understanding of the 'intention'[9] of Khomeini by the conceptualization of *wilāya* in his juridical texts. There are two reasons for this. First, the ideas that are brought forth for the first time in this text will be expanded later in his juridical texts. Second, the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh*, in the way it was developed in Najaf, should be treated as the fulfillment of his thought which is set out in the *Kashf*. As mentioned, he had always advocated the ideal of the government of the jurist (*ḥukūmat-i fuqahā*), though he did not reveal it in the *Kashf* because, Ayatollah Burūjirdī was against any kind of political activity by the *ʿulemā* (especially his students) toward the Shah and the regime. The stance of Ayatollah Burūjirdī toward the monarchy, his relationship with both the Shah and Khomeini, is mentioned in a number of sources.[10] The fact is that while he was alive, due to the privileged position he held, the general policy of the *ḥawza* was to support the monarchy and the Shah.

6.2 From 1942 to 1979: Westernization, Modernization, and Political Antagonism

The relationship between the court and the hierocracy became conciliatory in the interim between the abdication of Riḍā Shah and the succession of Muḥammad Riḍā Shah. The hierocracy tried to forget its "old grievances against the first Pahlavi", and moved on to "an accommodation with the young Shah, who was more than conciliatory while his rule remained precarious" (Amir Arjomand 1988, p. 85). The clash between them, however, seemed inevitable when the new Shah, under pressure from the United States, launched his reform program in 1961. The study of the political sociology of the then White Revolution[11] is beyond the boundaries and objectives of the present research, since the task at hand is an analysis of the conceptualization of *wilāya* in the writings of Khomeini; though, in order to contextualize his theory, a brief reference to the events of that time is necessary. An example is the chronology of the Land Reform Bill. The Land Bill of 1959 was ratified on May 17, 1960. One year later,

on May 9, 1961, the Shah dissolved the Majlis, and on November 11, 1961 he issued an edict ordering the government to implement the May 1960 Land Law. On January 9, 1962, the cabinet approved a new version of that law which eliminated most of its defects (Akhavi 1980, p. 94).

With regard to the agenda of the White Revolution, the conflict between the clerics, headed by Khomeini and the court, was not only a confrontation on the sources of power and re-distribution of political values, but also "had its roots in the clergy's perception that the government lacked a legal mandate and could only regain it by abiding by the Constitution" (Akhavi 1980, p. 117). Khomeini saw the Shah's initiative as "replete with motifs already encountered during the dreadful reign of the first Pahlavi" (Amir Arjomand 1988, p. 85), and hence started his anti-government protest against it. It was not Khomeini who, by taking a radical stance, tried to provide an alternative vis-à-vis the regime. The regime's new decision, as well as the death of Ayatollah Burūjerdī, motivated the *ḥawza* to take the initiative for a reconsideration of the relationship between the court and hierocracy on one hand and hierocracy and believers on the other. Concomitantly was the necessity to reexamine the *ḥawza's* organization from the perspective of *marjaʿīyyah*.

Ann Lambton in her article *a Reconsideration of the Position of the Marjaʿ Al-Taqlīd and the Religious Institution* has studied the office of *marjaʿīyyah* in the context of the long-term, historical, relationships between the hierocracy and the monarchy, and the efforts of latter to bring the former under control. Without going too far into examining this relationship, (e.g., from its beginning after the Occultation of the *imām* until the twentieth century), the author believes that it is more fitting to put the office of *marjaʿīyyah* in the context of the short-term intellectual and socio-economic developments of Iran in the first half of the 1340s (1961), and to analyze it as a non-radical reading of the role of *marjaʿ al-taqlīd*. However, Khomeini and the writers of *Baḥthī Darbāra-yi Marjaʿīyyat wa Rawḥānīyat*[12] (A Discussion on Leadership and Hierocracy) had three things in common. First, they came to the fore after the death of Burūjerdī, who was the main obstacle to any kind of political activity within the hierocracy. Second, they reacted to Burūjerdī's policies in the *ḥawza* and the court. Third, they responded to the regime and its efforts to control the *ḥawza* after Burūjerdī. Burūjerdī's manner may be termed 'autocracy' if not 'despotism', because due to his belief in the sole/centralized *marjaʿīyyah,* the life of the *ḥawza* was in his hands and he was impatient toward the independent activity of the clerics. The book, however, is

composed of ten short articles written by both clergymen and laymen, with particular emphasis on the necessity to reexamine the mutual relationships between the *ḥawza* and the court, and the *ḥawza* and the masses. While authors, and mainly Murtiḍā Muṭahharī, highlighted the matchless role of Burūjerdī, it was apparent that they appealed for a more active role, a revival, for *marjaʿīyyah* and for the relationship between *marjaʿ* and believers.

Ann Lambton assuredly evaluates the initiative as "the first attempt by a group of writers in modern times in Persia to examine and re-appraise the different aspects of a fundamental issue of the faith" (Lambton 1964, pp. 134–135), though the writers were not agreed on the ideal government, probably because the ideal government was not their main concern. Their political preferences, however, covered a wide range from the philosopher king, to the establishment of the kingdom of God upon earth, to political quietism, and to violent revolution (Lambton 1964, p. 135). But since all of them, with the exception of Muḥammad Husayn Ṭabāṭabāʾī, soon lined up behind Khomeini and took a radical stance vis-à-vis the Shah, one can safely argue that perhaps it was only Khomeini who knew exactly what he wanted from his opposition against the regime—Islamic Government.

Baḥthī Darbāra-yi Marjaʿīyyat wa Rawḥānīyat is also important from another perspective: the *Shīʿa* jurisprudence and *kalām* were no longer concerned with concepts such as the perfect man, but "a solution of the problems raised be sought rather in consultation and organization, to emphasize the need for continued growth in the religious institution, and to press the responsibility of the individual" (Lambton 1964, p. 135).[13] The Shah's modernizing discourse had impacted the entire Iranian society including its most traditional, aloof, section—the hierocracy—and therefore, "just as the state began to modernize and reform in organizational terms, so, in parallel, did the religious institutions" (Martin 2007, p. 28). *Shīʿa* Islam emphasized the importance of modernization and institutionalization of the *ḥawza* and of the financial relationships of the clerics and their followers in order to maintain their independence.

Twenty years after *Kashf al-Asrār*, in a reply to both Ḥikamī Zādih and Riḍā Shah, and in line with simultaneous reform movements, Khomeini spoke out against the regime. His radicalization was both a reaction to the White Revolution and the requirements of his followers, mainly low-caliber clerics, *bazaar*, and urbanized poor on one hand, and landowners who had suffered hardship due to land reform on the other. Khomeini,

however, used this new opportunity to attack the regime and the Shah. Compared with his peers' reaction to the regime, Khomeini's strategy was more inclusive, aggressive, and brave.[14] Therefore, Abrahamian's analysis that he, unlike many other clerics who "opposed the regime because of land reform and women's rights … scrupulously avoided the former issue and instead hammered away on a host of other concerns that aroused greater indignation among the general population" (Abrahamian 1982, p. 425) does not seem to be plausible. He attacked the regime on land reform too.[15]

Mohammad Gholi Majd shows how the clerics and landowners from 1959, at the time he revealed his land distribution program, were able to forge an effective and powerful alliance against the Shah. Among the clerics, Khomeini was the loudest. The opposition to the program, however, started with Ayatollah Burūjirdī and his *fatwā* (issued in December 1959), in which it had been declared that the program of land reforms and other similar measures were "contrary to the sacred laws of Islam and thus invalid" (Majd 2000, p. 196). The *fatwā* had addressed the *Majlis* deputies and resulted in the enactment of the Land Reform Law of May 1960, but when Burūjirdī died on March 30, 1961, the landlords, who had gathered in the Agricultural Union, on November 1961, appealed to the senior *ʿulemā* of Najaf and Qum for help. Majd reports that the *ʿulemā* of Najaf and mainly Ayatollah Ḥakīm (Seyyed Muḥsin Ṭabāṭabā'ī Ḥakīm, d. 1390 H/1970) were disappointing in their response to the appeal and instead were encouraging to the court, and to the *ʿulemā* of Qum; it was only Khomeini who stood for the rights of landowners and attacked the Shah on both secular and Islamic grounds (Majd 2000, p. 204ff).

Yet, it was after the radical stance of Khomeini and subsequent actions by Ḥassan Arsanjānī (d. 1348 *shamsī*/1969),[16] which had "provoked and further embittered the religious establishment", that the clerics took a stance by issuing *fatwās* (Majd, p. 208). In order to obtain national approval for the new decrees of January 17, 1963,[17] the Shah held a referendum on January 26, 1963 and in response, the Agricultural Union again appealed to Khomeini to elicit his opinion on the new development. His *fatwā*, which was issued in response to the appeal, removed the possibility of any reconciliation between the regime and the *ḥawza* (Majd 2000, pp. 218–220). Appraising Khomeini's fiery speeches at the *Fayḍīyah* School shows how the radical *Shīʿa* discourse was created by him and used extensively in later years. He took advantage of the latent possibilities of a number of *Shīʿa* concepts such as *wilāya*, martyrdom, resistance, justice,

and injustice, as well as expectation, and went far beyond the limit of the classical dualism of the *ʿulemā* and the monarchy. Amir Arjomand observes how Khomeini "was stepping along a well-trodden path" (Amir Arjomand 2016, p. 404), not only by using the *Shīʿa* classic conflict between justice and tyranny in 1963 (and of course later in 1979), but also by benefiting from "an armoury of emotive images for expressing the 'oppression psychosis' in terms of primeval tyranny (*zulm*) and for articulating the appropriate response in its glorification of martyrdom" (Amir Arjomand, p. 404). Moreover, he tried to nullify the decision of the Shah by turning to his followers and calling the referendum 'compulsory' and flaunting its unpopular aspects. He mobilized people to come to the streets to show their opposition to the regime, but when it was suppressed, he asked them to stay indoors and boycott any kind of interaction with the establishment. A combination of civil disobedience and political struggle having been wrapped in the cover of radical *Shīʿīsm,* Khomeini's defiance was a warm-up for the Islamic revolution.

The land redistribution policy, as already observed, was unconsidered and hasty and alienated the regime from the landowners, as well as from the *ḥawza* and its allies. It had also impacted the middle class (both new and traditional) by driving it to purchase agricultural lands as an investment, which itself resulted in the loss of savings. Given this, one can safely conclude that the land reforms smashed the traditional class structure of Iran which had lasted for centuries and replaced it with resentful landowners (humiliated by their own peasants as well as by the confiscation of their properties) and the radicalized *ḥawza* headed by Khomeini (Majd 2000, pp. 223–224). Thus, at the end of the 1960s, the Shah, representing a corrupt autocrat who had adopted a wrong policy toward his people, endowing rights and freedom to women, and by reshaping the culture of the society through modernization and secularization, as well as opening the door of the country to foreigners, mainly Americans, had become a ruler without justice (*ḥākim-i ẓālim*) (Akhavi 1980, p. 95).

Khomeini was sent to Turkey on November 4, 1964, and almost one year later, in October 1965 he was allowed to move to Najaf, Iraq where he stayed until 1978. It was in this city that he wrote his main juridical texts, containing the conceptualization of *wilāya* and the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh*.[18] To the degree that the Shah was enforcing his Westernizing and modernizing programs and, at the same time, moving toward a military dictatorship, Khomeini, sitting in Najaf, was intractable in his opposition to the Shah, radicalizing his tone and attracting the increasingly alien mass

to his magnet. Along with writing and teaching in Najaf, his other concern was developing a well-organized network of his students (as a more elaborated version of the old relationship between master and disciples), in order to disseminate his ideas among his followers, to keep his ties with the *bazaar*, and to push forward the struggle with the regime. All these figures played significant roles in the victory of the Revolution of 1979; among them Husayn ʿAlī Muntaẓirī (d. 1388 *shamsī*/2008) was notable. Before turning attention to Muntaẓirī and his services to the Revolution, and later to the newly established government, this chapter will now focus on Khomeini's conceptualization of *wilāya* and the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh* with regard to its intellectual background in *Shīʿa* jurisprudence from the eighteenth century onward.

6.3 *Walī* and the Office of *Wilāya* in Juridical Texts

Addressing Khomeini's discussion of *wilāya* and *wilāyat al-faqīh*, it is necessary to first give a brief introduction to 'juridical *wilāya*' in general and its background in the writings of the former *Shīʿī* scholars in particular. 'The former *Shīʿī* scholars' are those figures whose thoughts paved the way for Khomeini's arguments on the conceptualizations of *wilāyat al-faqīh*. These thoughts are:

First, from a juridical perspective, during the *imām*'s Occultation no one under normal circumstances, and without a justifiable reason, can exercise any kind of *wilāya* or special prerogative over another person, and every individual is in charge of his or her life. In other words, Islam prohibits believers from interfering in each other's life, and if one person wants to take custody over another, he or she needs to have a valid religious reason. Following this, there comes another hypothesis that the "jurists cannot claim to be privileged or possess a special mandate to manage the public affairs" (Mavani 2013a, p. 161). In *Shīʿa* jurisprudence it is an axiom to assume that people are wise, sane, and eligible to take responsibility for their lives, and therefore no one has guardianship over the other. This principle, which is called "lack of *wilāya*", is set out for the first time by the grand jurist of the Qajar period, Shaykh Jaʿfar Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ, and since then has been observed as a valid juridical principle by the *fuqahā* (Kadivar 1378a, pp. 56–57). In his brilliant discussion of the principle of 'commanding right and forbidding wrong', Michael Cook delves into the

scriptural and non-scriptural roots of this principle in Islamic sacred sources (*Qur'ān*, *sunna*, and *ḥadīth*), as well as in various Islamic juridical schools, including Imamism. He shows that with regard to executing *amr bil maʿrūf wa nahy ʿanil munkar*, *Imāmī* scholars preferred to adopt a "quietist tendency" at the time of the Occultation of the *imām*, because forbidding wrong necessitated designation of a representative, which itself required violence (Cook 2004, p. 269). Given this, believers' subjectivity and agency in their personal affairs, as far as the author understands, stand in contrast to the above-mentioned principle, and therefore one can posit an opposite formula, which is non-intervention in the personal affairs of people and/or executing *wilāya* over the other without his permission.

Second, similar to the *ʿirfānī wilāya* which is discussed in the previous chapter, the juridical *wilāya* has an established tradition in *Shīʿa* jurisprudence. Briefly, there are twelve types of *wilāya*, including the Guardianship of the Ruler (*wilāyat-i ḥākim*), which are recognized in *fiqh*. Pertinent to this is the belief that where *walī* has not been appointed by the Lawgiver, the area needs to be placed under the authority of the just jurist (*faqīh-i ʿādil*). Historically speaking, this area is called 'Islamic market regulations' (*umūr-i ḥisbīya/ḥisba*) and was the first region in which the term *wilāyat al-faqīh* was deployed. Kadivar adds, however, that it is disputable whether a jurist's authority to take responsibility in this area is generated from the right of *taṣrīf* (disposal) that he possesses, or is a result of his guardianship which is a more comprehensive right. In other words, the term *wilāyat al-faqīh* refers to religious and juridical guardianship and presupposes the abdication of those under guardianship, while the acceptance of the right of *taṣrīf* for the jurist does not entail abdication (Kadivar 1378a, p. 52). *Wilāya*, Kadivar states, necessitates the abdication of those under guardianship as a requirement.

The juridical *wilāya* on *ḥisba,* in the broadest sense of the term, has been discussed for the first time by Mullā Aḥmad Narāqī (Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Mahdī Fāḍil Narāqī, d. 1245 H/1829), the prominent *faqīh* of the nineteenth century. In chapter fifty-four of his classic *ʿAwāʾid al-Ayyām* (Achievements of the Years) entitled *An explanation of the wilāya of the ruler and everything on which he has wilāya,* he develops arguments for an elementary type of the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh*. He advocates the typical juridical viewpoint in which no one has the right to exercise authority and guardianship over another and every individual is in charge of his or her own life. This principle, however, is not absolute and unconditional, since God, or the Prophet or one of the *imāms*, can appoint

a certain individual as *walī* to exercise *wilāya* in a particular matter. From this perspective, *awlīyā* are many, including just jurists, fathers, and grandfathers from the father's side, vicegerents (*waṣīs/awṣīyā*), husbands, lords (*mawālī*), and deputies (*wukalā*). These types of *awlīyā* (*awlīyā* of children, wives, properties, and clients) have limited *wilāya* upon one under guardianship, which should be clearly defined in advance (Narāqī 1375 *shamsī*, p. 529). Narāqī, however, makes it clear that *ʿAwāʾid* only refers to *wilāyat-i fuqahā* who are both rulers (*ḥukkām*) at the time of the Occultation and the general deputies of the *imāms* (Narāqī 1375, p. 529). Addressing the office of *ʿulemā*, the chapter is divided into two sections (*maqāmān*): one section is about the *aḥādīth* on the right of *fuqahā* who enjoy the office of general *wilāya*, and the other on the explanation of *fuqahā's* responsibilities on the daily religious life of believers.

Regarding the latter, Narāqī maintains that just jurists are accountable for two things: whatever the Prophet and the *imāms* are responsible for, and for whatever belongs to the worldly interests or the daily religious life of believers (Narāqī 1375, pp. 531–536). In terms of transmitted sources, Narāqī maintains that just jurists are but referents of *ulu al-amr* (Narāqī 1375, p. 535), though he stresses that if the affairs of believers are to be administered and the community of Muslims is not to be dispersed, the Lawgiver (*shāriʿ*) must appoint *fuqahā* in order to be in charge of the worldly interests and the daily religious life of believers (Narāqī 1375, p. 538). Narāqī lists the scope of authority and responsibilities of *fuqahā* in the time of the Occultation in the following twelve areas: issuing *fatwā*, judgeship, *ḥudūd* and *taʿzīrāt*,[19] *wilāya* on orphans, *wilāya* on the abdicated and the one in absentia, conducting marriage ceremonies, *wilāya* on bodies of the abdicated, adjudication, possessing properties of *imām*, whatever the *imām* has had supervision and authority on it, and finally, anything that *walī* has to intervene in with the discretion of religion or reason (Narāqī 1375, pp. 539–582).

Recently, Dāwūd Feyraḥī in his discussion of the two categories of 'Constitutionalist Jurisprudence' and 'Political Jurisprudence' has shed light on Narāqī's conceptualization of *wilāyat-i ḥākim*. Feyraḥī explains that in Narāqī's view, there appear to be two types of relationships between human action and the Lawgiver's decree. First, there exists a situation in which no decree has been issued by the Lawgiver, and second, the Lawgiver has given a decree on a particular issue. In terms of the former, individuals have authority to make their own choices, and in terms of the latter, there are five conditions: *wājib* (*farḍ/farīḍah*), *ḥarām* (sinful/forbidden),

mustaḥabb (recommended), *makrūh* (detestable or offensive act), and *mubāḥ* (neither forbidden nor recommended, or religiously neutral) (Feyraḥī 1390, p. 135). Feyraḥī neither explains further the categorization of *wilāyat-i ḥākim* by Narāqī nor discusses how he comes to categorize it.

Third, Shaykh Murtaḍā Anṣārī (d. 1281 H/1864), the prominent *Shīʿī* jurist of the nineteenth century, discusses *wilāyat al-faqīh* under the category of 'the Parties of Contract' (*awlīyāy-i ʿaqd*) in his book *al-Makāsib*.[20] By 'the Parties of Contract', Anṣārī means the guardianship of father and/or grandsire from the father's side over the abdicated or underage. Kadivar gives examples from several other juridical books, such as *ʿAwāʾid al-Ayyām* of Mullā Aḥmad Narāqī, *ʿAnāwīn* (Subjects) of Mīr ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Ḥusseynī Marāghiʾī, *al-Khazāʾin* (Treasuries) of Mullā Āqā Darbandī, and others who have debated *wilāyat al-faqīh* alongside the guardianship of jurist over the abdicated and one in absentia (*qaṣṣir wa ghayyib*). These jurists, Kadivar stresses, have not mentioned the difference(s) between *wilāya* on people and *wilāya* on the abdicated and/or the one in absentia, which indicates the unity of meaning and connotation of *wilāya* in these texts (Kadivar 1378a, pp. 109–110). Kadivar wants to remind us that *wilāyat al-faqīh*—both in the theory of Ayatollah Khomeini and in the texts of the aforementioned jurists—presupposes *maḥjūrīyah* (the state of being ward or minor) of one under guardianship and, if the person is not abdicated, underage, or in absentia, then he does not need a guardian.

Fourth, just jurists are appointed to this office from God. Fifth, *wilāyat al-faqīh* in these texts is discussed as a juridical and not a theological issue.[21] Therefore, the problematic of *wilāyat al-faqīh* is not one of the fundamental principles of *Shīʿa* jurisprudence, but a branch (*farʿ*) of it. It is not one of the fundamentals because there are disagreements both on the existence and the scope of it (Kadivar 1378a, p. 112). Quoting from *Kashf al-Asrār*, Kadivar argues that Khomeini is in line with other jurists who discuss this topic from a juridical perspective (Kadivar 1378a, pp. 111–112). As will be observed in the following section, Khomeini in the book *Wilāyat-i Faqīh; Ḥukūmat-i Eslāmī*[22] (Guardianship of the Jurist; the Islamic Government) maintains that belief in *wilāyat al-faqīh* is a principle of the Faith of *Shīʿīsm*, and therefore it cannot be regarded as a juridical problematic. Sixth, *wilāya* encompasses all public areas, including social and political issues. Therefore, addressing the question of eligibility, there is an inequality between those under guardianship and those who enjoy the right of guardianship—or jurists (Kadivar 1378a, pp. 112–114).

6.4 *Wilāyat-i Faqīh*

From among Khomeini's juridical texts, *Wilāyat-i Faqīh* focuses on the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh* and the question of Islamic government. In this text, Khomeini is no longer the young and enigmatic scholar of *Kashf al-Asrār*, but a combatant *faqīh* who is to establish his utopia on the ruins of Pahlavi kingship.[23] The book is composed of thirteen lectures given by Khomeini in Najaf during a very short period of nineteen days (from the first to twentieth of January 1970/1348 *shamsī*). Due to censorship in Iran, *Wilāyat-i Faqīh* was published in Beirut, Lebanon and only available to be used by his followers the next autumn. One year before the Revolution of 1979, in 1356 *shamsī*/1977–1978, the book appeared in Iran as *Nāmi'ī az Imām Mūsawī Kāshif al-Ghiṭā'* (A Letter from *Imām Mūsawī Kāshif al-Ghiṭā'*) as an appendix to his other book *Jihād-i Akbar* (the Greater *Jihād*).[24] In terms of bibliography, the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh* had also appeared once before in the second volume of *Kitāb al-Bay'* (the Book of Transaction, both Persian and Arabic volumes).[25]

In *Wilāyat-i Faqīh*, Khomeini's arguments are made on a number of propositions:

First, *wilāyat al-faqīh* is self-evident (*badīhī*)[26] in the faith of *Shī'īsm* (Khomeini 1390, p. 9) and "the state's preservation … [is] a primary injunction [*al-aḥkām al-awwalīyyah*]", while "rituals (e.g., the obligatory prayers and fasting) … [are downgraded to] secondary injunctions [*al-aḥkām al-thānawīyyah*]" (Mavani 2013a, p. 209). *Wilāyat al-faqīh* is inclined to be a *kalāmī* problematic and in fact is read from this perspective by one of Khomeini's students Ayatollah Jawādī Āmulī (1312 *shamsī*/1933 -).[27] As stated earlier, Kadivar's reading was grounded on *Kashf* and not on the book *Wilāyat-i Faqīh* (Kadivar 1378a, pp. 111–112).

Second, the whole text revolves around a political (and false) interpretation of the history of Islam, and of the key Islamic and *Shī'a* terms such as *nubuwwa*, imamate, and *wilāya*.

Third, belief in the necessity of the establishment of government in Islam is embedded in the belief of *wilāya*, which is the issue of succession and authority after the Prophet. Thus, belief in *wilāya* requires attempts to establish the Islamic government and execute Islamic laws (Khomeini 1390, pp. 20–21).

Fourth, the office of *nubuwwa* is a political one, because the Prophet—the guardian of the cause—was regarded as the head of the executive branch too (Khomeini 1390, pp. 21–26).

Fifth, jurisprudence (*fiqāhat*) is the foundation of Islam, and just jurists are in charge of the affairs of believers (Khomeini 1390, p. 50). This statement has a presupposition which is the abdication of those under guardianship. In addition, the term 'just jurist' has two components: to be expert in the most honorable of all sciences or *fiqh*, and to be just (*ʿādil*).

Sixth, the just jurists have the same authority and guardianship that the Prophet and the *imāms* had, and therefore it is incumbent for every believer to obey them. Despite the different statuses that the Prophet and jurists have, since their duties are the same and equal, their rights for establishing government is the same and equal (Khomeini 1390, p. 50–51ff).

Seventh, by *wilāya* of the Prophet and the *imāms*, Khomeini means government, authority, and administration, and by *wilāya* of jurists he means a contractual non-Divine office by which an individual is appointed to take responsibility of the other. Interestingly enough, he equates the office of the *wilāya* of the just jurists to the appointment of custodian for the abdicated (Khomeini 1390, p. 51).

Eighth, the establishment of the Islamic government is *farḍ/farīḍa* (duty) or *wājib al-ʿaynī* for jurists, and they must rise either individually or collectively to fulfill this mission. Thus, the subject matter of *Wilāyat-i Faqīh* is duties fulfilled by jurists, and among them the execution of *ḥudūd* (Divine ordinances, legal punishments) is the most vital (Khomeini 1390, p. 52–53ff).

Ninth, in terms of method, he only uses transmitted sources which entail *aḥādīth* of the Prophet and of the *imāms* which are about the office of the imamate and of the role of *ʿulemā* as the heirs of the mantle of the Prophet. According to these *aḥādīth*, *ʿulemā* not only inherit his science, but also his guardianship and power as well (Khomeini 1390, p. 103). These *aḥādīth* depict *fuqahā* in the age of the Occultation as "the successors of the Prophet", "the citadel of Islam", "the proof of the *imām* for people", and "the trustees of the prophets" (Khomeini 1390, pp. 59–75).

Tenth, In his arguments for the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh*, Khomeini goes beyond the typical understanding of the office of *fiqāha*, in which the two functions of judgeship and issuing *fatwā* had traditionally been

recognized for *fuqahā* (Khomeini 1390, p. 76ff). He took this a step further and argued for the duty of *fuqahā* in the establishment of the Islamic government in order to execute the *ḥudūd*. For Khomeini, judgeship and statecraft are two faces of one coin (Khomeini 1390, p. 84ff). In fact, Khomeini's argument that the right of *ʿulemā* to exercise authority in public and politics, which originates from the office of judgeship, has a well-established tradition in *Shīʿa* jurisprudence since it was Shaykh al-Mufīd (d. 413 H/948) who, for the first time, argued that *ʿulemā* have the right "to run the important office of *qāḍī* [judge] on behalf of the *Imām*" (Kazemi Moussavi 1996, p. 71).

The reason for that is self-evident. Early *Shīʿī* jurists had to cooperate with the Sunni governments in administrating justice, and therefore scholars such as the above-mentioned al-Mufīd and his student Shaykh (*Seyyed/Sharīf*) al-Murtaḍā ʿAlam ul-Hudā (d. 436 H/1044) suggested ways to justify and legitimize working under a non-*Shīʿa* government (Kazemi Moussavi 1996, p. 71). Finally, the Islamic government is a "unique unprecedented" type of governance which could be classified as a constitutional domination in which rulers are conditioned to the *Qurʾān* and the tradition of the Prophet (Khomeini 1390, p. 43). Regarding this, *wilāya,* which indicates the execution of the religious laws or *ḥudūd*, is not inconsistent with this interpretation of constitutionalism and is actually the executive dimension of it (Khomeini 1390, p. 51).

It is not only *Wilāyat-i Faqīh* which entails Khomeini's conceptualization of *wilāya*, as he has elaborated on this theory in *al-Rasāʾil* as well.[28] In this all-juridical text, Khomeini, "relying upon both rational and traditional proofs … [supports] this case that during the messianic infallible *imām*'s prolonged Occultation, the jurisconsult, by virtue of being his indirect deputy, has both the mandate and the responsibility not only to interpret Islamic rulings on matters of devotion and personal affairs, but also in the social realm, and to manage the state's affair on behalf of the *Imām*" (Mavani 2013b, p. 180). Therefore, the jurist's authority is not only regarded as the extension of the *imāms'*, but also "reveals the intimate and organic relationship between the imamate and *wilāyat al-faqīh*" (Mavani 2013b, p. 180). Mavani calls this 'revolutionizing of the imamate', "such that it came to be viewed as uninterrupted and continuous (*mustamar*), with the right to rule assigned to jurists during the Occultation" (Mavani 2013b, pp. 180–181).[29]

In terms of his transmitted methodology, Khomeini mainly focuses on two *ḥadīth*, one by Omar ibn Ḥanẓalih, famous as '*Maqbūla-yi Omar ibn-Ḥanẓalih*' (Khomeini 1368 *shamsī*, vol. 2, pp. 104–107), and the other, known as '*Mashhūra-yi abī-Khadījah*' (Khomeini 1368 *shamsī*, vol. 2, pp. 109–111). These are not, however, the only *aḥādīth* being used by him, but are the most reliable ones. His arguments in *Wilāyat-i Faqīh* were also developed on the basis of these two *ḥadīth*, which are about the office of *fiqāha* and that of the just jurist as the heir of the Prophet and the *imāms*; given that just jurists have the right to issue *fatwā* and sit on the seat of the Prophet to judge among people. On the basis of these two functions, Khomeini argues that if jurists are the heirs of the Prophet, they should inherit his legacy entirely, including the right of governance (Khomeini 1368 *shamsī*, vol. 2, p. 94ff). Khomeini's other transmitted source is verse fifty-nine of the *sūrat al-Nisāʾ* of the *Qurʾān*, which says: "O you who believe! Obey God and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you" (Nasr 2015, p. 219). In his interpretation of the verse, Khomeini maintains that *ulu-l-amr* (those in authority) refers to just jurists who occupy the office of political guardianship over people (Khomeini 1390, p. 83ff).[30]

The idea of rulers as *ulu al-amr* was not confined to Khomeini and should be understood in the context of the "Renaissance of Islamic law" (Mallat 1993, p. 14) which had started in other parts of the *Shīʿa* world. As Chibli Mallat observes, the *ʿulemā* of the Najaf seminary, and particularly Muḥammad Bāqir as-Ṣadr as the pioneer whose exegesis was "peculiar in the *Shīʿa* world" (Mallat 1993, p. 65), had the same understanding of the *Qurʾānīc* term, though their cornerstone was verse forty-four of the fifth *sūrah* (*al-Māʾidah*, lit. the Table Spread). In it, Sadr found "the legitimation of the Islamic state and of the institutionalization of the *ʿulemā*'s position in it" (Mallat 1993, p. 62). In addition to Sadr, the Egyptian scholar Seyyed Quṭb (d. 1966) had the same insight[31] and emphasized "the political dimension of the verse, as well as on the foundation of a 'nucleus' of the Islamic state in the *Qurʾān*" (Mallat 1993, p. 65).[32] Muhsin Kadivar in *Ḥukūmat-i Wilāyī* (Divine Government) has not only discredited these two and other similar *aḥādīth*, but has also argued that since in this verse obedience from *ulu al-amr* comes immediately after obedience to God and to the Prophet, *ulu al-amr* are not jurists, but the *imāms*. He stresses that these three types of obedience are assumed to be equal; therefore, the referent of *ulu al-amr* cannot be just jurists, because

they are not equal to the *imāms* and the Prophet. He adds that the prerequisite of absolute obedience is immunity from sin (*ʿiṣma*), which is gifted to the Prophet and to the *imāms*. Kadivar concludes that the whole idea of *wilāyat al-faqīh* lacks rational as well as sufficient jurisdictional foundation, and as such the problematic of the political *wilāya* of the jurists remains doubtful and questionable (Kadivar 1378a, *passim*).

The politicization of *wilāya* by Khomeini and his thoughts on the Islamic state, as Vanessa Martin ascertains, "emerged from a debate that had been in progress since the nineteenth century. … The debate focused not simply on Islam as religion but on Islamic law, Islamic institutions, particularly those of education, and Islam as a political ideology" (Martin 2007, p. 100), itself as a reaction to Westernization and modernization policies which had started with Riḍā Shah and culminated in the reform programs of the 1960s and 1970s. During these two decades, the hierocracy had found itself on the defensive (Akhavi 1980, pp. 91–116 & 132–143), and, as has been observed, other reform programs that had started simultaneously with the White Revolution and the death of Burūjerdī, neither received a wide circulation among the population nor accomplished their purpose to affect the regime and conservative clerics. Yet, the theory of Khomeini offered an alternative to the crises of sovereignty and nation-building of the Pahlavi era.

Khomeini laid particular emphasis on Islamic law and its implementation through the apparatus of the Islamic government as the only sovereign ruler in post-revolutionary Iran. Distinguishing Islamic precepts into two categories of primary and secondary, Khomeini argues that the Islamic government and its laws should be treated as the referents of the former, or *aḥkām-i awalīyya*. For him, the Islamic government led by the just jurist has the absolute authority to issue decrees which not only stand superior to the constitution and the positive laws, but also have power over the precepts of Islam. In a letter to the president of the time, Ali Khamenei, Khomeini is certain that "the most important of Divine precepts is the *wilāya* and government (*ḥukūma*) of the Prophet which is endowed to him by God and is superior to all secondary precepts. And since the Islamic government is a branch (*shuʿba*) and continuation of the *wilāya* of the Prophet, therefore, it should be treated as one of the primary precepts of the religion. Such a government as one of *aḥkām-i awalīyya*, is not only legitimate to suspend the

secondary precepts, but also the primary ones like *ṣalāt*, fasting, and *ḥajj*, as well".[33]

Regarding Khomeini's belief in the status of the Islamic government and of the *faqīh*, scholars like Moin argued that his absolute power originates from his *ʿirfānī wilāya* and stands in contradiction to orthodox Islam in which nothing is above Divine rules (Moin 1999, p. 296). Moin's outlook on Khomeini's *ʿirfānī wilāya*, with regard to our discussion on the latter's mystical guardianship in the previous chapter, does not seem plausible. Besides, as Ridgeon discusses, Khomeini's appeal for "the full extent of power that the Islamic government could exercise" (Ridgeon 2014, p. 219), should be understood in the shadow of the events of 1987–1988 in which Khomeini not only finally accepted the priority of the Islamic government over all Divine commandments, but also commanded the formation of the Commission for the Determination of the Interest of the Islamic Order (*majmaʿ-i tashkhīṣ-i maṣlaḥat-i niẓām*).[34] As a jurist, Khomeini believed in political jurisprudence, and since the most central question in political jurisprudence is 'Islamic government', his arguments for government in Islam and its legal status in the constitution of the post-revolutionary Iran should be understood from the perspective of a *faqīh*. The preservation of Islamic government as well as the implementation of Islamic laws were his main concerns. However, Moin is right that Khomeini's belief in the suspension of primary precepts of Islam contradicts orthodox jurisprudence, but, this does not stem from his position as an *ʿārif*, but as a statesman who had to deal with the requirements of state-building and constitution-making of the post-revolutionary Iran.

6.5 *Wilāyat al-Faqīh*: Post-Khomeini Era

6.5.1 Muntaẓirī, the Movement of Reform and the Evolution of the Theory of wilāyat al-faqīh

Husayn ʿAlī Muntaẓirī was born in 1301 *shamsī*/1922 into a humble family in Najaf Abad, twenty-four kilometers to the west of Isfahan. He entered the seminary of Isfahan when he was twelve years old and stayed there for seven years. In Isfahan, he studied with scholars such as Ḥājj Āqā Raḥīm Arbāb (d. 1355 *shamsī*/1977) and Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥassan ʿĀlim Najaf Ābādī (d. 1344 *shamsī*/1966),[35] himself the student of Jahāngīr Khān Qashqāʾyī (d. 1290 *shamsī*/1910) and Mullā Muḥammad

Ākhund Kāshānī, known as Ākhund Kāshī (d. 1294 *shamsī*/1914). Before moving to Qum to complete his studies in jurisprudence and philosophy, Muntaẓirī, through his masters in Isfahan, was connected to and inspired by two significant intellectual trends of his time: the *uṣūlī* jurisprudence which was the predominant juridical school and *Ṣadrīan ḥikmat*, though during his entire life, he remained more of a *faqīh* than a *ḥakīm*. In Qum, he was acquainted with Ayatollah Khomeini, whose interest and skill in *Akbarīan* mysticism, *Ṣadrīan ḥikmat*, and *uṣūlī* jurisprudence were discussed extensively in the previous chapter.

During Khomeini's exile in Najaf, Muntaẓirī was appointed as his plenipotentiary representative and played a key role in disseminating his master's ideas to his followers in Iran and maintaining Khomeini's connection with the *bazaar*. Muntaẓirī was elected to a number of important offices after the Revolution of 1979, most notably leadership of the Assembly of Experts of the Constitution (*majlis-i khubrigān-i qānūn-i asāsī*), the Friday prayer of Qum, and finally, one-time heir apparent to Khomeini. He wrote extensively on jurisprudence, the principles of jurisprudence, political jurisprudence, modern laws, and criminal laws. He trained many students, all of whom became in different ways key figures of the Islamic regime, and a few of them in later years, became religious reformers and intellectuals who played important roles in the movement for reform which had started in late 1360s *shamsī*/1980. From among the latter, one can mention figures such as the late Aḥmad Qābil (also Ghābil, d. 1391 *shamsī*/2012), ʿImād al-Dīn Bāqī, and Muhsin Kadivar, whose ideas on the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh* will be discussed briefly.[36]

If it were not for the ceaseless efforts of Muntaẓirī, the idea of *wilāyat al-faqīh* would not have been incorporated into the Constitution of the new establishment. Since the task at hand is the study and analysis of the developments of the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh* in the subsequent years, the debates of the Assembly of Experts of the Constitution in the formative days of the Islamic system will not be discussed.[37] Much research has been conducted on the role of Muntaẓirī in the Council and on the debates of the members on the nature and articles of the new Constitution. Comparing the stances of figures such as Seyyed Muḥammad Ḥusaynī Bihishtī (d. 1360 *shamsī*/1981), Akbar Hāshimī Rafsanjānī (d. 1395 *shamsī*/2017), Abuʾl-Ḥasan Banīṣadr, and Maḥmūd Ṭāliqānī (d. 1358 *shamsī*/1979), all of them members of the Council, Ulrich von Schwerin believes that it was Muntaẓirī who was "the most senior clerical defendant" of the article on *wilāyat al-faqīh* (Schwerin 2015, p. 54). Addressing

Muntaẓirī's 'radical' position on the necessity of incorporating the article of *wilāyat al-faqīh* into the Constitution, Schwerin clarifies that Muntaẓirī warned of endorsing a Constitution in which the article is not mentioned; because, for him, the goal of the revolution was to have the clergy elected as the head of the State and to write an Islamic Constitution (Schwerin 2015, p. 55).

Muntaẓirī's reading of the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh* had three phases: the first position he held (from the beginning of his career until 1979) was 'the collective guardianship of jurists', which had seemingly been adopted under the influence of Ayatollah Burūjerdī's concept of *wilāya* and the role of *faqīh* in society. Secondly, Muntaẓirī revised this viewpoint in favor of the single role of the *faqīh* who is appointed by God and not people and acts as the representative of the *imām* during his Occultation. The position was adopted as the official reading of the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh* and, as has already been observed, incorporated into the final draft of the Constitution. The third position taken by him around 1364 *shamsī*/1985, shortly before his election to the office of heir apparent to Khomeini[38] (the main concern of the research here), looked for a "greater respect of the interests of people and better control of the government" (Schwerin 2015, p. 86), and can be regarded as a return to his first position. Given this, however, Schwerin is certain that the new position neither allowed for a democratic reading of the role of people nor was clear on how respect for the interests of people should be achieved (Ibid.).

6.5.1.1 Mabānī Fiqhī Ḥukūmat-i Islāmī

Dirāsāt fi al-Wilāyat al-Faqīh wa al-Fiqh al-Duwal Islāmī (Studies on *Wilāyat al-Faqīh* and the Jurisprudence of the Islamic States) was a series of lectures given by Muntaẓirī circa 1364 *shamsī*/1985, in which he discussed political jurisprudence and the responsibilities of the just jurist to society and to people. The Arabic edition was published in four volumes, of which two volumes were translated into Persian three years later and published as *Mabānī Fiqhī Ḥukūmat-i Islāmī*.[39] In the introduction to the first volume of the book, Muntaẓirī used transmitted sources (the *Qurʾān* and *ḥadīth*) to argue that according to a juridical primal principle (*aṣl-i ūlā*), Man is created free by his natural disposition, and no one has guardianship or authority over another (Muntaẓirī 1379, vol. 1, p. 111). Quoting from *al-Makāsib* of Shaykh Murtaḍā Anṣārī (d. 1281 H/1864), he maintains that the above-mentioned principle is a juridical axiom and should be used as a stepping-stone for any juridical arguments, although

God, the Prophet, the *imāms*, and the just jurist are excluded from this principle as they have right to exercise *wilāya* over people (Muntaẓirī 1379, vol. 1, pp. 111–113).

Muntaẓirī applies evidence from transmitted sources to sustain his arguments for the necessity of having a just government. Man is a social animal by nature, he maintains, and having government is sufficiently self-evident not to require proof (Muntaẓirī 1379, vol. 1, pp. 89–90).[40] Therefore, the community of people needs to have a guardian/government (Muntaẓirī uses both these terms interchangeably) to establish order and security (Muntaẓirī 1379, p. 90ff). In the second volume of the book subtitled, *Imamate wa Rahbarī* (Imamate and Leadership), he lists the qualifications for the ideal Islamic leader according to transmitted and rational sources. Quoting from Muslim philosophers, theologians, jurists like Aḥmad Narāqī and scholars such as ibn Khaldūn, Muntaẓirī develops his arguments for the office of the Just Leader (*ḥākim-i ʿādil*). Using the same *ḥadīth* sources, and also the *Qurʾānīc āyah* of *ulu al-amr*, as Khomeini and prior to him, Burūjerdī, he argues that during the Occultation of the *imām*, the *fuqahā* are regarded as his general vicegerents (*nāʾib al-ʿāmm*) (Muntaẓirī 1379, vol. 2, pp. 211–218). His interpretation of the term *ulu al-amr* is also reminiscent of his master's, in that the just jurists are the guardians of the cause and, since the office of *wilāya* is modulated, they stand after God, the Prophet, and the *imāms;* however, their *wilāya* is confined to the execution of the *sharīʿa* laws and not creating law (Muntaẓirī 1379 vol. 2, pp. 224–229).

Muntaẓirī sets himself apart from Khomeini and his theory when he gives people their rights in choosing the leader.[41] He uses the verb *inʿiqād* (lit. to ratify) to argue that the office of political leadership (imamate in Muntaẓirī's words) achieves legitimacy only by the people's ratification. To this end, he brings a variety of transmitted and rational sources; among them, the first *āyah* of the *sūrah al-Māʾidah* is significant: "O you who believe! Fulfill your pacts" (Muntaẓirī 1379, vol. 2, p. 286). It is notable because he reads the *Qurʾānīc* term 'contracts' (*ʿuqūd*, single. *ʿaqd*) from a modern perspective and like a Contractarian.[42] His argument for imamate as a contract goes beyond the classical term of *shurā* (consultation), which had been used by his predecessors to sustain their arguments for the legitimacy of the Islamic Government after the Constitutional Revolution. Unlike *shurā*, the concept of *ʿaqd* actively involves people as signatories of the contract that actualizes the office of imamate.

Along with the *āyah* of *ʿaqd,* Muntaẓirī transmits several *ḥadīth* as well as historical examples of *bayʿah* (lit. a sale or a commercial transaction, though in Islamic terminology it is an oath of allegiance to a leader) to sustain his arguments for the new *wilāyat al-faqīh* (Muntaẓirī 1379, vol. 2, pp. 304–326). In contrast to Khomeini's *kalāmī* reading, Muntaẓirī's interpretation of the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh* acquires a philosophical aura, not only because he is inspired by, and quotes from Muslim philosophers, but also because he offers a new reading of the *Qurʾānīc* term "*ʿaqd*" which endorses the role of people in choosing the leader.

Evaluating Muntaẓirī's new reading, Schwerin is certain that although his lectures "clearly showed that he wanted greater respect of the interests of the people and better control of the government, … it remains unclear how this should be achieved" (Schwerin 2015, p. 86). Furthermore, the new *wilāyat al-faqīh* should not be regarded as a democratic government, nor as a check and balance mechanism to ensure the control of the government (Schwerin 2015, p. 86). Muntaẓirī lacked knowledge of Western philosophy and modern political thought, which could definitely have provided him with an understanding of what a modern democratic government looks like. Moreover, in terms of new arrangements such as popular election, democratic checks and balances, and modern understanding of the sovereignty of the state, *Shīʿa* jurisprudence is poor and unprepared to be exposed to modern questions. Despite this, Muntaẓirī's new reading was not only in contrast to Khomeini's *wilāyat al-faqīh* which had been incorporated into the post-revolutionary constitution, but also stood in opposition to "the doctrine of the absolute guardianship of the jurist (*wilāyat-i muṭlaqa-yi faqīh*) which was adopted as the official doctrine in 1988" (Schwerin 2015, p. 86).

6.5.1.2 People's Rights

Muntaẓirī's revised theory centers on the concept of people's rights (*ḥaqq al-nās*). It seems that Man and his rights had become his main concern after his dismissal from the office of heir apparent in 1368 *shamsī*/1990. He wrote an independent book entitled *Risāla-yi Ḥuqūq* (the Book of Rights) on the conceptualization of *ḥaqq* (rights) and its place in *Shīʿa* jurisprudence.[43] The book was written in 1383 *shamsī*/2004 and discusses the concept of people's rights from different perspectives, such as natural rights (and the classification of the rights to life, living, and the right of determination), Man's rights toward society and toward himself, the rights of nations, and the reciprocal rights of Man and society. Distinguishing

between natural laws (*ḥuqūq-i fiṭrī*) and positive laws (*ḥuqūq-i qarārdādī*), Muntaẓirī argues that the latter are man-made laws that oblige an action, describe the establishment of specific rights for an individual or group, and, as a double-faceted entity, produce both rights and responsibilities. The former (natural laws), however, comprise inherent rights, having been conferred not by act of legislation but by God, nature, or reason (Muntaẓirī 1383 *shamsī*, pp. 11–21).

Quoting *imām* Ali in *Nahj al-Balāgha*, Muntaẓirī argues that people's rights and the rights of God (*ḥuqūq-i ilāhī*) are inseparable, because in Islamic tradition people's rights have priority over the rights of God, and are regarded as an introduction to them. The right of human dignity (*ḥaqq-i karāmat-i insānī*) is one of Man's essential rights and should act as a foundation for positive laws (*ḥuqūq-i mawḍūʿa*). Referring to the *Qurʾānīc āyah* which indicates Man's exalted status in the cosmos and his office of vicegerency (*khalīfat al-lāhī*),[44] Muntaẓirī maintains that Man has inherent dignity and respect (*karāmat wa ḥurmat*), and therefore their violation is abominable (Muntaẓirī 1383 *shamsī*, pp. 31–39). Turning his attention to positive laws, he makes arguments for the reciprocal rights of people and government and argues that people are obliged by God to choose their rulers (the right of determination) (Muntaẓirī 1383 *shamsī*, pp. 60–63).

Along with *Risāla-yi Ḥuqūq,* Muntaẓirī's conceptualization of people's rights is cited in another book containing the questions submitted to him by his followers and/or students. Answering these questions, Muntaẓirī clarifies his stance on people's rights which had been theorized before, either in *Mabānī Fiqhī Ḥukūmat-i Islāmī* or in the *Risāla-yi Ḥuqūq. Ḥukūmat-i Dīnī wa Ḥuqūq-i Insān* (Religious Government and People's Rights) was written in 1387 *shamsī*/2008, one year before his death, and contains the ideas of a jurist who is at the climax of his knowledge, experience, and political activity. On the nature of government and politics in Islam, Muntaẓirī argues that *ḥukūmat-i Dīnī* (religious government or *wilāyat al-faqīh*) is the preferred form of governance and statecraft, although the political leader (the just jurist) is not appointed by God but is an elected ruler by popular election. People use the right of governance (*ḥaqq-i ḥukmrānī*) which has been conferred on them by God to choose *walī* and to remove him from the office whenever he acts against their interests (Muntaẓirī 1387 *shamsī*, pp. 9–12). Therefore, the office of *wilāyat al-faqīh* does not entail absolute power and an unlimited term (Schwerin 2015, p. 177).

According to Muntaẓirī, there exists two readings of *wilāyat al-faqīh*: the first one which is called the theory of appointment (*naṣb*) is the official reading, and as it sounds, defends the idea of Divine appointment of the jurist in which there is no room for the people's right to choose their leader. According to the second reading which is called the theory of [popular] election (*nakhb*) and is Muntaẓirī's principal concern, the guardianship of the jurist is actualized only when people elect him as their leader. This is because the office of *wilāya* entails the right of *taṣrīf/taṣarruf* (lit. to take upon one under guardianship), and without the vote of the people, the *walī* will not be able to govern them and take responsibility for their lives. Therefore, the legitimacy of the office of *wilāya* depends on people as the owners of the right of sovereignty. In terms of the form of religious government, Muntaẓirī clarifies that as long as the content is religious and the government meets the spiritual needs and requirements of people, the form can be different, although religious government is founded on the basis of the separation of powers (Muntaẓirī 1387 *shamsī*, pp. 12–15).

In such a government, the role and the authority of the *walī* are limited to issuing *fatwā* and supervision, and he cannot execute laws (Muntaẓirī 1387 *shamsī*, p. 14).[45] Muntaẓirī's argument for the impossibility of Divine appointment of the jurist is founded on a rational (*ʿaqlī*) basis: it is not possible for him to be appointed by God, because rationally no one is able to prove such an appointment. In other words, human intellect and reason are not enough, and therefore the Divine source of *walī's* guardianship remains controversial in the time of Occultation (Muntaẓirī 1387 *shamsī*, p. 15). Muntaẓirī extracts the people's right of sovereignty from the right of determination, which, as observed earlier in this chapter, is itself a natural law and a part of human dignity (*karāmat-i insānī*) (Muntaẓirī 1387 *shamsī*, pp. 16–17). Addressing the significance of people's rights, Schwerin is certain that while Muntaẓirī "was ready to compromise on the *sharīʿa* if this was in the interest of the State, he was not willing to sacrifice his principles for the sake of personal power or to close his eyes to the systematic violation of people's rights" (Schwerin 2015, p. 88).

Supervision (*niẓārat*) and not guardianship of the jurist is the desirable form of the *wilāyat al-faqīh*, and it will be achieved only when people are able to elect the leader. In addition to internal mechanisms of checks and balances like justice (*ʿidālat*), external mechanisms should also be established to prevent the transformation of supervision to guardianship (Muntaẓirī 1387 *shamsī*, pp. 22–23). Muntaẓirī does not clarify what he means by these mechanisms; however, one can imagine the separation of

powers is one of them to ensure the people have the right to vote. The *faqīh* also cannot impose his viewpoint on minority, and therefore his authority remains confined to supervision of the process of legislation to ensure that the laws which are ratified by the parliament are not contradictory to Islam (Muntaẓirī 1387 *shamsī*, pp. 22–23). His new theory has the potential for rebellion and resistance and allows people to break their contract with government (here Islamic government) whenever they are not satisfied with it, or, when it rules arbitrarily (Muntaẓirī 1387 *shamsī*, pp. 56–57).

To sum up, Muntaẓirī's conceptualization of *wilāyat al-faqīh* needs to be understood in the light of the concept of people's rights, which enabled him to revise his initial theory in which people were devoid of any subjectivity or agency. However, the appearance of this concept in the terminology of Muntaẓirī was a necessity of its time. To this end, he started with a juridical axiom that nobody has *wilāya* over the other, because Man is born free. Therefore, jurisdictionally, *wilāya* is not self-evident as Khomeini argued, but an exception. In other words, sufficient rational reasons are needed to prove *wilāya* for a guardian in personal affairs, but the extension of *wilāyat al-faqīh* into the public domain is not only possible but necessary (*iḍṭirār*) to prevent chaos and disorder (Muntaẓirī 1387 *shamsī*, pp. 144–145). The just jurist gains legitimacy and popularity from election through which his *wilāya* becomes actualized, and since rational reasons are insufficient to prove the Divine source of the *wilāya* of the just jurist, *wilāyat al-faqīh* lacks a credible foundation in Islamic jurisprudence. In his quest to limit the powers of the jurist, Muntaẓirī not only redefined the office of *wilāya* more as supervision and less as guardianship, but also sought to "strengthen the people's participation in politics in order to safeguard their will and to prevent the abuse of their rights" (Schwerin 2015, pp. 147–148).

Muntaẓirī believed in renewing his theory, and the footprint of his era was visible in his revision. He wrote two articles after the victory of Seyyed Muhammad Khatami to presidency in 1997, entitled *Wilāyat-i Faqīh wa Qānūn-i Asāsī* (the Guardianship of the Jurist and the Constitution) and *Ḥukūmat-i Mardumī wa Qānūn-i Asāsī* (Popular Government and the Constitution), both of them centered on the idea of people's rights. In the former, he rejected the idea of the absoluteness of the *wilāya* of the Prophet and the *imāms*, arguing that it is only God, and not any individual, that has absolute guardianship over people (Muntaẓirī 1377 *shamsī*, pp. 31–65). In the latter work, he maintained that even the Prophet and

the *imāms* needed popular legitimacy to actualize their *wilāya* (Muntaẓirī 1378 *shamsī*, pp. 171–233). From the time of writing *Mabānī Fiqhī Ḥukūmat-i Islāmī* in 1988, until the publication of his last book *Ḥukūmat-i Dīnī wa Ḥuqūq-i Insān* in 2008, in which the imprint of the Green Movement was undeniable,[46] Muntaẓirī maintained his outlook about the nature of the office of *wilāya* as being elective and not appointive. For him, *wilāyat al-faqīh* was equal to *wilāyat al-fiqh* or the correct implementation of religion in society, a goal which is only attainable through supervision and not guardianship (Muntaẓirī 1378 *shamsī*, pp. 181–184).

Muntaẓirī's ideas were taken further by one of his students, Muhsin Kadivar, whose critiques on *wilāyat al-faqīh* have, so far, been some of the most serious on this theory. Kadivar criticizes Muntaẓirī's theory both on the basis of the transmitted sources he uses (*Maqbūla-yi ʿUmar ibn-Ḥanẓalih* and *Mashhūra-yi abī-Khadījah*)[47] and the ways he makes arguments to sustain his thesis. Moreover, he has always been an open opponent of the leadership of Ali Khamenei, whose *wilāya* stems from the rights given to him in the revised Constitution. Following Muntaẓirī, Kadivar believes that from the two rights of judgeship and issuing *fatwā*, which are traditionally designated to the jurists, as well as the mandate of the office of *fiqāhat* over the community of believers as the only legitimate heir of the legacy of the Prophet and the *imāms*, one cannot bring about the *wilāya* of any individual jurist, let alone the absolute guardianship.[48] Yet, if, in *Ḥukūmat-i Wilāyī*, Kadivar is doubtful whether the right of governance in the Islamic jurisprudence is extractable from the *wilāya* of the jurist, or from the area which is called "Islamic market regulations" (*umūr-i ḥisbīya/ḥisba*) (Kadivar 1378a, p. 52), in his recent writings, he adopts a different stance and questions the whole idea of *wilāyat al-faqīh*. Both *Ḥukūmat-i Wilāyī* and *Naẓarīyahāy-i Dawlat dar Fiqh-i Shīʿa* were written almost twenty years ago and do not represent the view point of a scholar who, in recent years, has reviewed his initial ideas.[49]

In his recent article entitled *wilāyat al-faqīh and Democracy*, Kadivar maintains that the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh* "lacks any credible religious basis for its deployment in the political sphere" (Kadivar 2011, p. 219). Studying its background in *Shīʿa* jurisprudence, Kadivar is certain that "*wilāyat al-faqīh* has risen out of a sort of false expectation of the purview of Islamic jurisprudence" (Kadivar 2011, p. 221), and should rather be regarded as

> a reflection of the Iranian theory of kingdom and Eastern despotism in the mind and essence of *Shīʿī* jurists, which has also been corroborated by the Platonic theory of the philosopher-king. Its absolutism can be traced in the absolute *wilāya* of the perfect human being in Ibn ʿArabī's Sufism. It seems that traditional Islamic jurisprudence imbued with such notions as the principle of non-*wilāyat,* the principle of sovereignty (all people are the masters of their properties), and the principle of consensus (rulership over the people is not legitimate without their consent), cannot be compatible in the public sphere with the notion of *wilāyat al-faqīh.* (Kadivar 2011, p. 221)[50]

6.6 Conclusion

Some lessons have been learned from the conceptualization of *wilāyat al-faqīh* in the juridical writings of Khomeini, as well as its further development in the reform movement initiated by Muntaẓirī and later implemented by Kadivar:

Unlike mystical *wilāya* which is as old as Islamic mysticism, the idea of *wilāyat al-faqīh* is a new chapter in *Shīʿa* jurisprudence and dates back to Shaykh Murtaḍā Anṣārī's *al-Makāsib* which was written two hundred years ago (Kadivar 1378a, p. 109), though despite its short life, it has undergone transformation. As observed in the previous chapter, by the time of Khomeini, the mystical conceptualization of *wilāya* had already reached its culmination, and from this perspective, Khomeini's contribution looks old. In terms of the arguments he makes and the sources he uses, it is as if it had been written hundreds of years ago. The juridical *wilāya,* in contrast, has gone through a tremendous change, not only in the hands of Khomeini but also his preceding jurists like Mullā Aḥmad Narāqī and Shaykh Jaʿfar Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ. The politicization of *Shīʿa* jurisprudence, which coincided with Fatḥ ʿAlī Shah's reign (d. 1213 *shamsī*/1834), in later years, led to significant changes; among them, the emergence of the constitutional jurisprudence and the formation of the political jurisprudence of Khomeini are notable. Socio-political developments acted as a midwife to facilitate the delivery of the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh.* In other words, political jurisprudence and particularly the conceptualization of *wilāya* have been exposed to external environment and for its part, impacted on it as well.

By 'external environment' I mean the two systems of Qajar and Pahlavi, their policies (secularization and westernization), and their relationships with foreign countries which, in the eyes of the hierocracy, had resulted in

the domination of non-Muslims over a Muslim land. Therefore, for the hierocracy, Islam was both a safe haven in which they could take refuge and a rich source of inspiration that could help them find a solution to the crisis of state-formation and nation-building (Amir Arjomand 2016, pp. 402–406). Although Khomeini, by the time of the revolution, did not have a "specific vision of the Islamic state" (Martin 2007, p. 127), his objective from the time of the writing *Kashf*, was a state governed by jurists. To be more precise, he never gave up his belief in the superiority of the Islamic *sharīʿa* over all other kinds of laws, nor in the legitimacy of the *ʿulemā* as the only legitimate political leaders.

In the case of the political jurisprudence of Muntaẓirī, the footprint of time is more identifiable. His theory, in contrast to Khomeini's, underwent considerable change and revision. He had enough courage to review and criticize his ideas to make them responsive to new questions, and from this perspective, he is unique among Iranian politicians. His example, as Schwerin observes, highlights "it's changing motives and objectives and its internal rules and external limits as well as the evolving role of religious authority and political power in the shaping of the discourse" (Schwerin 2015, p. 5). Muntaẓirī's latest theory, which advocates the idea of the popular election of the just jurist, seems to be a return to a view he had expressed forty years earlier, but the emphasis he puts on people's rights and on the limited terms of the *faqīh's* leadership are new and can be traced back to socio-political changes in the past two decades of the Iranian politics. Therefore, scholars like Kadivar who have put themselves in anguish to prove that Muntaẓirī's theory should be regarded as a continuation of Khomeini's *wilāyat al-faqīh* need to revise their outlook, as these two theories have a resemblance in name only (Kadivar 1378a, pp. 148 & 211). Muntaẓirī's revised theory, unlike that of Khomeini, recognizes two sources of legitimacy: Divine will and people's sovereignty.

Kadivar's example displays an actual break from the existing tradition of political jurisprudence in general, and the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh* in particular—not only because he believes in the incompatibility of democracy (his political ideal) and the guardianship of the jurist (in which he has already lost his hope and belief), but also because he cannot identify any jurisdictional element or heritage in it. Like Muntaẓirī, his belief in the *wilāyat al-faqīh* underwent changes and finally resulted in total rejection of the right of the just jurist to govern. For Kadivar, this theory is groundless in *fiqh* and its roots should be traceable in areas other than jurisprudence. For him, both as an intellectual and a political activist, the life of

wilāyat al-faqīh, as a theory and in action, has come to an end. Regardless of its internal paradoxes and inconsistencies, Iran's existing political apparatus, which is founded on this theory, due to the socio-political developments of time and the weight and force of republicanism as the second wing of the Islamic Republic, is doomed to failure.

Recapitulating the methodology used, all the three scholars whose outlooks on *wilāyat al-faqīh* are studied in this chapter shaped their 'webs of beliefs' as "networks of interconnected concepts with the concepts and the connections between them; being defined in part, by beliefs about external reality" (Bevir 2004, p. 191ff) against the inherited tradition of their time, though in contact with it. Khomeini and his Sunni peers broke away from traditional jurisprudence by replacing it with a radical reading of some *Qurʾānīc* verses. In the same way, Muntaẓirī formed his 'webs of beliefs' against the official theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh* as the inherited tradition, though he maintained his loyalty to it. For him, this theory had been distorted and needed to be corrected by the razor of the reform. Kadivar's gradual, but consistent, move away from the tradition of political Islam resulted in his denial of *wilāyat al-faqīh*. He is still a student of the school of the reform movement, but with no concern or interest in political dimension of it. Addressing the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh,* Kadivar shaped his 'web of beliefs' in contrast to the inherited tradition of his time and with no reciprocal connection to, or exchange with it.

Notes

1. The details of these policies have been discussed in several books, including:

   Touraj Atabaki and Erik J. Zurcher (eds), *Men of Order: Authoritarian Modernization Under Atatűrk and Reza Shah,* 2004 (London & New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd).

   Stephanie Cronin (ed), *the Making of Modern Iran: State and Society under Riza Shah, 1921–1941,* 2003 (London & New York: Routledge).

   Stephanie Cronin (ed), *the Army and the Creation of the Pahlavi State in Iran, 1910–1926,* 1997 (London, I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd).

2. Shahrough Akhavi has studied the formation of the Endowment Organization (*Sāzmān-i Awqāf*), its history and its impact on the financial position of the hierocracy. See:

   Shahrough Akhavi, *Religion and Politics in Contemporary Iran: Clergy-State Relations in the Pahlavi Period,* 1980 (New York: State University of New York Press), pp. 132–143.

3. For an analysis of the restructuring and reorganizing the *ḥawza* under Burūjerdī, as well as the impact of his measures in the later emergence of the Islamic movement, See: Martin, Op.cit, 2007, pp. 48–74.
4. Murtiḍā Muṭahharī also reviews Burūjerdī's works and contribution to the *ḥawza* in:

   Murtiḍā Muṭahharī, *Mazāyā wa Khadamāt-i Marḥūm Ayatollah Burūjirdī* (Advantages and Contributions of the late Ayatollah Burūjerdī), in *Baḥthī Darbāra-yi Marjaʿīyyat wa Rawḥānīyat*, 1341 *shamsī*/1962 (n.d., Anjuman-i Kitāb), pp. 231–249.
5. The text of the constitution is accessible here:

   http://m-hosseini.ir/mashrot/articles-3/278.pdf, last accessed 3/29/17.
6. ʿAlī Akbar Ḥikamī Zādih, the son of Shaykh Mahdī Qumī, was one of the most well-known scholars of Qum in the early twentieth century. He had such a reputation and popularity to the extent that when Shaykh ʿAbdulkarīm Ḥāʾirī Yazdī moved to Qum from Arak, he resided in his home. ʿAlī Akbar, the author of *Asrār-i Hizār Sālih* was a young student in Qum when he started revising his ideas and was very much inspired by Aḥmad Kasravī, the notable Iranian linguist, historian, and reformer who was murdered on March 11, 1324 *shamsī*/1946. In the *Asrār*, Ḥikamī Zādih sets forth a number of questions and critiques against Islam, *Shīʿīsm*, and *Shīʿa ʿulemā*.
7. For a historical account of hierocracy in Iran after the Constitutional Revolution to the present time, see: Mehdi Khalaji, *Naẓm-i Nuwīn-i Rawḥānīyat dar Iran* (the New Clerical Order in Iran), 1389 *shamsī*/2010 (Bochum: Aida Publication).
8. Recently, Dāwūd Feyraḥī gave an account of the two categories of 'constitutionalist jurisprudence' and 'political jurisprudence'. See: Dāwūd Feyraḥī, *Fiqh wa Sīyāsat dar Irān-i Muʿāṣir*; *Fiqh-i Sīyāsī wa Fiqh-i Mashrūṭih* (Jurisprudence and Politics in Contemporary Iran; Constitutionalist Jurisprudence and Political Jurisprudence), 1390 (Tehran: Ney Publication).
9. By 'intention', I mean 'weak intention' or 'individual viewpoint' or 'expressed beliefs' which, as it is observed in the Introduction (C.2., pp. 19–24) are equal to 'hermeneutic meanings', whose discovery should only be the task of the historian of ideas. To recall Bevir, 'weak intention' is "the meaning an utterance had for its author or a later reader, whether consciously or unconsciously" (Bevir 2004, p. 171), and therefore, if the task of the historian of ideas is "to study only the meaning of the action" (Bevir 2004, p. 135), then he needs to concern himself only with the beliefs it expresses (Bevir 2004, pp. 135ff).

10. There exists a number of sources on the relationship between the Shah and Ayatollah Burūjerdī:

    Ayatollah Husayn ʿAlī Muntaẓirī, *Khāṭirāt* (Memoirs), 2 volumes which is accessible here:

    https://amontazeri.com/book/khaterat, last accessed 3/23/17.

    Mehdi Ḥā'irī Yazdī, *Khāṭirāt* (Memoirs), Habib Lajevardi (ed), 1381 (Tehran: Kitāb-i Nader). Accessible here: http://honarvarnet.blogspot.com/2010/07/1_22.html, last accessed 3/23/17.

    Shahrough Akhavi, Op.cit, 1980.

    Saïd Amir Arjomand, Op.cit, 1988, pp. 94–95.

    Hamid Algar, *Burūjerdī, Ḥosayn Ṭabāṭabā'ī*, Encyclopaedia Iranica, IV/4, pp. 376–379, available online at http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/borujerdi-ayatollah-hajj-aqa-hosayn-tabatabai-1292-1380-1875-1961, last accessed 3/24/17.
11. As Fatemeh E. Moghadam has shown, during the 1960s and 1970s, the rural economy of Iran experienced major structural changes due to two important forces: "deliberate government policies aimed at introducing structural changes in the countryside, and the rapidly growing, industrializing, and urbanizing Iranian economy stimulated by rising oil revenues" (Moghadam 1996, p. 1). In agricultural policy of the regime which had been incorporated into the White Revolution, three phases were identifiable: land reform of 1962–1967 that resulted in massive redistribution of land from landlords to peasants, the establishment of large-scale farms which lasted from 1967 to 1976, and "the acceptance of the status quo in land property relations without any further attempt by the government to alter them" that lasted from 1976 to 1979 (Moghadam 1996, p. 2). The agricultural policies changed the traditional land relations forever and resulted in the increased power of the Shah, and also paved the way for the Islamic revolution of 1979.
12. Akhavi mentions another initiative which was conducted shortly before the above-mentioned book. He calls it the first reform movement which started immediately after the death of Burūjerdī. Akhavi, Op.cit, 1980, pp. 117–119.
13. For a comprehensive review of the book and the context in which the book is written, see: Akhavi, Ibid., pp. 119–129.
14. Akhavi has categorized the 'pattern of '*ulemā*'s behavior' into four factions of radicals, social reformers, the conservatives, and finally those who wanted to cooperate with the court. Khomeini, as it is mentioned above, was leading the radicals and it seems that the more his status was lower, the more radical his stance was. Akhavi, Ibid., pp. 100–105.
15. As Vanessa Martin shows, the hierocracy during 1960s had experienced a growing power, and as the country and the state that grew wealthier, so did

the clergy. The increased contribution from the believers and the increased number of mosques, madrasas, and religious students testify to the fact that "the clergy remained an important source of referral on personal law and conduct. They also branched out into publishing, the establishment of Islamic societies, and welfare activities, all of which ensured their influence among the *Shīʿa* community remained high" (Martin 2007, p. 24).

16. With the full name of Dr Seyyed Ḥassan Arsanjānī, the minister of agriculture in the cabinet of Dr ʿAlī Amīnī (d. 1371 *shamsī*/1992), and the main figure who introduced the program of land reform in Iran.
17. The cabinet of Assadullāh ʿAlam (d. 1357 *shamsī*/1978) issued two new decrees on January 17, 1963. One was the Additional Articles and the other nationalized Iran's forests and pastures. In order to obtain national approval of these and previous decrees, the Shah held the referendum (Majd 2000, p. 218).
18. For the chronology of Khomeini's exile, see this website: http://www.hawzah.net/fa/Magazine/View/130/3638/17006/%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%B4%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D8%A8%D8%B9%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%AD%D8%B6%D8%B1%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%AE%D9%85%DB%8C%D9%86%DB%8C-(%D8%B3), last accessed 3/25/17.
19. In Islamic Law, *taʿzīr* refers to punishment, usually corporal, and that can be administered at the discretion of the judge as opposed to the *ḥudūd* which have been defined by the Lawgiver.
20. Anṣārī discusses the issue in his book *al-Makāsib* (Transactions). Many of his works also center on *fiqh* and *uṣūl al-fiqh* (the principles of jurisprudence). *Al-Makāsib* is a detailed exposition of Islamic commercial law and is taught in today's *ḥawzas*.
21. Ayatollah Jawādī Āmulī in his *Wilāyat-i Faqīh; Wilāyat-i ʿIdālat wa Fiqāhat* (the Guardianship of the Jurist, the Guardianship of Justice and Jurisprudence), stresses that in the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh,* the *kalāmī*, and not the juridical reading of the office of *wilāya*, is preferred.
22. The book is referred to as *Wilāyat-i Faqīh* throughout this chapter.
23. Muhsin Kadivar divides Khomeini's political thought into four phases and maintains that the theory of *wilāyat-i faqīh* (as discussed in the book of *Wilāyat-i Faqīh*) belongs to the second phase which is the Najaf period. Khomeini's *wilāyat-i faqīh* in this period does not differ in essence from the concept of *wilāyat al-ʿāmmah* (general *wilāya*) in the writings of figures such as the above-mentioned Mullā Aḥmad Narāqī and Ayatollah Burūjirdī. According to Kadivar, Khomeini was sharpening his tongue over years and from being a constitutionalist (Qum period) ended up in the absolute *wilāyat-i faqīh*. See: https://kadivar.com/?p=14576, last accessed 12/27/18.

Kadivar's observation of the evolution of Khomeini's political thought does not contradict with our analysis of this theory and its further developments, because Khomeini's configuration of this theory in the last two phases (Paris and Tehran periods) were based upon Najaf's outline, which is the basis of our analysis of his theory in the present research.

24. The phrase '*kashf al-ghiṭā'*" (to breach the veils) is a reminder of the abovementioned *Kashf al-Asrār*, or can be indicative of the influence of mysticism on Khomeini. *Kashf* (to unveil, to reveal) of an obstacle between God and servant is an important topic in Islamic mysticism.
25. Khomeini discusses *wilāyat al-faqīh* in *Kitāb al-Bayʿ*, and there is a reason for that. When he was in Najaf, his old students who had moved with him from Iran to Iraq asked him to continue his lectures from where they had stopped in Qum, and he started his classes with transaction or *Bayʿ*. In the following, "he broached the topic of the role and responsibility of the Islamic jurist as guardian or custodian of minors and the mentally deranged, in cases where the latter were involved in a transaction. It was at this point that Khomeini intentionally strayed from the normal legal trajectory of his subject matter to advance a political theory" (Rahnema 2014, p. 89). Ali Rahnema has discussed the topic and its background extensively. See:

    Ali Rahnema, *Ayatollah Khomeini's Rule of the Guardian Jurist From Theory to Practice*, in *A Critical Introduction to Khomeini,* Arshin Adib-Moghaddam (ed), 2014 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 88–114.
26. Obviously, reminiscent of ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī's definition of *wilāya* as "immutable law of nature" (Ṭabāṭabā'ī 1341 *shamsī*, p. 75).
27. Hamid Mavani has the same reading and argues that "it appears that he [Khomeini] regards this concept as part of the *madhhab's* fundamentals, like justice and imamate, that ought to be grouped under 'beliefs' rather than as a juridical opinion under jurisprudence. Of course, such a perspective would severely constrain the sphere of tolerance, deliberation, and disagreement on this concept" (Mavani 2013b, p. 183)
28. The book is composed of two volumes and is written in 1385 H/1343 *shamsī* (1964).

    http://www.noorlib.ir/View/fa/Book/BookView/Image/3830, last accessed 3/31/17.
29. Mavani argues that Khomeini's theory, as well as his understanding of the role and the office of imamate, "is primarily political in nature" (Mavani 2013, p. 9) and stands in contrast to the viewpoint of scholars such as Amir-Moezzi and Corbin who overemphasize *Shīʿīsm* as a "suprarational esoteric tradition" (Amir-Moezzi 1994, p. 19 in Mavani 2013b, p. 9).
30. Ayatollah Khomeini brings this *āyah* in *al-Rasā'il* as well, though he omits the controversial part which is on *ulu-l-amr*. So, the *āyah* is cited incomplete. See: Khomeini, vol. 2, pp. 111–117.

31. For the similarities between Khomeini's *Nahḍat* and its Sunni peer, Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt, See: Martin, Op.cit, 2007, pp. 197–202.
32. Along with the aforementioned verse, Ṣadr interprets the verse on *ulu-l-amr* as well to sustain his argument that the Islamic state is qualified to be part of *ulu-l-amr*. Mavani, like Mallat, estimates Ṣadr's reading as "novel" which has paved the way for other *Shīʿa* scholars—such as Husayn ʿAlī Muntaẓirī—to argue that "jurists have a mandate to govern during the messianic *imām*'s concealment" (Mavani 2013b, p. 150). Mavani estimates Muntaẓirī's elaboration on the theory as "quite anomalous in post-Occultation *Shīʿa* scholarship, [which] expanded the jurist's scope of power and eliminated the plurality of authority in government … [though] he advocated a role for the jurisconsult that was based on a social contract between the jurisconsult and the public" (Mavani 2013b, p. 155).
33. Khomeini's letter as well as explanation on the concept of *ḥukūmat-i Islāmī* is stated in this website: http://www.hawzah.net/fa/Article/View/5350, last accessed 5/17/17.
34. Saïd Amir Arjomand discusses the developments that led to Khomeini's decision in detail and calls these developments "the constitutional crisis of the 1980s and Khomeini's second revolution". See:

    Saïd Amir Arjomand, *Authority in Shiism and Constitutional Developments in the Islamic Republic of Iran*, in *The Twelver Shia in Modern Times: Religious Culture and Political History*, Rainer Brunner and Werner Ende (eds), 2001 (Leiden, Brill), pp. 301–333.
35. Muḥammad Ḥassan Najaf Ābādī was born in 1230 *shamsī*/1852 in Najaf Abad and entered the seminary of Isfahan to study jurisprudence and philosophy with figures such as Jahāngīr Khān Qashqāʾyī and Mullā Muḥammad Ākhund Kāshānī. After completing *saṭḥ* (intermediate level of the *hawzawī* schooling), Najaf Ābādī emigrated to Najaf to attend the classes of Ākhund Khurāsānī (1329 H/1911) and Seyyed Muḥammad Kāẓim Ṭabāṭabāʾī Yazdī (d. 1337/1919). He received the *ījāza* of *fatwā* from both Khurāsānī and Yazdī and came back to Iran to teach and train students in the seminary of Isfahan. Due to his skill in jurisprudence, he became famous as *ʿĀlim* (lit. learned, erudite scholar). He died in 1344 *shamsī*/1966 and was buried in Isfahan. He wrote a book entitled *Faḍīlat al-Sīyāda wa Faḍāʾil al-Sādāt* (the Virtues of the Household of the Prophet).

    http://www.hawzah.net/fa/Magazine/View/2689/6585/76779/%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%B8-%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%87-%D8%A2%DB%8C%D8%A9-D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%91%D9%87-%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%AD%D8%B3%D9%86-%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85-%D9%86%D8%AC%D9%81-%D8%A2%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AF%DB%8C, last accessed 4/21/2017.

36. The information about Muntaẓirī's biography, teachers, studies, books, and students are gained through:
    https://amontazeri.com/biography, last accessed 4/21/17.
    http://www.bbc.com/persian/iran/2009/01/090129_ir_montazari.shtml, last accessed 4/21/17.
37. The Assembly was founded in the summer of 1358 *shamsī*/1979, headed by Muntaẓirī, to write a new constitution for the Islamic regime. It convened on August 18, 1979 to consider the draft constitution written earlier and completed its deliberations on the rewriting of the constitution on November 15, 1979. Finally, the constitution was approved by referendum on December 2 and 3, 1979 by over 98% of the vote. The draft of the constitution was written by Ḥassan Ibrāhīm Ḥabībī (d. 1392 *shamsī*/2013) without any indication to *wilāyat al-faqīh*. *Wilāyat al-faqīh* as the form of the new government was incorporated into the final draft of the constitution by the efforts of Muntaẓirī. Muhsin Kadivar gives a lengthy account of Muntaẓirī's stance on the article of the *wilāyat al-faqīh* in the Islamic constitution in his book *Ḥukūmat-i Wilāyī*, Op.cit, 1378a, pp. 185–187.
38. Even before Muntaẓirī became appointed as the heir apparent to Khomeini in 1364 *shamsī*/1985, he had started reviewing his opinion about *wilāyat al-faqīh* by giving lectures on the theoretical foundations and practical implications of this theory. The lectures were published in Arabic in 1988, though became translated into Persian entitled *Mabānī Fiqhī Ḥukūmat-i Islāmī* (the Jurisdictional Foundations of Islamic Government) and is the main text containing Muntaẓirī's reinterpretation of the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh*.
39. Husayn ʿAlī Muntaẓirī, *Mabānī Fiqhī Ḥukūmat-i Islāmī* (the Jurisdictional Foundations of the Islamic Government), translated into Persian by Maḥmūd Ṣalawātī and Abu'l-Faḍl Shakūrī, 8 volumes, 1367 *shamsī* (Tehran, Sarā'yī publication).
40. As is observed earlier in this chapter, Khomeini used the same argument to prove the necessity of *wilāyat al-faqīh* for believers.
41. Muhsin Kadivar insists that Muntaẓirī's revised theory is in fact in line with Khomeini's reading of *wilāyat al-faqīh* and should be regarded as the continuation of the latter's theory, and not in opposition to it. See: Muhsin Kadivar, Op.cit, 1378a, p. 148 & 212.
42. With regard to the centrality of the concept of the contract, Kadivar calls Muntaẓirī's theory *wikālat* (also *wikāla*, lit. agency, delegation). See: Muhsin Kadivar, Op.cit, 1378a, p. 151, though in his other book, *Naẓarīyahāy-i Dawlat dar Fiqh-i Shīʿa*, Kadivar calls Muntaẓirī's theory *naẓarīya-yi wilāyat-i intikhābīya faqīh* (the theory of the elective and constrained guardianship of the jurist); see: *Naẓarīyahāy-i Dawlat dar Fiqh-i Shīʿa*, Op.cit, 1378b, pp. 148–158.

43. As I argued elsewhere, *Risāla-yi Ḥuqūq* contains Muntaẓirī's discussions on human rights and is regarded as a foundation for his jurisprudence of human rights, which was and still is quite innovative in *Shīʿa* jurisprudence. Muntaẓirī pruned his theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh* and particularly downweighted *wilāya* in order to make room for his doctrine of human rights, because he rightly believed in the inconsistency and incompatibility of these two. Also, he shifted from the classic duality of 'ought' and 'ought not' to 'rights', itself a recognition of modernity and its discourse of rights. See:

    Leila Chamankhah, *Human Rights and Muslims*, in *Handbook of Contemporary Islam and Muslim Lives*, Ronald Lukens-Bull and Mark Woodward (eds), 2019 (Springer).
44. There is a number of *āyahs* on Man's vicegerency, but Muntaẓirī brings two of them; one in the *sūrat al-Asrāʾ* (the Night Journey): "We have indeed honored the Children of Adam, and We carry them over land and sea, and provide them with good things, and We have favored them above many We have created" (Nasr 2015, pp. 714–715) and the other in *al-Muʾminūn* (the Believers): "Then of the drop We created a blood clot, then of the blood clot We created a lump of flesh, then of the lump of flesh, We created bones and We clothed the bones with flesh; then We brought him into being as another creation. Blessed is God, the best of creators!" (Nasr 2015, p. 852).
45. While in the *Mabānī*, Muntaẓirī had maintained that the *walī* can execute the *sharīʿa* laws. In terms of restricting the rights and the authority of the *walī-ya faqīh* to supervise and not execute the laws, *Ḥukūmat-i Dīnī* is a more radical book and contains Muntaẓirī's latest revision of the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh*.
46. As Sussan Siavoshi is certain, the evolution of Muntaẓirī's views on state-society relations did not end with the essay he wrote during the presidency of Khatami. She maintains that "the greater the state oppression and violation of people's rights after 2005, the more he objected and distanced himself from his earlier authoritarian position" (Siavoshi 2016, p. 44).
47. As it is observed, Khomeini uses the same methods and sources.
48. Kadivar's opinions are cited in his books, *Ḥukūmat-i Wilāyī* and *Naẓarīyahāy-i Dawlat dar Fiqh-i Shīʿa*; both of them are used extensively throughout this thesis.
49. Schwerin, on the basis of *Ḥukūmat-i Wilāyī* and *Naẓarīyahāy-i Dawlat dar Fiqh-i Shīʿa*, which were written long time ago, comes to this conclusion that Kadivar does not provide his readers with his final opinion about *wilāyat al-faqīh* and leaves it to them to draw their own conclusion (Schwerin 2015, p. 186). Considering Kadivar's recent writings, such an outlook does not seem to be plausible.
50. Vanessa Martin also emphasizes the Platonic root of Khomeini's theory. Martin, Op.cit, 2007, p. 203.

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CHAPTER 7

Conclusion

The present research has had two main objectives. It discusses and analyzes the conceptualization of *wilāya* in certain key texts of the *Shīʿī* thinkers from Shaykh Aḥmad Aḥsāʾī to Ayatollah Khomeini, with particular emphasis on the influence of Ibn ʿArabī and his mysticism on later scholars. Parallel to this is the importance of studying the nature of authority in *Shīʿa* Islam. Has authority in *Shīʿīsm*, which is crystalized in the concept of *wilāya,* changed and developed over time (from the eighteenth to the twentieth century)? Or can the fallible, visible, representative/vicegerent of the authority of the *imām*, himself the infallible, invisible, bearer of the esoteric wisdom and Divine *wilāya*, claim the same authority as the *imām*? I lay particular emphasis on 'authority' because *wilāya* is stuffed with authority, hegemony, and with the right of *taṣṣaruf*. *Walī* is friend, but it is precisely due to his friendship that he can exercise absolute authority. Pertinent to this is the question of whether *Shīʿa* Islam is a faith (*madhhab*) of subordination, submission, and subjugation.[1]

The present study gains significance when viewed in light of the transformations that occurred in *Shīʿa* political thought, as well as in the public life of the community. By 'transformation', I mean the politicization of *wilāya*, and I prefer the term 'public' to 'political', as the extent of the changes brought about by this marriage embraces a wider realm than polity. As discussed in the Introduction, *wilāya* has its roots in Islamic sacred sources, including the *Qurʾān* and *Shīʿa ḥadīth* compilations, and since in

L. Chamankhah, *The Conceptualization of Guardianship in Iranian Intellectual History (1800–1989)*, Palgrave Series in Islamic Theology, Law, and History, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-22692-3_7

the *Shīʿa* tradition, the words and behaviors of the Fourteen Illuminate Figures (*maʿṣūmīn*) have the same authority as the *Qurʾān* and are binding, the guardianship (both as authority and affinity) of the Prophet and the *imāms* are of secondary importance after the *wilāya* of God.

Discussion of the sacred sources helps us to delve into conceptual developments of *wilāya* over time, and therefore the present research can be regarded as a contribution to the existing tradition of modern *Shīʿa* intellectual history. The author sought to focus on the doctrines of *wilāya* from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, as well as to position debates within historical contexts in an attempt to pinpoint the way that *wilāya* took on the characteristics of its time, and how it should be read in the light of historical developments in every age. The question was asked whether the conceptualizations of *wilāya* have remained faithful to the classical understanding of the term, in which the connection between *wujūd* and *wilāya* (the ontological notions of this term) was emphasized.

Tracing the fate of *wilāya* guided the study toward dramatic changes in the history of this concept and to the conjunction of theology and jurisprudence with politics having culminated in the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh*. Jurists and theologians, as has been observed, were bearers of the change, and therefore the ontological notion has been replaced by the political one. The last inheritors of the apolitical, classical conceptualizations of *wilāya* were the *ḥakīms* of the School of Tehran, as after them, and from the nineteenth century onward, *wilāya* came to be understood in terms of the political functions it had. Unlike previous scholars who have focused on the conceptualizations of *wilāya* in a particular text or a certain thinker, this thesis advances our knowledge of the subject in an original way by contextualizing *wilāya* in the intellectual and political arenas of eighteenth- to twentieth-century Iran, and from this perspective, it can be regarded as an addition to the existing scholarship in this area.

The pair *wilāya/walāya* (meaning authority, dominion, leadership and affinity, and sanctity and love), which brings about the reciprocity of lordship/love (or obedience), portrays an ideal type that, perhaps except for the days of the administration of the Prophet in Medina and the short reign of the first *Shīʿī imām*, has had no other equal in the whole history of Islam. *Wilāya* is also a modulated (*mudarraj/mushakkak*) term, and Allah himself is the *walī* who bestows mastery and lordship upon every believer. Therefore, the Divine *wilāya* is the source of the affirmative *wilāya*, as opposed to the negative one, which is the *wilāya* of non-Muslims. The Divine *wilāya* is a sacred pre-temporal covenant (*mīthāq/ʿahd*,

of allegiance, loyalty), having been taken in pre-eternity when nothing was yet created. The term *al-mīthāq* is used more than twenty times in the *Qurʾān* and refers to an alliance between God and humanity, in general, and between God and the Prophets, in particular. As observed, *mīthāq* is significant in the Imamite tradition, as other conceptual developments have been elaborated around this central concept. *Wilāya* is a mega-term, embracing a number of related terms and ideas, such as light, knowledge (hiero-intelligence in the classic Imamite sources), *ḥujja*, and most importantly, Truth (*al-ḥaqq*), among others. It is with the Truth that *wilāya* finds an ontological dimension and connection to *wujūd*. In the Imamite doctrines of *wilāya*, *wilāya* is inseparable from imamate and constitutes the cornerstone of Twelver *Shīʿīsm*, and as such, is a *kalāmī* problematic. *Imām* is the proof (*ḥujja*), and the uninterrupted chain of the *imāms*/ proofs started with Adam and ended in the Hidden *imām*. In this discourse, *wilāya* is the face of God (ousia) and is transformed into messianic expectation of *ẓuhūr* (Parousia).

In our discussion of the *ʿirfānī wilāya*, the conceptualizations of *wilāya* were dated back to the third century (between 205 and 215 H/820–830), when *ḥakīm* Tirmidhī developed the idea of *wilāya* into a coherent theory on the seal of the *wilāya*, as well as a systematic Islamic theory of *wilāya*, a measure by which the false claimants of *wilāya* are distinguished from the true ones. Tirmidhī's initiative is significant, as for the first time in the history of Islamic mysticism, *wilāya* is defined as a modulated status, and classified into the two types of *walī allāh* and *walī-yi ḥaqq allāh;*[2] each is referred to as a station in the spiritual progress of the *walī*. *Ḥakīm* constructs his theory of *wilāya* on the basis of the concept of the *ḥaqq allāh*; a term which refers to the domination and kingdom of God over the cosmos. According to this theory, there exist only two groups of people who recognize and submit to His authority, namely *walī allāh* and *walī-yi ḥaqq allāh*. The former is a servant, who, by performing his religious duties, expects a reward, while the latter beholds God and does not wish to exchange duty for reward. The former is the owner of the status of *ʿibāda* (service and worship), while the latter holds the office of servitude (*ʿubūdīyyah*) (Sūrī 1385, pp. 96–97).[3] Tirmidhī's main argument is the idea of the modulation of prophethood, starting with Adam and ending with the Prophet of Islam. The office of *wilāya* is modulated as well and is sealed by one of His most ascetic servants who is not necessarily a member of the household of the Prophet, as the term *ahl al-bayt* can also refer to people who inherit the spiritual legacy of the Prophet and not his blood.

Ibn ʿArabī was the heir of such a legacy. His conceptualization of *wilāya*, which is studied in the context of the ethics of *wilāya*, *khilāfa*, *nubuwwa*, and *risāla*, is analogous to the classic Imamite understanding, as both are perennial, pre-existent, and the face of God (*wajh allāh*). In *Akbarīan* mysticism, *walī* has two features: he is both cognizant of the Divine names and attributes, and the one who has completed the status of totality (*jāmiʿīyyah*) and unity. *Walī* is the Perfect Man, and as such the face of the cosmos and the intermediary between Him and creation. Due to his exalted status, *walī* is the only one who has the privilege of access to Divine knowledge, a groundbreaking idea which became the central idea of the theory of *wilāya* in later years, and approached the Imamite understanding of it. *Wilāya*, as a result, intertwined with and became inseparable from ʿ*ilm* (knowledge, *maʿrifa*).

It is the importance of attaining ʿ*ilm* from the Divine source, as well as the continuity of the office of *wilāya* (unlike that of prophethood and apostleship), that endows it with a sublime status: *walī* is a partner in the science of prophecy. In the *Akbarīan* School, however, *wilāya* can embrace *nubuwwa* which happens when a prophet dies and God sends a *walī* as a sign of His mercy to the people. This mercy, as we observed, is called the general *nubuwwa* (*nubuwwa ʿāmmah*). It was also through Ibn ʿArabī that the idea of *wilāyat al-takwīnīya* became an inseparable part of the theory of *wilāya* (which is another similarity with the Imamite tradition), though despite the similarity, it is observed how his idea of the seal (*khatm*) resounded with controversy into the *Shīʿa* world. Without digging into these disputes again, it is briefly mentioned that the *Akbarīan* idea of the *khatm* and Ibn ʿArabī's reading of the term *ahl al-bayt* motivated *Shīʿī* mystics to achieve a synthesis of their theology with the *Akbarīan* mystic–political thought. Their endeavors had two main characteristics: the identification of *walī* and the *Shīʿī imām* to the point that the two concepts of *wilāya* and imamate were completely merged into one another, and their emphasis on the uninterrupted chain of *walīs* from Adam to the Hidden *imām*.

In keeping track of the concept of *wilāya* in the *Shaykhī* School, we observed the ways *wilāya* maintained its central position and began to be understood as the hiddenness of God, mediated by a gate (*bāb*). The significance of the office of *rukn-i rābiʿ* originates from the fact that God is completely driven away from man's cognizance and *wilāya* is the latent dimension of Deity, and as a result, it is hidden and unknown. It is important to

remember that prior to the *Shaykhī* conceptualization of the office of *wilāya*, in the classic Imamite tradition, as well as in the *Akbarīan* School, *wilāya* was typically understood as the face of God and the outward dimension of Deity. An important development that happened with *Shaykhīsm* was that the office of *wilāya* was moved to the corner of the hiddenness of God and turned into a latent, hidden, and ever unknown status. It was then that the idea of the 'gate', which is manifested in the office of *rukn-i rābiʿ*, was created as a bridge between the hiddenness of Deity and *wilāya* on the one hand and *wilāya* and believers on the other.

The conceptualizations of *wilāya* in the *ḥikma* tradition are tied to a number of factors, such as the doctrine of *wujūd* (which is the recapitulation of *wilāya* from the early period), the doctrine of *wilāyat al-takwīnīya* (predates Ibn ʿArabī), and the authority of the *uṣūlī ʿulemā*. *Walī* is the *imām* and the Prophet, who himself is the personification of the Universal Intellect and the Primal Pen, and as such the first being emanating from God. As the heirs of the legacy of the *Ṣadrīan ḥikma* and *Akbarīan* mysticism, each of these schools offered their own reading of Ṣadrā's legacy; the *ḥakīms* of the Qajar period went with the *ʿirfānī* reading of *wilāya*, while the scholars of the School of Qum had a philosophical understanding. The culmination of the former, as observed, was the writings of Āqā Muḥammad Riḍā Qumshiʾī, and that of the latter was the doctrine of *wilāya* in the thought of ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī, who in his reading of the *Sadrīan ḥikma* distinguished between the philosophical and the *ʿirfānī* approaches.

The politicization of the concept of *wilāya* and its crystallization in the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh* should be considered as a result of long-term developments in *Shīʿa* jurisprudence which started from the early nineteenth century. Beginning with *wilāya* as *marjaʿīyyah* and ending in Divine kingship, the conceptualization of *wilāya* in the tradition of political jurisprudence (including constitutional jurisprudence of the early twentieth century), unlike its mystical peer which had remained stagnant and inert, underwent tremendous changes. As an infusion of mysticism into political jurisprudence (Chaps. 5 and 6), Khomeini's theory had a number of wellsprings, including the Imamite and the *Akbarīan* traditions, the Platonic philosophy, as well as the rich tradition of kingship in ancient Persia. One can add to it his inspiration by *Shīʿī* and Sunni scholars who, shortly before him, had already started offering a political reading of some *Qurʾānīc* phrases. In addition, compared with previous theories on *wilāya* which were studied in this research, the influence of his era on Khomeini's

thought is undeniable, and hence, it should be understood in the context of socio-political ups and downs of pre-revolutionary Iran. Addressing these developments, the author has sought to offer a better understanding of both the *ʿirfānī* and juridical *wilāya* in the writings of Ayatollah Khomeini by comparing the contexts and genealogies of these two conceptualizations. Since they had different intellectual traditions and backgrounds, they bore fruit in two distinct understandings of *wilāya*, although the core of both relates to the same problem, which is the question of authority and control. From this outlook, the present research is an original contribution to the existing knowledge.

Unlike his predecessors, however, Khomeini invites his readers to submit to the unquestionable and self-evident privilege of the *uṣūlī ʿulemā* to establish government in the time of Occultation, a fact which gives his theory a *kalāmī* aura. One cannot call a halt to rethinking juridical foundations, or to the critical analysis of the *Qurʾānīc* verses in order to find answers to queries (and dreams) of a questioner, and that is why, the theory of Khomeini was not, and should not be, regarded as the maximal understanding of the political role and authority of the just jurist. We called this Khomeinism (Chap. 1, Sect. 1.3.4, p. 16), which indicates the political culture of pre-revolutionary Iran and is centered on political jurisprudence and the theory of *wilāyat al-faqīh*. Khomeini trained a number of students whose writings and political activities are indicative of their inspiration by this culture as an alternative to both traditional jurisprudence adhering quietism and the Pahlavi regime.

The conceptualization of *wilāya* underwent a new reading by Hossein ʿAlī Muntaẓirī who, by emphasizing the doctrine of people's rights, distanced himself from the *kalāmī* reading of his master. His theory is groundbreaking, in so far as the *wilāya* of the just jurist is no longer fundamental of *Shīʿīsm* and is therefore not self-evident. One needs to bring sufficient jurisdictional evidence (both transmitted and rational sources) to prove the political *wilāya* for the *faqīh*. Besides, his *wilāya* will not be actualized and come into effect until he is elected by popular election. Moreover, his term is limited to a certain period of time which is defined in the constitution, and he is only able to supervise, and not to execute laws. From this perspective, the office of *wilāyat al-faqīh* in Muntaẓirī's theory is more reminiscent of the office of presidency than that of religio-political leadership. Kadivar, Muntaẓirī's one-time student, in the end completely broke away from this tradition. He argued that this theory, in

terms of transmitted and rational sources and the Divine source of the appointment of the jurist, is not jurisdictionally verifiable, and therefore should be abandoned in favor of democracy.

All in all, it is no exaggeration to say that *wilāya,* as both a religious right and a duty (*taklīf*), was embraced by the Sufis, and was philosophized and legalized in schools with different tendencies. As such, it can be treated as a mirror reflecting the many intellectual developments in the *Shīʿa* milieu that have arisen during the past two centuries in Iran, and to a lesser extent, in Iraq.

Notes

1. Fazlur Rahman has a very helpful discussion on this topic and his critical eye on *Shīʿīsm* would help *Shīʿa* reader/researcher to reach impartial conclusions. See:

   Fazlur Rahman, *Islam,* 2nd edition, 1968 (New York: Anchor Books), *passim*.
2. Tirmidhī is the first and also the only *ʿārif* in the entire history of Islamic mysticism that coins and uses such a term, as neither before nor after him has this term (*walī-yi ḥaqq allāh*) been used. Besides, he uses this term in only one of his books entitled *Sīrat al-Anbīyāʾ*. See:

   Muḥammad Sūrī, Ḥakīm Tirmidhī wa Naẓarīyayi Wilāyat, (Ḥakīm Tirmidhī and the Theory of Wilāya), *the Journal of Falsaphah wa Kalām*, Vol 4, Winter 1385, p. 96.
3. *Ḥakīm* clarifies that *ʿibāda* and *ʿubūdīyyah* are different as the former refers to the optional tasks of man, while the latter indicates man's as well as the whole creation's indigence and dependence on God. Muḥammad Sūrī, Ibid., 1385, p. 96.

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Glossary

Abu al-ʿAlā ʿAfīfī (1314–1385 H/1897–1966), an Egyptian scholar and writer. Upon obtaining his doctorate in philosophy from Cambridge University in 1930, he started teaching at the University of Cairo, and in 1941 he joined the University of Alexandria. His specialization was *Akbarīan* mysticism.

Abul al-Faḍl ʿAbdu Razzāq Kāshānī (also Qāshānī, ?–736 H/1335), a famous mystic of the eighth century and expert in both esoteric and exoteric sciences. His commentaries on *Fuṣūṣ* of ibn ʿArabī and *Manāzil ul-Sāʾrīn* of Khwāja ʿAbdullāh Anṣārī are famous. He exchanged a number of letters with another exponent, and also critic of ibn ʿArabī, ʿAlāʾ al-Dawlah Simnānī on *waḥdat-i wujūd*.

Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Mahdī Fāḍil Narāqī (1185–1245 H/1771–1829), an Iranian jurist and poet of the eighteenth century. He issued the *fatwā* of *jihād* against Russians in the second Russo–Persian War (1804–1813). Along with *ʿAwāʾid al-Ayyām*, which is in Arabic, he wrote other books such as *Miʿrāj ul-Saʿādah* on ethics in Persian, *Mustanad al-Shīʿa fi al-Aḥkām al-Sharīʿa*, and two books of poetry '*Dīwān*'.

Ahmad Kasravi (1269–1324 *shamsī*/1890–1946), born in Tabriz, Iran, initially enrolled in a seminary in his birthplace, but became a radical Constitutionalist. Later on, he abandoned his clerical training and

L. Chamankhah, *The Conceptualization of Guardianship in Iranian Intellectual History (1800–1989)*, Palgrave Series in Islamic Theology, Law, and History, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-22692-3

became an anti-cleric. He was a lawyer, a reformist, and a political activist affiliated with Iran's Democrat Party. He was assassinated by the radical *Shīʿa* group of *Fadāʾīyān-i Islam* (Devotees of Islam) in 1946 (1324 *shamsī*).

***Akbarīan* School** refers to a school of thought which was developed by a number of ibn ʿArabī's students such as Ṣadr al-Dīn Qūnawī (607–673 H/1207–1274), ʿAfīf a-Dīn al-Ṭilmisānī (610–690 H/1213–1291), the abovementioned ʿAbdu Razzāq Kāshānī, and Sharafadīn Dāwūd Qayṣarī (658–751 H/1260–1350). These figures were influential in elaborating on a particular brand of mysticism centering on the theory of *waḥdat-i wujūd*. It is needless to say that *al-Shaykh al-Akbar* never used this term, and it was mostly his disciple and step-son Qūnawī who coined it for the first time.

***Akhbārī* School of jurisprudence** The *Akhbārīs* refused to consider reason (*ʿql*) and consensus (*ijmāʿ*) as 'legal principles' (*uṣūl-i fiqh*), and therefore recognized the *Qurʾān* and the *ḥadīth*. The school was active from the third to the twelfth century, but lost its supremacy over its rival, the *Uṣūlī* school, after the Safawid period.

Al-Futūḥāt al-Makkīyah (with the full name of *Al-Futūḥāt al-Makkīyah fi al-Maʿrifat al-Asrār al-Mālikīyyah wa al-Malikīyyah*), the most significant book of ibn ʿArabī containing the revelations and intuitions (*mukāshifāt wa shuhūdāt*) he received when he was doing *ḥajj*. The book is written over thirty-five years and was finished in Damascus in 634 H/1236. *Al-futūḥāt* was published for the first time in 1910 in Cairo, Egypt, and was republished in Beirut, Lebanon, in 1970. There exists another edition of the book by the Syrian scholar, ʿUthmān Yaḥyā (1337–1417 H/1919–1997), though only ten of thirty-seven volumes have been published so far.

Al-habāʾ (dust), the atomic or cosmic realm in which God hollows out/builds up the bodies of this world.

***Al-ḥaqīqat al-muḥammadīyah*,** coined for the first time by ibn ʿArabī, the term refers to the first emanated (*ṣādir-i awwal*) or the Greatest Name (*ism-i aʿẓam*). It is the origin of all other creatures and is fully manifested in the perfect man.

ʿĀlam-i asghar wa akbar (lit. microcosm or minor cosmos vs. macrocosm or macro cosmos), allegories of the perfect man and the cosmos, respectively. As a central idea in Islamic mysticism, it is believed that *al-insān al-kāmil* encompasses all the characteristics of the macrocosm

and is regarded as its spirit. He is created according to God's names and attributes and as such has the authority to act upon the cosmos.

Asfār al-Arbaʿi (with the full name of *al-Ḥikmat al-Mutaʿālīya fi al-Asfār al-ʿAqlīyata al-Arbaʿi*), one of the most famous books of Mullā Ṣadrā Shīrāzī. The book contains his ideas on *ḥikmat al-mutaʿālīya* and has four chapters; each is named after one of the four mystical journeys.

Aʿrāf (lit. the people of the heights), refers to *awlīyā/imāms*. The office of *aʿrāf* is to identify the people of Heaven (*ahl al-janna*) and to separate them from the people of Hell (*ahl al-nār*), in the sense that those who accept their *wilāya* are allowed to enter Heaven and those who deny it will exist in Hell forever.

Aʿyān thābitah (lit. permanent archetypes, also fixed entities or essences). Ibn ʿArabī discusses the things known to God as permanent archetypes. These entities are things inasmuch as they are nonexistent in themselves but known to God. They are exactly the same things to the extent that they have been given a certain imaginal or delimited existence by the engendering command.

Bāb (lit. gate), either refers to an intermediary status between Deity and people or the Hidden *imām* and his believers. As a central idea in the Imamite *Shīʿīsm,* it is believed that the twelve *imāms* are regarded as *abwāb* between people and God, though in later elaborations, the idea of *bābīya* (also *bābīyat*) was extensively used to indicate the intermediary office between the *imām*—who is in occultation—and believers. The doctrine of *bābīya* is prominent in *Bāṭinī* trends such as *Shaykhīsm*. In addition, in the *Akbarīan* mysticism *al-insān al-kāmil* (the perfect man) is depicted as a medium by which Deity looks at His creatures.

Baqā (lit. subsistence with God, perpetuation). As the last station in the spiritual journey of novice, he recognizes all existence, including him or herself, as being non-existent in and of itself, and discovers in his or her consciousness that every being, living and non-living, is a manifestation or shadow of the light of the Divine Knowledge and Existence. *Baqā* is achieved when the servant of God annihilates him or herself in God and takes down all human attachments.

Baqīyatallāh (lit. the Remnant of God). It is both a common title for all the *imāms* and a specific title used exclusively for the last *imām*.

Bāṭinī (lit. esoteric) meaning or dimension. It can refer to the *bāṭinī taʾwīl* of the *Qurʾān* or *bāṭinī* schools like *Shaykhīsm* or the *Ismāʿīlī* movement. It can also imply the status of *wilāya* as the internal face or dimension of *nubuwwa*.

Dhāt-i ilāhī (lit. Divine Essence or Absolute Essence). Also called *al-Ḥaqq* or Reality, is that to which names and attributes belong in their real nature, not as they appear in existence. It denotes the Self (*nafs*) of God and it stands beyond any expression or hint of what the Essence is, since it has no opposite or like.

Fanā (lit. total dissolution of personal identity, self-annihilation or extinction). In Islamic mysticism, it is believed that the servant of God must die to himself in order to reach subsistence or *baqā*. *Fanā and baqā* are correlated.

Faṣṣ (lit. bezel). The name of each chapter of the book of *Fuṣūṣ* as it is designated to each prophet. *Faṣṣ* is used in two meanings: the abstract or summary of something and the ring of stone, but in the *Akbarīan* context, it implies the *ḥikma* (Divine gnosis) of every prophet.

Fiqh-i mashrūṭah (lit. constitutional jurisprudence). A type of jurisprudence which deals with Constitutionalism. *Fiqh-i mashrūṭah* emerged around the Iranian Constitutional Revolution of 1907. Constitutionalist jurists produced valuable literature, among them *Tanbīh al-Ummah wa Tanzīh al-Millah* (to Warn the Community and to Distance the Nation) of Muḥammad Hossein Nāʾīnī Gharawī (1239–1315 *shamsī*/1860–1936) is the most notable.

***Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*,** another book of ibn ʿArabī on mysticism, which is written in the seventh century. *Fuṣūṣ* (lit. bezels) is composed of twenty-seven *faṣṣ* (a metaphor of *ḥikma*), each of them dedicated to a prophet. The author claims that he received the book in dream from the prophet and was commanded by him to write it. It is believed that 110 commentaries have been written on this book.

Ghawth (lit. help or aid). In the hierarchical chain of *awlīyā*, the highest status belongs to *ghawth*, who is one (*wāḥid*), and it is impossible for any age to be deprived of him. It is also through him that God looks at His creatures, and it is by him that He helps those who are seeking aid.

Ghullāt (lit. extremists). Indicating a group of companions of the *imāms* who held metaphysical attributes and powers for them, and/or regarded the office of imamate as supra-natural, having been involved in creating the cosmos. They were renounced and in some cases even cursed by the *imāms*.

Ḥadīth (lit. report) describes the words, actions, and habits of the Prophet Muḥammad. In *Shīʿa* Islam, *ḥadīth* includes the sayings of the *imāms* too, which have been collected in *ḥadīth* compilations.

Ḥakīm (lit. adept in *al-ḥikmat al-mutaʿālīya* or transcendent philosophy). The term in its contemporary usage gained popularity during the Safawid era and referred to the exponents of the *Ṣadrīan ḥikmat* which was a new school of thought having been founded by Mullā Ṣadrā Shīrāzī (979–1045 H/1571–1640).

Henry Corbin (1903–1978). French Orientalist and scholar who made a great contribution in introducing *Shīʿa* Islam into Western thought. His areas of interest were extensive, from the Imamite *Shīʿīsm* to the *Akbarīan* mysticism and to *Shaykhīsm*. His conversations with ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī are famous.

Hossein ʿAlī Muntaẓirī (1301–1388 *shamsī*/1922–2008). An Iranian jurist, human rights activist, student of Ayatollah Khomeini, and one of the most significant figures of the Islamic Revolution of 1979. He was designated as successor to Khomeini in 1985, though four years later and due to a serious disagreement with Khomeini on domestic and foreign policies, and mainly the latter's *fatwā* of executing thousands of Iranian Leftists prisoners in 1988, was removed from his post. He resided in Qum and became the symbol of opposition to the leadership of Ayatollah Khamenei, the successor of Khomeini. He died shortly after the Iranian Green Movement in 2008.

Hūrqalyā (originally *havarqalyā* or mundus imaginalus). The intermediate world or the world of subsistence images. It was Shahāb al-Dīn Yaḥya ibn Ḥabash Suhrawardī (549–632 H/1145–1191) who used it for the first time. In the *Shaykhī* context, it is equal to *ʿālam al-mithāl* or the abode of the Hidden *imām* because the *imāms'* bodies belong to this world and are deprived of any temporal impurity. Therefore, forms, figures, and bodies of the world of *hūrqalyā* have maximal transparency and purity.

Ījāza A juridical authorization which endows a jurist to issue *fatwā* or narrate *ḥadīth*.

Ijtihād (lit. physical or mental effort). It is an Islamic legal term referring to independent reasoning or the thorough exertion of a jurist's mental faculty in finding a solution to a legal question.

Imāmology To know the reality of the imamate and prophethood.

Irshād al-ʿAwām (the Guidance of the People). The name of the main book of Muḥammad Karīm (Khān) Kermānī containing the *Shaykhī* creed.

ʿIṣma (lit. immunity from doing sin or error). In the *Shīʿa* culture, it is believed that the Prophet, his daughter Fatima, and the twelve *imāms* comprise the fourteen infallible figures. Infallibility is an inseparable part of the office of imamate and prophethood. Fatima is the mother of imamate and daughter of prophethood and as such shares this attribute with her father and sons.

Jafr, the science of letters and one of the Occult sciences. It is a methodology to interpret Divine names, themes, and letters.

Kalām (lit. speech/argument). It refers to theological reflection using rational philosophical argumentation to study and express the content of the faith in a coherent manner. A discipline among other religious sciences of Islam such as jurisprudence and mysticism. Free will versus determinism is one of the main *kalāmī* subjects.

Kashf* or *mukāshifa (lit. unveiling the inner meanings). A significant component of the *Shaykhī* School. The *Shaykhī ʿulemā* claimed that they enjoyed the esoteric knowledge of the *imāms*, which enabled them to unveil the hidden meanings of the scripture and *aḥādīth*.

Khatm al-wilāya (lit. the sealing of the sainthood). A *walī* who completes the status of *wilāya*. The station of the sealing is divided into the seal of the *Muḥammedan wilāya* and the seal of the general *wilāya*.

Maqām al-jāmiʿ (lit. the station of totality). In *Shaykhīsm*, it stands for *nubuwwa* which is a station after *rubūbīya* (lit. the station of Divine Essence).

Maqām al-tafṣīl (lit. the station of multiplicity). In the *Shaykhī* School, it stands for imamate which is the last station of gnosis after *nubuwwa* and *rubūbīya*.

Marjaʿīyyah (lit. the office of religious reference). In *Shīʿa* Islam, it is the highest authority on religious laws after the *Qurʾān*, the Prophet, and *imāms*.

Murtiḍā Muṭaharī (1298–1358 *shamsī*/1919–1979). The Iranian cleric, ideologue, and philosopher. He was a student of Ayatollah Khomeini and appointed by him to different posts after the Revolution of 1979. He formed 'the Council of the Islamic Revolution' at Khomeini's request, and was the chairman of the council at the time of his assassination in Tehran by a member of the *Furqān* Fighters.

Mīthāq (lit. covenant/trust). A pre-temporal covenant, promise, or oath. The notion of such a pledge is rooted in the *Qurʾān* and was first given to the Prophet Muhammad. In the *Shīʿa* context, it means *wilāya* which has been given to the *imāms* in the world *a-Dharr*, and true believers of the *imāms* by following them are included in this covenant too.

Naqalah (lit. transmitters), referring to the *Shaykhī* jurists/*faqīhs*.

Naẓarīya-yi wilāyat-i intikhābī-ya muqayyada-yi faqīh (the theory of the elective and constrained guardianship of the jurist). The theory is offered by Ayatollah Muntaẓirī in his book *Dirāsāt fi al-Wilāyat al-Faqīh wa al-Figh al-Duwal Islāmī*, between 1363 and 1368 *shamsī* (1384–1389/1390), defending the dual source of legitimacy of the jurist—both Divine and elective. It underwent further reform by Muntaẓirī to put more emphasis on people's rights, though the core of it remained untouched.

Niᶜmatullāhī/Niᶜmatullāhīyah A Sufi order originating in Iran. It gained its name from its founder Shah Niᶜmatullāh Walī (730–834 H/1330–1430), originally from Aleppo, who settled down in Mahan, Kerman. The *ṭarīqa* gained popularity in Persia and the Indian subcontinent in the post-Safawid era, and during the Qajar period, it was popular among the courtiers, but it lost its popularity among the elite after the Constitutional Revolution of 1907. It also split into several different branches.

Quṭb (lit. pole/pivot). In the *Akbarīan* mysticism, it is equal to *ghawth*, *khalīfa*, and *ṣāḥib al-waqt* (the Lord of Time). There is one *quṭb* per era and ibn ᶜArabī calls him apostle (*rasūl*). Due to his accessibility to Divine knowledge, he enjoys *wilāyat al-takwīnīya* and the right of lawgiving (*tashrīᶜ*) both, though his *sulṭat ul-bāṭinīyah* (inward domination) is more important than *tashrīᶜ* because it enables him to conquer the hearts of people. *Quṭb al-aqṭāb* is identical to *al-ḥaqīqat al-muḥammadīyah*.

Rukn-i rābiᶜ (lit. The Fourth Pillar). Level of being/gnosis which has been invented by Muḥammad Karīm Khān Kermānī (1225–1288 H/1810–1871), the third *Shaykhī* leader. *Rukn-i rābiᶜ* is love and belief of believers in the *Shaykhī ᶜulemā*. It should be regarded both as a station of gnosis (*maᶜrifa*) and as a religious principle, only through which a believer is able to know his *imām*.

Sirr (lit. secret). Another name for *wilāya* with an established tradition in the Imamite *Shīᶜīsm* and its branches like *Shaykhīsm* and *Shīᶜa* mysticism. From the classic *ḥadīth* compilations to the contemporary conceptions of *wilāya*, *walī* is depicted as the owner of the secret (*ṣāḥib al-sirr*) and the station of *awlīya* is that of *sirr*. *Sirr* refers to the covenant between God and the *imāms* on one hand and the *imāms* and their believers on the other, all that testifies to the fact that *Shīᶜīsm* has a strong esoteric dimension.

Sulūk (lit. spiritual conduct). In Sufism, it indicates the path that every traveler (*sālik*) should take to leave his worldly attachments in order to reach self-annihilation and subsistence with God.

Tuṭunj (lit. gulf). In *Kermānī Shaykhīsm*, it indicates the status of *imām* Ali and one of the proofs of *aʿrāf*, the one who stands at the origin of mercy and/or agony.

ʿUlūm-i khafīyah/gharībah (the Occult sciences). It is a study of occult practices such as magic, alchemy, and astrology, as well as the sciences of numbers and letters, and has been one of the branches of science which has been taught in the classical education system in the Muslim world. It is both significant in the *Akbarīan* mysticism and the *Shaykhī* School.

Uṣūlīsm It is based on the principles of jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) and utilizes *ijtihād* by adopting reasoned argumentation in finding the laws. *Mujtahids* are important because they are capable of independently interpreting the sacred sources as an intermediary of the Hidden *imām* and thus serve as a guide to the community.

Uwaysī (mystics). Related to Uways al-Qaran (29 before *hijra* to 37 H/594–657), who lived during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad, but never had a chance to visit him. *Uwaysī* is a Sufi with no visible master among men.

Waḥdat-i wujūd (lit. unity of existence/unity of being), an important term in the *Akbarīan* mysticism, which is used frequently by later mystics, though ibn ʿArabī has never mentioned it. According to this doctrine, existence/being is one but its manifestations are many. God manifests Himself through His names and attributes, each of them like a mirror reflecting a reality of His Essence.

Wilāyat al-ʿāmmah* versus *wilāyat al-khāṣṣah (lit. General and Particular *wilāya* respectively). The seal of *wilāya* in ibn ʿArabī's mysticism is divided into two types of the seal of the *Muḥammedan wilāya* (*wilāyat al-khāṣṣat al-Muḥammadīya*), and the seal of the general *wilāya* (*wilāyat al-ʿāmmah*). Jesus is the referent of the former and ibn ʿArabī is the referent of the latter. In subsequent conceptualizations, however, *wilāyat al-ʿāmmah* indicates *nubuwwa* and *wilāyat al-khāṣṣah* refers to *wilāya*.

Wilāyat al-faqīh The official theory of governance and statecraft in post-revolutionary Iran. Coined by Ayatollah Khomeini in Najaf, it advocates a kind of political system relying upon a just and capable jurist (*faqīh*) to assume the leadership of the government in the absence of an infallible *imām*.

Wilāyat al-takwīnīya or *wilāyat al-taṣarruf* (lit. existential guardianship) is the right or authority to act upon the cosmos.

Ẓāhir (lit. exoteric). The outward or apparent meaning or dimension of the *Qurʾān*, ritual or religious prescriptions, from which the *bāṭin* is educed.

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