Shiʿa Mystical Theology:
Notes on Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī's
Jāmiʿ al-Asrār wa Manbaʿ al-Anwār

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There is a certain tendency among the scholars of Shīʿī Islam to synthesize Shīʿism and Sufism within the Islamic context. Chief among these scholars is Bahāʾ al-Dīn Ḥaydar b. ʿAlī b. Ḥaydar al-ʿUbaydī Āmulī (1319 or 1320 – after 1385) known as Ḥaydar-i Āmulī whose *Jāmiʿ al-Asrār wa Manbaʿ al-Anwār* is one of his essential works in which the interrelation between Shīʿism and Sufism developed. This paper tries to look closely at the *Jāmiʿ al-Asrār* to depict the ways and approach in which Āmulī necessitates the identicality of the Shīʿī-Sufi approach. In the same framework, his relation to Ibn Arabi is examined. Āmulī's approach is called a marginalized one by some in the Shīʿī seminary. This paper, on the other hand, indicates that Āmulī's approach is more a continues and existing movement rather than a marginalized historical approach.

Keywords: *Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī, Shīʿism, Sufism, mystical theology*

1. Introduction

For many Western scholars of Islamic studies, mysticism has always been an intriguing subject to ponder upon. Western scholarship has devoted a large number of inquiries, translations, and debates regarding the history, development, and analysis of Islamic mysticism through different approaches and methodologies. The translation and examination of many mystical and educational works of outstanding Sufi figures and discussing the profound and simultaneously paradoxical notions in the history of Islamic Sufism is an example of this interest.

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Contrary to this interest, a canonical focus of western scholarship to a particular period or school of thought within the history of Islamic Sufism has resulted in inattentiveness to some other areas and prominent figures. Among those, one could allude to Bahāʾ al-Dīn Ḥaydar b. ʿAlī b. Ḥaydar al-ʿUbaydī (1319 or 1320 – after 1385) known as Ḥaydar-i Āmulī[1] a profound figure of Shia mystical theology who has produced numerous works in the field of theoretical Sufism and Quranic interpretation concerning his Shīʿī affiliations. He was a disciple of Fakhr al-Muhaqqiqīn (1283–1369), the son of Allama al-Hillī's[2] (1250–1325); and the most important representative of the Shīʿī School to synthesize Shīʿīsm with Sufism. The significance of Āmulī's works lies in his tendency toward reconciliation and identification of the principles of Sufism and Shīʿīsm. He certainly was familiar with the works of Ibn ʿArabī (1165–1240), and thereupon in some of his writings, Āmulī tries to respond to Ibn ʿArabi's ideas based on his Shīʿī principles. It is within this scope that Robert Wisnovksy tries to call it "the Akbarian Turn in Shīʿī Theology" (Wisnovsky 2007). However, the Akbarian school of thought has taught and commentated within the Shia-mystic scholars. Still, it is not so easy to call it an Akbarian turn in Shia theology.

We may refer to the fact that Shia scholars such as Āmulī have found Akbarian terminology and his way of conceptualizing the notions such as perfect man as a very close notion to their understanding of the concept of Prophet or Imam. Thus, they tried to identify some of Ibn Arabī's mystical or theological ideas with the prophetic hadiths or Shia Imam's narrations. Therefore, we can better call it a "Shīʿī Response to Ibn Arabī". Ibn Miʿmar[3] the author of *Al-Kashkūl Fī Mā Jarā ʿAlā Āli Rasūl* (*The Beggar's Bowl in Ex-*

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1   For a comprehensive account of Āmulī's life and works in additional to Henry Corbin see: "Haydar-i Amuli" in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (2012–2021) & Kohlberg 1996.

2   al-Hillī was a contemporary to Ibn Taymīyyah (d. 1328), who wrote his *Minhāj Al-Sunnah Al-Nabawīyah Fī Naqḍ Kalām Al-Shīʿah Al-Qadarīyah* in refutation of al-Hillī's defense of Shīʿī doctrine in his *Minhāj al-karāmah fī maʿrifat al-imāmah*. He lived during the rulership of the Mongol Uljāytu (r. 1304–16) in Iran, during which Uljāytū converted to Shīʿīsm. Ibn al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī, al-Ḥasan ibn Yūsuf (1250–1325), his son Fakhr al-Muhaqqiqīn and Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī lived in that era. For the development of the Shīʿī thought during Uljāytū's time see: Schmidtke 1991. Also, on Mongol rule in Iran see: Kolbas 2006. For more on the development of the Shīʿī and Sufi thought in this period see the forthcoming: Ansari & Asghari 2021.

3   His full name according to *Tārīkh ʿUlamāʾ Baghdād* (*History of Scholars of Baghdad*) is ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ismāʿīl al-Asadī al-Baghdādī Abū Muhammad al-Manʿūt bi al-Jalāl al-Kātib, al-Adīb al-filsūf al-Muʿrūf bi Ibn Miʿmār. Ibn al-Fuwaṭī in his *Talkhīṣ Majmaʿ Al-ādāb Fī Muʿjam Al-Alqāb* calls him "al-Shaykh, al-ʿālim al-ʿārif Taj al-Dīn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ismāʿīl ibn al-Miʿmār" and adds that Ibn Miʿmār's disciples had learned "secrets of the Sufi scholars". His Shīʿī refutation to Ibn Taymīyyah entitled *Al-Inṣāf Fī al-Intiṣāf Li Ahli al-Ḥaqq Min Ahl al-Isrāf Raddun ʿAlā Minhāj al-Sunnah Li Ibn Taymīyyah al-Ḥarrānī.*

planation of What Went to the Household of the Prophet) believes the well represents the Shī'ī-Sufi convergence prior to the emergence of Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī.

Nevertheless, within the Western scholarship, first Henry Corbin and Osman Yahya's edition introduced Āmulī's *Jami' al-Asrar* (the Sum of the Secrets) to the readers. Herman Landolt, Seyed Hossein Nasr, Etan Kohlberg, Van Ess, Robert Wisnovksy, Muhammad Rustom, and some others, regarding Āmulī's life and works, have written scholarly articles or entries in encyclopedias.

2. Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī

Āmulī, in the introduction to his commentary on the *Quran* known as *al-Muḥīṭ al-a'ẓam,* gives us more details of life and chronology of his works. It is important to note that Āmulī belongs to the pre-Safavid (1501–1722) era of Shī'ī school of Islam. The influence of the socio-political power of Safavids made Shī'ī theology to be developed in certain fields, but a delicate observation of Āmulī's thought will show us the foundations of the mystical theology of Shī'ī Islam prior to the Safavids era.[1] A famous post-Safavid figure of this approach is Mulla Sadra whose commentary on *Uṣūl al-Kāfī* could be described as another step in developing Shī'ī mystical theology (Asghari 2017).

Āmulī, in his introduction to his commentary on *Fusūs al-Hikam* of Ibn Arabi, alludes to the point that God has ordered him to detach from the worldly matters and focus all of his attention to Him only. Therefore, he was "inspired" by God to find a place and stay there to be able to worship Him. He was ordered to find the most valuable and sacred place on the earth. Āmulī narrates this as follows:

> Thus, after detachment from my job as minister, boss, and leaving all my wealth and parents, wife, children, and friends, I travelled toward Mecca.

In the history of Islamic thought and Sufism travelling to Mecca to seek proximity to God is quite common. Al-Zamakhsharī (1074 or 1075–1143 or 1144) a famous commentator of the *Quran* who was called as Jār-Allāh (God's neighbour), al-Ghazzālī and Ibn al-'Arabī, who wrote his voluminous

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1   For more on the theological challenges and development of the Shī'ī mystical theology see the forthcoming Ansari, H. & Asghari, S. 2021. Extremism (Ghuluww) as a Philosophical School: Studies on Shi'i-Sufi and the Nuṣayrī's Relationships during the 6/12-8/14th centuries.

al-Futūhāt al-Makkīyyah in his journey and dwelling in Mecca, have had the same mentality.

Āmulī's account of his life shows that at the time of detachment, he was thirty. Meanwhile, due to sickness, his travel to Mecca and Medina did not last long; he, therefore, went back to Mashhad in Iran and later moved to the holy city of Najaf in Iraq where he settled and began his ascetic discipline (*Riyādhah*), seclusion (*khalwah*) and spiritual journey. It is in this stage that he receives more openings and spiritual discoveries. Based on his account, meanings, knowledge, truth, and subtleties unveiled to him, and he realized that all of them are from Divine speeches (*Kalimāt ul-llah*), which are countless and endless. Like Ibn Arabi in his *Fusus*, he states that he was inspired and ordered by God to reveal some of those words to God's excellent servants. Thus, he begins to compile a book on the knowledge of *Tawhīd* (absolute unity) and its secrets in a book he entitles *Jāmi' al-Asrār wa Manba' al-Anwār*.[1]

Featured biographers of Shi'a scholars posited Āmulī as a profound figure of Shi'a mystical theology. Nūr Allāh al-Shushtarī (b. 1557), in *Majālis al-Mu'minīn* (Shushtarī 1986), Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Tabrīzī (1879–1955), in *Rayḥānat al-Adab* (Mudarris 1967), Khwansārī, in *Rawḍāt al-Jannāt* (Muḥammad Bāqir ibn Zayn al-'Ābidīn 2003), Ma'sūm 'Alī Shāh, in *Ṭarā'iq al-Haqā'iq* and Al-Amīn, in *A'yān al-Shī'a* ('Āmilī 1947) have their accounts and the entry of life and works of Āmulī. The later in his account attributes to Āmulī variety of qualities such as "man of knowledge", "jurist", "commentator of the *Quran*", "the narrator of *hadith*" (*Muhaddith*). What makes it exciting is that Al-Amīn adds that he was among the most outstanding scholars of *Imāmiyyah*, and among the noblest of Shia scholars. He then adds that he was among the most outstanding scholars of Sufism and belonged to *Imāmī* School of Islam. These are the qualities that Āmulī expected a true Shia scholar must obtain and for which he spent his life and carrier.

Perhaps one of the most outstanding biographical notes in Āmulī's life is how he was described in 1360 by Fakhr al-Muḥaqqiqīn son of al-Hillī (1250–1325) which is narrated by Al-Amīn in his *A'yān al-Shī'a* ('Āmilī 1947). This short note indicates that Āmulī's received his permission of Ijtihād from Fakhr al-Muḥaqqiqīn while he described him as follows: "I have authorized our master, the noble (Sayyid), the leader and scholar, […] the most esteem of scholars, the most learned of the learned, the one who combined knowledge with action, the honour of the prophet's household." These attributes are an indication of the importance of Āmulī in the eyes of the greatest scholars of Shī'ī Islam.

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1   Osman Yahya states that the total number of Āmulī's works is thirty-five books and treatises.

3. Jāmiʿ al-Asrār

Jāmiʿ al-Asrār wa Manbaʿ al-Anwār is one of the most important works by Āmulī in which he sums up his mystical theology. A modern study of the book in Arabic published in Tehran in 1968. Henry Corbin (1903–1978) and Osman Yahyā edited and co-authored its introduction (Āmulī 1989). The main book includes an introduction and three chapters, each of which contains four principles (*Qāʿidah*).

In his introduction, Āmulī explains the philosophy behind authoring the book. At first, he clarifies that it was written in response to the request of "the righteous brethren that are wayfaring in the spiritual path". The main question of those people who seem to be his disciples in the Sufi path was according to Āmulī the greatest secrets of God, prophets and his friends (*awlīyāʾ*)". He then continues to go into details of those questions by remarking that he wants to talk about the secrets of *Tawhid*, its kinds, consequences and demands.

Āmulī was not the first author in the history of Islam to write about the Unity of God and its demands. What makes his works outstanding is his approach to the religious literature in which the outcome is a mystical theology as if this approach is the sole and core intention of revelation and goal of religion. Every individual is invited to this way of contemplation and to actualize the inner potential Divine realities that possess. Āmulī reached all these conclusions in synthesizing Shīʿism with Sufism within the framework of the Shīʿī theology that, according to him, is not separable from Sufi theology.

Thereof he states that the book is written in a way that all of its subjects are based on principles of the people who confessed to the unity of God (*Muwahhid*) and saints in whom the truth has become actualized (*Muhaqqiq*). We know that the word *Muhaqqiq* has a certain meaning in the Islamic intellectual tradition. As William Chittick puts Taḥqīq derives from the same root as ḥaqq, which means truth, reality, appropriateness, rightness, responsibility, and duty. He as well defines Muḥaqqiq as someone who knows without the intermediary of transmission and acts appropriately. He fulfils his responsibility toward God, creation, and society on the basis of a verified and realized knowledge, not on the basis of imitating the opinions and activities of others (Chittick 2007).

Āmulī, in his introduction, tells us that by the word *Muhaqqiq* he refers to real Sufis, but he reminds us that the notion about which he writes at the same time all of it is in acceptance with the Twelver *Imāmī* Shīʿī school (Āmulī 1969b). He then claims that he brings all these together in a way that it removes all disagreements among them and there would not be a need for another book (ibid.).

As introduction presents, the first chapter of *Jāmi' al-Asrār wa Manba' al-Anwār* discusses the problem of *Tawhīd*, its divisions, and its four principles: the virtue, definition, divisions, and the nature of *Tawhīd*.

In the second chapter, though, Āmulī gathers a good number of Quranic verses, prophetic hadiths, and narrations from Imams, saints, and Sufis on the notion of *Tawhīd*. He then briefly commends those citations.

The third chapter is devoted to the consequences of the secrets of Divine religions. Āmulī defines four principles for this part to explore those secrets as follows:

1. The explanation of *al-Sharī'a*, *al-Tarīqa* (the path) and *al-Haqīqa (Truth)*;
2. An explanation of the secrets of prophecy *(nubuwwah, rīsalah)* and sainthood *(wīlāya)*;
3. Exploring the revelation, inspiration, and mystical intuitions;
4. Clarifying the meanings and consequences of *Islām, Imān (faith),* and *Certitude (Iqān).*

Jāmi' al-Asrār includes exploration of a number of Āmulī's mystical ideas. Chief among them is his famous theory of mutual relationship and in-depth unity of Shī'īsm and Sufism initially represented in this work.

Āmulī's project, in fact, is looking to redefine Shī'īsm based on what he defines as its original spiritual meaning. He opposes reducing Shī'īsm into a mere hadith and juridical school. In his introduction to *Jāmi' al-Asrār,* while exploring the situation his time, Āmulī asserts that there has been an ongoing conflict and disagreement among Sufis and Shī'ites. He surprisingly mentions that among the different schools of Islam, none of them rejects Sufis as Shi'a does (ibid.). He tells us that the opposition movement as well goes in the same direction: no one rejects Shi'a as Sufis do. Positioning himself as a connector of this two, Āmulī points out to his core beliefs and attitudes that the origin, offspring and references of both Shī'īsm and Sufism are the same (ibid.). The similarity, according to Āmulī lies in the fact that he references of all of the sects of Shi'a, especially the *Imāmiyyah* branch, is none except the commander of the faithful Ali and his children and children of his children. And the source and offspring of all of them and references for their knowledge and principles is the God almighty. The real Sufis share the same reality (see: Āmulī 1969a; Āmulī 1989).

Āmulī then turns to the Sufi clock (*Khirqah*) and knowledge and claims to have taken it from Ali and his children through Kumayl bin Zīyad al-Nakha'i who was Ali's distinguished companion or through Hasan al-Basrī or Imam Ja'far ibn Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq (Āmulī 1969b).

Āmulī tries to tell the reader that writing on Shīʿism and Sufism needs authenticity in both, a quality that he possesses. He indicates that the reason why those brethren asked him to author such a book was his comprehensiveness of both Sufism and Shīʿism. He asserts to this point as follows:

> Know that from the earliest vigour of my youth, namely from my childhood to the age of thirty or thereabouts, I was engaged in studying the religion of my own forefathers, the *maʿsumin* – the infallible ones.
> With regard to the outer aspect of the *shariʿah,* I undertook a study of the Imamiyah sect and their juridical school *(madhhab) – which* is daily practised amongst the Shiʿahs; and with regard to the inner, namely the study of the truth and reality *(haqiqah),* I devoted my attention to the Sufis and the masters of the science of the unity of Allah *(Tawhid)* (ibid.).

By considering the works by Āmulī we know that he was the master of both theology and jurisprudence. This is also evident through the permission by Fakhr al-Muhaqqiqīn that we already mentioned. Thus, Shīʿism, according to Āmulī, is not merely confined in theology and jurisprudence or a political movement as some scholar has asserted it to be or to put it between Ashʿarite and Muʿtazilites. Āmulī, in other words, had a phenomenological encounter with the origin of Shīʿism. He asserts that every religion has three aspects of *Shariʿa, Tarīqah* and *Haqīqah,* and both Shīʿism and Sufism in their essence are dealing with these levels. In his in-depth studies, Āmulī grasps the truth:

> The least of these truths was such that after seeing reality from both sides and the true and false aspects of each side, after perceiving in what manner the one was true and the other false, I was able to understand how every one of these matters was connected to a point of reality and *Tawhid* – just as the line which is drawn from circumference of a circle is connected to the central point. I was also able to understand the meaning of Allah's words: "There is no living creature, but He holds it by its forelock; surely my Lord is on the right path" (*Quran* 11: 56), and "Allah's is the East and the West, therefore, whither you turn, thither is Allah's purpose" (2: 115); and the secret contained in the words of the Prophet: "The ways leading to the Real are as many as the persons in creation" (Amuli 1969b).

Almost in all of his works, he refers to this division and based on it redefines the Shīʿī wisdom in which the issue of *wilāya* plays a vital role. He tries to say that the jurisprudence is the outer side of Shīʿism while its kernel is its secret. To understand Shiʿa mystical theology, one has to gain

an understanding of *wīlāya* in both its theoretical and practical aspects. He meanwhile asserts that those who understand the inner secrets are in the minority and not all have the capacity of its comprehension. Thus, many came to deny it, and Imams thereupon did not openly talk about it in the presence of everyone. Āmulī refers to narration to show that Imams have already indicated the difficulty of this secret: "Truly our command is hard and complicated".

Thus, he concludes that no one could endure it except Angel of Divine proximity (archangel), a messenger of God or a believer whose faith God has examined (*mu'min mumtaḥan*). Following this definition, he tries to question those Shiite that are merely following jurisprudence. Does he ask whether they feel bearing such secrets in their hearts? If not, then the result is that they are not *mu'min mumtaḥan*. So, a true Shi'a, according to him, is the one who engaged with the secrets of *wilāya*. This introduction also helps him to separate the true Sufi from the wrong one and concludes that the real Sufi is the real Shiite and the real Shiite is the real Sufi. Therefore, as Kohlberg indicates; Āmulī is equally critical of Shī'ites who reduce their religion to a legalistic system and of Sufis who deny that their origins and doctrines go back to the Imams (see: Kohlberg 1996).

As noted above, his main point is to return to the origin of the Shi'ites, where he can bring together Sufism and Shī'ism. He, in fact, faces some disagreements from both Shi'ites and Sufis while making this proposal. He describes this problem in his introduction to *Jāmi' al-Asrār wa Manba' al-Anwār* as follows:

> After my affirmation of the truth of Sufism, certain persons were troubled by some of its more abstruse and esoteric aspects with regard to the Real – such people imagined that I was availing myself of invalid and other spurious means. May they realize that this was not the case and that in reality, I was only drawing upon the religion of my own forefathers – the infallible Imams. Because of their extreme ignorance, the majority of Sufis think that the Imams were devoid of the excellencies and superior insights of Sufism (Āmulī 1969a).

Imams in Āmulī's view are "the repositories and embodiments of *wilāya*", which indicates that they receive their knowledge from a metaphysical source. Thus, it is not mere knowledge of Shari'a, instead, they are the source of all knowledge whether intellectual, spiritual or transmitted. There is no knowledge that is hidden to them, and therefore they are the source of knowledge of *Shari'a*, *Tariqa* and *Haqiqa*, as Āmulī puts it:

Moreover, many Shi'ahs also believe that the knowledge of their Imams is restricted to that same knowledge which is in common use amongst themselves. In fact, there is not a single form of knowledge but that the Imams are the source of that knowledge; there is not a secret or hidden wisdom but that they are the mine from which it may be extracted; they are the teachers of the *sharī'ah* and the leaders of the *tarīqah* and the poles of the *haqīqah;* they are the caliphs and the vicegerents of Allah in the heavens and the earth; they are the manifestation of the power and majesty of Allah in His *mulk* – the earth and heavens – and in His *malakut – the* realm of the spirits and angels. I swear by God that if they did not exist, then the heavens would not be standing, the earth would not be outspread, and the creatures would not be living in them (ibid.).

Each aspect of religion is a reference to cosmic and metaphysical reality. *Sharī'ah* is the state of jurisprudence and *tarīqāh* is the state of mysticism or spiritual journey. Āmulī comes to this division based on a prophetic tradition in which he says: "The *Shari'a* are my words (*aqwal*), the *tarīqāh* are my actions (*a'mal*), and the *haqīqāh* is my interior states (*ahwal*)". It should be said that according to him, these are not a separated division, rather metaphorical interpretations (*i'tibar*) of a single reality. So, the inability to perceive religion in the form of the three-fold reality, according to him, is equal to misapprehending it. He, on the other hand, by comparing the three Abrahamic religion tries to show that in Judaism it is *Shari'ah* that bolded, while in Christianity, *tarīqāh* is much more canonical, the *Qiblah* of Judaism is in the West where the sun falls, while for Christianity it is the East where the sun rises, and the *Qiblah* of Muhammad's religion is between east and west. There he refers to a prophetic tradition in which he said: "My *Qiblah* is between the east and the west" and sometimes he quotes the *Quran*: "The East and the West belong to God. Wherever you turn, you are always in the presence of God" (*Quran* 2: 115).

Āmulī tries to emphasise that the reality of Islam is the union of the *Sharī'ah* and *tarīqāh*, therefore, *Quran* includes the truth of both Moses and Jesus. Thereupon the meaning of the word "*Quran*" in Arabic is not merely derived from q-r-a to read, and rather it is from q-r-'a (*jama'a*) which means collect, comprehend and embarrassed, which is to refer to the comprehensiveness of the *Quran*. He thus concludes that those interested in *Sharī'ah* are taking the Mosaian part of the *Quran* and those devoted to *tarīqāh* are asserting the Jesusian reality of the *Quran* and merely people of the truth (*haqīqāh*) pay attention to the inclusiveness and comprehensiveness of it. As a result, dealing only with one of the angles does not lead one to understanding the comprehensiveness of the *Quran*. Here he uses the three concepts of

Islam, Imān and Itqān to refer the relation of the outer and inner side of the *Quran* and Islam. Islam in this scheme is equal to *Sharī'ah*, Imān is a respond to *tarīqāh,* and *Itqān* corresponds *haqīqāh*. In other words, the messenger (*risālah*) is corresponding to the state of *Sharī'ah*, prophecy (*nubuwwah*) is the state of *tarīqāh* in which prophet informs man about the unseen and invisible worlds. The third stage, i.e. is *wilāyah* is equal to the truth or the inner aspect of religion. Āmulī, following the teachings of Ibn 'Arabi, states that the *wilāyah*[1] of Muhammad is more significant than his *nubuwwah* and *rīsalāh*. The reason is that *wīlāyāh* corresponds to the interrelation of God and Muhammad. It was to refer to this state that Muhammad said that "I have some states with God that no any prophet or archangel could reach to the truth of that" (Majlisī 1983). It is with referring to this three-fold division that Āmulī states that all the religions (Abrahamic religions) in the state of *haqīqāh* are the same. It is as *Quran* indicates:

> The Messengers and the believers have faith in what was revealed to them from their Lord. Every one of them believed in God, His angels, His Books, and His Messengers, saying "We find no difference among the Messengers of God". They also have said "We heard God's commands and obeyed them. Lord, we need Your forgiveness and to You, we shall return" (*Quran* 2: 285).

With regard to the transcendental unity of religion, Āmulī, in his works, also refers to another verse of the *Quran* to show that all religions in the state of *haqīqāh* are the same:

> He has plainly clarified the religion which is revealed to you and that which Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus were commanded to follow (He has explained it) so that you would be steadfast and united in your religion. What you call the pagans to is extremely grave for them. God attracts to (the religion) whomever He wants and guides to it whoever turns to Him in repentance (*Quran* 42: 13).

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1   It should be noticed that meanwhile one of the most important disagreements of Āmulī with Ibn al-'Arabī is on the issue of the seal of *wilāyah*, which needs to be analyzed in a separate paper. Āmulī in one passage states that: "The unveiling of the Shaykh and his aforementioned masters is that Jesus has more right and is more fitting to be the Seal of Absolute *wilāya*. Our unveiling and the unveiling of other masters is that 'Alī has more right and is more fitting for this rank. Along with this, if you were to reflect, you would come to recognize that the unveiling of the Shaykh also bears witness to this (Āmulī 1969a: 413).

As we mentioned before, Āmulī is, in a way, in the school of Ibn al-ʿArabī, who regarding the transcendental unity of religions had clarified his own ideas in his major works such as *Al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah* and *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. It is under the light of such mystical and spiritual understanding of the truth that he also asserts the transcendental unity. It is noteworthy to consider how Ibn al-ʿArabī, for instance, justifies the core meaning of trinity and its relation to Tawhid:

> The people of the Trinity (*Tathlith*), because of the state of being odd (*Al-Fardiyyah*), which is hidden in the Trinity, will be saved. For odd is among the attributions of the One. They are, therefore, monotheists (*Mu-wahhidun*) through the *Tawhid* of combination (*Tawhid-a Tarkibī*). And it is to be hoped that they will be covered by combined mercy (*Al-Rah-matu al-Murakkabatu*). [...] It is likely that the people of Trinity will be included among the monotheists because they hold to this oddness in God (*Hazrat al-fardaniyyah*) and not because they hold to the oneness of God (*Hazrat al-Wahdaniyyah*). I found them in this way through intuition, and I was not able to make a distinction between monotheists and the people of the Trinity (Ibn al-ʿArabī 1968; Kakaie 2009).

The three stages of *Sharīʿah, tarīqāh* and *haqīqāh* for Āmulī are three different realities of religion; meanwhile, they are interconnected. A real Sufi does not ignore the *Sharīʿah*, but when he performs the daily prayer, the spiritual level of his prayer is higher than the prayer of the one who merely performs the outer and mere jurisprudential standards of the prayer.

4. Opponents

It is apparent that each scholarly work may encounter opposition. Āmulī is not an exception in this regard. There are two groups of opponents to Āmulī's approach in synthesizing Shīʿīsm with Sufism. One, among the Shiʿa scholars who were not admitting Sufi's as something not only close to Shīʿīsm but also the religion of Islam at all. The other group were among the Sunni theologians and probably of the Hanbalite School who rejected both Shīʿī and Sufi theology.

The disagreement on the status of philosophy and Sufism in the Islamic world dates to the Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement during the ʿAbbāsid dynasty. It is clear, however, that early philosophers among the Muslims strived first and foremost to reconcile philosophical notions with Islamic revelation. Such attempts began mainly with al-Fārābī's (d. 951) efforts in linking the notions of the Philosopher King and prophet in his Utopia. Such trends

are clearly articulated in the works of Ibn Sīnā (d. 1037) and Suhrawardī (d. 1191). Mullā Ṣadrā's (ca. 1571–1636) opus during the Safavid period provides another example, in which Sufism, philosophy, and Shī'ite beliefs merge. The above-mentioned debate continued among Shī'ī scholars, more specifically, the dilemma of whether philosophizing or referring to Sufi masters was a deviation from the path of pure Islam as apparently defined by Shī'ī Imams – about which there are disagreements – or it was in compliance with their teachings. For such detractors in the seminary, the direct consequence of engagement with philosophy and Sufism was the negligence of Shī'ī Imams, implying the disagreement with their teachings.

A typology of the inner Shī'ī objection could be found in the works of people like Qummi (d. 1689) who lived during the Iranian Safavid era, when an anti-Sufi wave was established by him, Majlisī (1699)[1] and Mīr Lawhī (d. 1671). These people who held the highest position of muftis (*Shaykh al-Islam*) in the cities of Mashhad, Isfahan and Qum had two things in common. They all were known as great jurists and at the same time as firm opponents to philosophy and Sufism.

In a standard language of these opponents, Qummi posits his opponents as those who are having a corrupt belief. A sample of his style in anti-Sufi and philosophy writing is as follows:

> In these times, there are many people of corrupt belief. […] There is a group of them who call themselves seekers of knowledge and, by doing so, soil the name of the seekers of [religious] knowledge. That is because they embark upon reading the books of philosophers and Sufis without [first] having the power of certainty and without seeking the knowledge of religion. Thus, they have become corrupt in their beliefs, and most of them go on to deceive ignorant people. [However] let me emphasize that it is permissible for those among the Twelver ulama who possess divine souls and the perfect power of certainty to study books of philosophy and other books after finishing their studies in religious sciences in order to break the glasses of misgivings (*shubahat*) and corrupt imaginings with stones of refutation thrown from the sling of reasoning and syllogism… [as] for others, it is better for them to turn away from reading and hearing such books so that they do not come to grievous ends (Anzali 2017).

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1 Majlisī has a major role in preserving Shī'ī tradition by supervising the collection of a voluminous Shī'ī encyclopedia in the 17th century. He managed the support of the Safavid court in gathering every extant Shī'ī manuscript and creating an encyclopedic compendium of Shī'ī ḥadīth in 110 modern volume entitled *Biḥār al-Anwār*. For more on *Biḥār al-Anwār* see: Mahdi & Farzin (2012–2021), "Bihar al-Anwar", in: *Encyclopaedia Islamica*.

The above excerpt suggests that a true Shīʿī scholar according to Qummi is the one who merely follows the tradition as he limits it in the *Quran* and hadith literature and narrows it only based on his reading and understanding. In the viewpoint that he represents, the best approach to any religious tradition is to look at them as sacred text and avoid rationality. As the text suggests, philosophy and Sufism cause corruption in faith for they originated from a source that is not only not Divine, but also are human product that is associated with false claims and astray. There is only one option to study these subjects according to Qummi and that is to study them in order to refute them. The principal premise of these authors is that philosophy is already corrupted and the duty of religious scholar is to refute them. A contemporary example of this viewpoint in the Shīʿī seminary belongs to Mīrzā Mahdī Iṣfahānī (1885–1946) who, in his works, severely attacked philosophy and Sufism and established *Maktab-i Tafkīk* (the School of Separation). *Maktab-i Tafkīk* is considered the most influential movement opposing Islamic philosophy and Sufism in contemporary Shīʿīsm with seeking refuge in the transmitted hadith by Ahl al-Bayt (the Household of Prophet Muhammad). He applies the same language as Qummi applies. In his *Abwāb al-Hudā*, Iṣfahānī describes the translation movement in the early Islamic centuries as follows:

> To anyone who is aware of the policy of the Caliphs, it will be evident that the reason of translating Greek philosophy and spreading Sufism was nothing but the policy of eclipsing the knowledge of Ahl al-Bayt and making people feel no need for them (Isfahani 2008).

The general argument of the opponents is that the revelation is rooted in the Divine while philosophy and Sufism are of human origin. The same notion exists in the Sunni polemics against the Sufi and philosophy-oriented approach. In any contemplation about opponents to Āmulī it must be taken into consideration that the same people similar to Āmulī whose agenda was reconciliation between Shīʿīsm and Sufism and following were under attack in the areas like Damascus. Historians like ʿAbd al-Ḥayy ibn Aḥmad Ibn al-ʿImād in his *Shadharāt al-Dhahab fī Akhbār man Dhahab* and Ibn Kathīr in his *Al-Bidāyah wa-Al-Nihāyah* and Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī in his *Al-Durar Al-Kāminah fī Aʿyān Al-Miʾah Al-Thāminah* in narrating the history of Damascus of 14th century tell us that heretics were beheaded in the city under the Hanbalite ruling judges (see: Ibn Hajar al-ʿAsqalani 1972: VI/152; III/95; Dhahabi 1980: III/68). It must be noticed that Ibn Taymīyyah had a major role in creating such harsh approach.[1]

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1 For Ibn Taymīyya's role in this crisis see his Fatwā against the Nusạyrīs in which he climes that they are not Muslims, rather more heretic than most of the heretics. Yaron Friedman

3. Conclusion

Āmulī, as a prolific Shi'a author of the 14th century, was among the followers of the mystical school of Ibn al-'Arabī in Iran. He nevertheless emphasized the identical core reality of Sufism and Shī'īsm. The importance of Āmulī is laid on the fact that he lived in pre-Safavid Iran and a sound study of his works is an important gate to the understanding of the development of Shi'a mystical philosophy prior to Safavid Iran. The aim of this paper was to make a general overview to Āmulī's, *Jāmi' al-Asrār wa Manba' al-Anwār*, in which he was developing his Shi'a mystical theology while he was under influence of the school of Ibn al-'Arabī. There are scholars prior and post Āmulī who followed the same path. These scholars nevertheless, faced an opposition among other Shī'ī scholars. Some tried to indicate that Āmulī's approach was marginalized in the Shī'ī seminary. If this is the case, even if the official curricula of the Shi'a seminary focused on the study of jurisprudence, yet a large number of commentaries on Ibn 'Arabī and the view that synthesizes Shī'īsm and Sufism produced by Shi'a scholars. A marginalized approach cannot produce such a movement. A more detailed and careful reading of his book is needed to study his agreement and disagreement with the school of Ibn 'Arabī and to indicate that what the final meaning of his theory of identical unity of Shī'īsm and Sufism is and what it demands.

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indicates that "this Fatwā was the only one issued in the Middle Ages and it is not echoed by others", perhaps the exception is the ISIS ideology that had a lot in common with Ibn Taymīyya. See: Friedman 2010: 61, 299–309.

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Mistička teologija u šiizmu:
beleške o Sajidu Hajdaru Amoliju i njegovoj knjizi
Džami al asrar va manba al anvar

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U nekim krugovima šiitskih učenjaka u islamu postoji određena tendencija da se šiizam i sufizam sjedine u ukupnom islamskom stadijumu. Glavni predstavnik ovih učenjaka jeste Bahaudin Hajdar ibn Ali ibn Hajdar al Ubajdi Amoli (rođen 1319. ili 1320. i umro posle 1385), poznat kao Hajdar Amoli, a njegova knjiga *Džami al asrar va manba al anvar* predstavlja markantno delo u kojem se obrazlažu sličnosti između šiizma i sufizma. U ovom radu pokušaćemo da se bliže upoznamo s knjigom *Džami al asrar* kako bismo ilustrovali Amolijeve metode i njegov poseban pristup pitanju sjedinjenosti šiizma i sufizma. U okviru iste analize, ispitujemo i način na koji on razume Ibn Arabija. Amolijev pristup gdekada se smatra marginalizovanim u šiitskoj teološkoj misli. U ovom radu pak pokazujemo da Amolijev pristup treba zapravo razumeti kao proces koji ima kontinuitet i dinamiku, a ne kao neku vrstu marginalizovanog istorijskog pristupa.

Ključne reči: *Sajid Hajdar Amoli, šiizam, sufizam, misticizam, teologija*