The development of guardianship concept in Shiism and Sufism
(Azizuddin Nasafi, Sheikh Safi al-Din, Shah N.A Vali)

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Abstract

As the guardianship issue is the most central idea in Shi'ite, though it first was acceded into the vocabulary of Sufism by Hakim Tirmidhi (ninth century AD); the Mongol invasion and the fall of Sunni support prepared ground to freely express beliefs of the Shia Imami as well as made also an opportunity to give birth of Shiite Sufism. As the emphasis on the guardianship of Ali and its ending with the expectation of the emergence of the last Imam would be the most important common aspect of discourse between Shiism and Sufism in the sixteenth and seventieth centuries. Thus, in the evolving trend, Nasafi with mystical interpretation of the province provides theoretical foundations and this matter by Sheikh Safi and Shah N. turned to most deserve symbol of the perfect-man realization to lead the community and to challenge the legitimacy of governments over time; an approach that eventually under empowering Safavid and institutionalization of Shi’ism was accomplished virtually.

Keywords: Sufism, Shiism, guardianship, Azizuddin Nasafi, Sheikh Safi Ardebili, Shah N. Vali.
Introduction

However, in political and cultural terms, prominent discrimination in Safavid era was coincided in Imamich Shia recognition and institutionalization; however, undoubtedly this success was inherited from the centuries spent on evolution of words and Shiite theology and the interaction with Sufism (Nasr, 1974, 271). Meanwhile, the Mongol invasion along with the Ismailis removed from power lawsuits gave rise to overthrow the pole of Sunni; it had the two-sided effect on shaping the intellectual Iranian life-culture. Removing the two aforementioned claimants and making the disruption of Sunni’s excellency, in one side, it produced the opportunity Shia Imami leading thinkers to express that turned back the philosophy and rearrangement of guardianship affected by Khajeh Nasir Tousi (Alshoyaby, 2006, 89) and on the other side, the interaction between Shiism and Sufism was reflected in discussions focused on the guardianship. Indeed, not only sharing discourse between the Shiism and Sufism in this context caused the emergence and spread of extremist ideas in Sufism (P. Mitchell, 2009, 38-39) but also Sunni Sufi sheikhs, despite the tendency to Sunni, mixed Shia doctrine about the guardianship with the mystical concept and upgraded it to be the main axis of their own discourse. As in the evolving trend, idea of guardianship according to elders such as Nasafi, Safi al-Din Ardibili and Ne’matollah Valiprovided mentally the prone bed to Safavid dynasty’s power claims. Therefore, this study aims at while studying in the trend of evolving concept of guardian from the viewpoints of three aforementioned Sheikhsto answer to two fundamental questions: first, how would intellectual and cultural situations after the abolition of the Caliphate make the ground for the spread of the teachings of Shi’ism and its interaction with Sufism centered on discussions of guardianship? And second, in a gradual and time circumstances-based process how did the main representatives of Sufism draw the guardianship in Sufi form by help of that discussion from Shiite?

Concept of guardian and guardianship in Sufism to Nassafi

Rooted application of guardianship concept, perhaps, this debate has been followed until the idea Khourneh. Aside from the Shia’s believing inAli deserved to the succession to the prophet (Baghdadi, 1988, 281-282), in Sufism, despite references of Ibrahim Adham (779 AD) and Bayazid Bastami (877 AD) to the guardianship, for the first time, Hakim Tirmidhi (ninth AD) discussed it in a theoretical framework. His central ideas were based on three foundations: the separation of the specific guardianship from generic one, termination of guardianship and differentiation between messenger and guardian (Tirmidhi, 1965, 117, 394) not only contributed to the beginning of guardianship issue to discuss (Shafagh, 2004, 251; Zarrinkoub, 2004, 101) that after him, Ibn Arabic (1165-1240M) in a step farther, coined the term "Perfect human" Azizuddin Nasafi influenced by him chose his own mystical work named by this term (Nasr, 2000, 62). Most Sofia, especially after Ibn Arabic believed that guardians when drowned in the appeal with God obtained such a status that being able to purify other human beings from and hence this considered it necessary to guide the wayfarer (Yazdi-Moutlagh, 2001, 140). Of course, the ancients and the late scholars, while acknowledging the separation of generic and specific guardianship (Qushayri, 1982, 427), some would rank the status of guardianship after the prophets (Hajviry, 1358, 304, 307), and some believed that this preceded that (Siraj Tusi,
2003, 67). However, in terms of the breadth of the guardianship concept and its historical development until Nasafi, the guardians are relatively limited a group of men and women within whom divine character were manifested through the promotion of the highest mystical experiences and close relationship with God (Nicholson, 1979, 19). On the other hand, though Sufi themes said by people like Kharaaz (ninth century AD) and Tirmidhi was free from the Shi‘ism, Meyyam Bahrami (XIII AD), as famous commentator of Nahj al-Ali introduced Ali (PBUH) to be the perfect man and a guardian (Bahrani1999, vol. 1: 79, 80, 304, 309). And this approach was effective in the next attitudes of the mystics to the extent that in the works like Jalal al-Din Rumi’s, he was remembered as the guardian (for example, Rumi, 1983, the first book, distichs 2959.2231, 4541, 4538). Hereafter, despite significant role by Kubraviyah for the Shiite influencing on the Sufism (Basani, 1992, vol. 5, 517), the uncommon trend can be sought only in the works of Saad Eddin Hamavyythat while describing the Shiite Imams as the leaders of Islam guardians, he believed to return the twelfth guardian to spread justice. Comments of Sa'ad, while harmonizing the teachings of the Sufi with Twelver Shi‘ism (Ibid, 517), represented a reaction to the turbulent conditions governed in thirteenth century AD(Reyoon, 1999, 307). Hamaviknew that the Mahdi’s emergenceto be related to the competence of the people in understanding the secrets of monotheism (Carbon, 1979, vol. 1, 100-101). Meanwhile He in "Messbah Fi-Altasavooof” determined the source of unit spiritual for finality of Prophethood and guardianship (Hamavieh, 1983, 99-100), he regarded the symbol of the Prophethood to be Prophet Mohammad and manifestation of guardianship to be the last Imam (Nasafi, without date, 67; Ibid , A., 1983, 320-321), so if there had been balanced between Najmuuddin Kubra’s tendency to some cabalas which are supporter of Ali and Fatima and the tendency to early caliphs, Aisha and companions (Madelung, 1998, 90-92),first Sadoddin would have provided a new chapter in redefining the concept of pontificate in Shia and with Shi‘ism format in which Imam and guardian were expressed. Second, using the themes of Shiite when defining guardian and equality or even its superiority than prophecy, they knew the promised Mahdi to be the perfect human that not only the time of appearance for him has come, but also anyone with guardian rank could be a head of society.

**Intellectual and religious areas of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries AD**

The abolition of the Caliphate, the Shia spread a platform for promotion of Shia that even created a trend in Sufism and even in the Sunni with moderate Shiite, in removal of political-belief backing of Sunni (Bassani, Ibid, 516; 517, 273, 1974). In fact, pushed scholars back from east Islamic world where was caused by the Mongol domination (Roemer, 1385, 186), they are forced to accept the approach of Shiite, Sufi sects and impressive reverence for the Ali and his family (ibid, 186-187). So the Shia was promoted since the thirteenth AD afterword by some Sufism practices related to Sunnis- often Shafei (Amorty, 2001, 334). The guardianship by Ali became center of Shiism and Sufism over which if the Shia Imams were dynast of guidance; this was transferred in Sufism to Sufi scholars and intrinsic beliefs towards Ali’s guardianship made different branches, at least in appearance, closer to Shiite. It is also in establishing the Shia’s words not only Nasir Tousi (1274 AD) and his student Allameh Hilli (1326 AD) had a key role in the establishment of Shiite jurisprudence (Amir Arjomand, 1985: 198) that in order to comply with the Ilkhans, built the ground for positive change in the participation of political power (Lambton, 1980: 47- 48) and extended the jurisconsult guardianship issue on behalf of the
immaculate Imam in Friday Prayers in the jurisdiction district. This perspective which was a great development of the Shi'ite jurisprudence in a political philosophy viewpoint would be the most important way over that jurisprudence entered into the policy realm (for more information: Ibn al-Maki, 1989, vol. 1) and made the legitimacy of government related to enforce laws and regulations of Shi'ite jurisprudence (Jafari Harandi, 2000,221). However, with the transfer of such achievements to the Timurid era and countless support of emirs and princes for Sufi mysticism provided breeding grounds for progress and development (Sharaf al-Ali Yazdi, 1957, vol. 1: 229; Yarshater, 1955, 19). As opposed to the official Islam in urban areas that were promoted by the scholars; Sufi masters, especially in rural and suburban areas, attracted people by a form of emotional faith (Kayani, 1990, 275; Lawrence, 1994,78- 79).

Azizuddin Nasafi and political position of guardianship (B. twelfth and thirteenth AD)

About the family background and description of the early days of Azizuddin Nasafi, there was no authentic history, it is clear such that he was born in one year of the late twelfth century AD in Nasaf, or Nakhshab of Marae-Al-Nahr. In his youth he went to Bukhara and due to the invasion of Abagakhan (1281-1265 AD) he had to leave the country and moved to Khorasan, Isfahan, Shiraz and finally sent Abarghu In twelfth, according to evidence at where he died (Nasafi, 1980, 3; Hemo 1983 (a), 20-21). Azizuddin, who was accounted as a follower of Sa'd al Hamwi (Hedayat, 2011, 108) based on the view of the termination of guardianship (Afshar, 1975, vol. 13, 307) sought God by choosing one of the guardians as a the prophecy, sent him to guide people (Nasafi, 1980, 8). He also emphasized the same truth of prophecy and guardianship (Nasafi, 2000, 77) knew prophecy to continue guardianship by Twelve of the Prophet's family and the last of them to represent the guardianship and perfect man (Nasafi, without date, 245 247). In this way, the guardianship was free of all shackles, with features such as piety, wealth and having passed the perfection levels (religion, spirituality and truth) (Nasafi, b, 1983, 3), he had been worthy to be successor of God and world leadership, his should be obeyedin obligatory way upon the people (Nasafi, 1980, 6; Hemo, 2000, 78). In spite intreatise "Manzel-Al-Sayerin" he knew perfect man because of intrinsic knowledge to entitle to acquire the knowledge and behavior of prophet, but he avoided from the issue of jurist’s substitute on behalf of the last Imam (Nasafi, B,1983, 334; Ryjyn, ibid., 78). Also the fact that in Islam, the Prophet was an example of perfection and Sufism finality of Prophethood in guardians’ achievement to the spiritual perfection made the Prophet vulnerable; Nasafi, with a new interpretation of the Prophecy and guardianship may allow to upgrade to such a position for the guardian (Reyjon, ibid: 275). As the messenger received God's grace, he deserved to be the guardian and because he brought the divine message to the people, he entitled to be the prophet, and hence guardianship constituted the prophecy’s inside and the prophecy, the guardianship appearance (Nasafi, without date, 244 245). In fact, although the newness of idea on emergence of the last Imam said by Hamwi caused harsh reactions of elders such as Abdurrahman Esfarayeni (Esfarayeni, 1979, 32-33) and Ala-Douleh Semnani (Semnani, 1979, 45); Nasafi with a moderate approach as well as rejected the emergence of the expected Imam now predicted he to emerge in very near future, fourteenth AD (Nasafi, B, 1983, 320-321). Nasafi who was trying to avoid conflict between Shi'ite and Sunni was only satisfied to saytheir comments (Nasafi, 1983,82) after the tabling of the opposing and agreed comments on the guardianship superiority than the prophecy (Nasafi, 1984, 59), discreetly, he showed further tendency towards first group (Nasafi, b, 1983, 316).
Because in his opinion, the knowledge of the prophet to the facts of objects was originated from the guardianship’s light and science that of the guardian had come from light of prophecy (Nasafi, 1984, 106). In fact, Nasafi and contemporary Sufis with him, with posing their religious-political ideas about the guardian authorities, found out that it was possible a guardian to achieve to the Prophet status in the ascension (Reyjon, the, 292, 297) while acknowledging his worldly status, provided fields to pose the theories of the government (Nasafi, 1984, 126) and therefore the perfect man who with abilities and knowledge causes the welfare and guidance of the people is the most qualified person for the government (Nasafi, 1984, 67; Nasafi, B, 1983, 412). However, in the absence of appropriate time conditions for the guardian’s government- that was considered as the epitome of knowledge and power (Nasafi, B, 1983, 412)-Nasafi emphasized in one hand, to step down from the power and in other hand, kings’ advices in obedience to him (Nasafi, B, 1983, 442 445; Nasafi, A., 1983, 8, 182). Thus, at a time when the elders in the face of the power behaved in differently swing way from resistance against the Mongols, like Najmuddin Kubra, to cooperation with them, like Saifuddin Bakharzi (1260 AD) and Sa'd al Hamwi (Reyjon, Ibid, 326); Nasafi regarded isolation higher than any participation and opposition, as if considered the reservation for the guardian superior to any action (Nasafi, Ibid, 67).

Sheikh Safi al-Din and promoting the concept of guardianship (1334-1252M)

Safi-al’Din Isaac Ardebili was born in the culmination of Ilkhang’s power (1252 AD) this had a major impact on his life and his actions (Roemer, Ibid, 253). As a teenager, he to seek the Perfect Master did long trips so that found his purpose by seeing Sheikh Zahed Gilani, who was Sunni Sufis pole (Khandmir, 1991, 13 14) and according to his support, he did the guidance to the people (Tavakouli Ibn Ismail Ardebili, 1908, 49). He got married with the daughter of Sheikh Zahed which was not only the beginning of a aristocracy-based Sufism (Alshoeiby, Ibid, 371,372) that depended on the orientation of the Mongols to the greatness of saints, his monastery was promoted to be kiblah of ruler and bondman (Afeveshtee Naturan, 1971, 27, secretary of the Turkmen, vol.1, 2003: 13; Valeh Qazvini Isfahani, 1993. 30; Shamloo, 1992, 24). Sheikh Safi al-Din’s tendency to Sunni of Shafi’I orientation and witha reputation for numerous miracles, in addition to a variety of followers from different social classes also added his legitimacy and wealth (Qazvini Ghaffari, 1964, 26). He appeared almost simultaneously with the death of Nasafi with permission guidance of Sheikh Zahed (1301 AD) was introduced as typically perfected man, in an attempt to change the status of guardian, he took steps towards intercourse between terrestrial and spiritual sovereignties. Perhaps it was known the first indication of trends of the guardianship towards the practical field to show in the enunciation of Sheikh Zahed to Safi that studying works of "Jahangiri" and "Ershad", induced him to guide the people according to the command of "God" (Tavakoli Ibn Ismaili Ardebili, Ibid, 43). In "Safavaho al-Safa" among the various miracles attributed to the Safi, two dreams involve more than all in the political concept making of the guardianship. He in a dream behold himself staying toward to the Ardabil mosque’ Kiblah, suddenly the sun was appeared on his face and when talking about the sleeping dream with his mother, she promised him "You will become a master to illuminate the whole world by his education and guidance" (Ibid, 15). In fact the sunny light interpreted as a symbol of the greatness of Sheikh Safi in the future (Quinn, 2000, 67) would be a promise to him who conquering on power owners that at that time, as it seemed to realize
the promise of the perfect man. Ibn Bazazz said the dream such that the he saw himself with a huge sword on his waist and a cap on the head, the top of Mount Qaf. This was matter how hard he tried to pull the sword out, but not be successful, until removed three times the cap from the head that every time the sun shined to lighten the world. Because he talked about his dream to Sheikh Zahed, he said that "the sword had been the guardianship dictum and the sun, its light" (Tavakoli Ibin Ismail Ardebili, Ibid, 15). Based on this tradition and expressions of the Sheikh Zayed, there have mattered two points in rotating guardianship to try to gain political power. First: the dream of Safi was getting closer those dreams of the founder of the dynasty that the light was fallen down into their collar and shaded considerable light on everywhere. And Second: in the interpretation of dreams, Sheikh Zahid assessed that Safi was enjoyed by both the guardianship light meaning sense of God's love, and the sword of the guardianship, in terms of governance (Queen, ibid, 67). However, in view of Safi, reaching the highest level of knowledge not only makes a person worthy of guardianship position that promoting to this degree reflects his ability to lead people and preside over them (Tavakoli Ibin Ismail Ardebili, the, 152, 216; Amini Heravi, 2004, 12-13). Another special feature of Sheikh significantly influencing on the development of the guardianship concept resulted from his penetration among the mass of the people that made him abled to speak of the unity of religions (Jahn Aray of Safavi, 1984, 5) and his legitimacy of the succession to the Prophet (see the second house of forty parliaments Ala-Douleh Semnani (Semnani, Ibid, 5-6). In addition, compatibility and linkage between the Shafi‘i and schools of Sufism provided such realm that receiving and absorbing claims exaggerated (Madelung, ibid, 90-92) that some people like Sheikh Safi oriented it opened up the way for their succession, until to promote the exaggeration, in a kingship (Babayian, 1994: 153; Tavakouly Ibin Ismail Ardebili, Ibid, 149-150). In total, the guardianship in Sheikh Safi’s opinion differed from Nasafi’s under few features: first, in terms of Sufism prominent place among the last Ilkhans, his opinion from the perfection human made closer to the governance. Second, he hid rejecting power structure knew that it belongs to the guardian (Aspnaqchy Pashazadeh, 2000, 24-25; Khonji Isfahani, 2003, 287). Third, relying on exaggerating Sufism and its mixture with his trials on the guardianship, he opened the way for his successor exaggerating development that the spiritual aspect of the Safavid kings was the result of such a heritage (Nasr, 1979, vol. 2, 253).

Shah N.A. Vali and guardianship (fourteenth-fifteenth century AD)

The third Sheikh Sufi influencing on the development of the guardianship; this was Amir noorae-Aldin Ne’matollah was born in Aleppo (1330 AD) and after passing the formal science education course (Farzam, 1995: 565, 32) he was taught the principles of Sufism by Sheikh Abdullah Yafy (1337 AD) Shafi‘i scholar (Vaezi, 1984, 280; Moustophi Bafghi , 2006, vol. 3, 20); with obtaining the permission of Ershad (about 1342AD), spent rest of his life to teach some followers in Iraq, Hijaz, Egypt, Turkestan (Farzam., Ibid., 61), Samarqand, Herat, Yazd and Kerman. According to many biographers, quoting the number of followers was in Turkestan estimated at one hundred and ninety thousand (Abdul Kermani, 1982, 122, Farzam., 1972, 4); Ne’matollah with features such as trying to create unity among the oppressed and foreseeing in the training of followers (Farzam, 1968,15) had a profound impact on the development of Iran’s mystical traditions (Lewisohn, 1998,43). He in his essay "idioms" as well as the assignment of trained guardians to God, their presence at any time knew it was necessary as the hub of the world of
humanity and the last Imam and they were called as a symbol of divine mercy for the worlds (Shah Ne’matollah Vali Kirmani, 1963, vol. 3, 26-27, as, 9, 10; Hemo 1961, vol. 1, 61-62). From the perspective of the Shah, the prophecy ended (Shah Nematollah Vali, without the date, 290), but the guardianship as all true faces of prophets were eternal and stable (Ibid, 1964, vol. 4, 39). In between, the Shah "Scholars are heirs of the prophets" with distinction between internal and external inheritance interpreted in such a way that as the guardians would be intrinsic heirs of the prophets, the scholars would be the apparent heirs and both had come together on him, then he deserved to be heir of apparent and intrinsic knowledge of the Prophet (Shah Vali, 1964, vol. 4, 49). He in mentioned essay considered Imam to be as Caliph and hob and the perfect man and regarded Ali to be superior because he achieved in the whole of eternal levels, therefore anyone could achieve his levels, consequently, deserved to the prophecy and guardianship positions (Ibid, 1961, vol. 1, 133). Thus, in his view, a perfect guardian and a mentor would be two titles for the same concept that under divine blessings, guided the people as he believed himself to deserve this position (Ibid., 1964, c 4.88, F., 1993. 136-137), with as an infallible person, frequently he claimed to be succession to Muhammad from God (Shah N. Vali Kirmani, 1982: 517 556, 266; Ibid, 1961, vol. 1, 61, 62; Ibid, 1982, 477, 26, 210, 517; Ibid, without date, 327-328). In fact, according to the Shah, there was no opposition between mysticism and politics; because the policy is located in the area of personal affairs and "God" with "policy divine" made him governed on his and others’ soul to order vassals to do good things and avoid the bad things. For this reason, Vali with reaching the highest degree of knowledge was able to understand the best, better than anyone (Shah Vali Kirmani, 1963, vol. 3, 85). Accordingly, in continuing approach of guardianship, although he didn’t add a new concept on the Sufi and within the century everybody, the Sufi hubs each considered superior for guidance, he also regarded himself to be worth guardian only; but in the transition of interactions and the relations between Sufism and Shi‘ism intend to pose the Imam Mahdi to be guardian in the form of obligatory obeyed person, based on Shiite’s beliefs.

**Result**

The fall of the Abbasid caliphate was effective from both sides on intellectual conditions of Iran: Twelver Shi‘ism was upgraded to a level that the presence of some of Shiite figures in the construction of power in the late patriarch introduced. And on the other hand, the Sufism on the guardianship of Ali was found the common point of interaction with Shia; it was expanded in the theory of perfect man. As Sa'ad Hamwi posed the idea of a savior raised in the form of the perfect man or the same guardian. Hence the guardian once got closed to the Shia under leading of the Sufis Kubravi and according Sa‘ddin Hamvi, put on higher degree of prophecy, took a step forward by Nassafi and the necessity of putting things in it was explained. In another dimension, though Nasafi, based on the circumstances, emirs ordered to obey Vali that opened the way for the project of Shiite-Sufi guardianship by Sheikh Safi. Accordingly, the patriarch’s adherences to the Sufi provided an opportunity for Safi to lead guardianship in order to catch power. In fact, not only with help of Sheikh Safi, not only absorbed elements from exaggerated Shi‘ism become easier in Sufism, the claim of entitlement to obtain the power led the Sufism guardianship went beyond the advices and implicitly emphasized on its legitimacy. At the other pole of Sufi, the Shah N. as well as the adherence to the interpretations available, by means of the apparent lawsuits to the guardianship, gave rise to the most followers to become more ready to accept the
guardian’s deserve as a worldly ruler. And all before the formation of the Safavid dynasty, this made linkages between Shiite and Sufism too deep, as if each one were redefined instead of the other.
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