

## **The Confrontation of Sharia and Tariqat in the Safavid Era (based on the View of Moghadas Ardabili in the Book of Hadighat-al Shi'ah**

### **Abstract**

The Safavid Sufis, who began their work with the activities of Sheikh Safi al-Din Ardabili in the seventh century, over time, took advantage of the alignment of political and social conditions of the time and attempted that two centuries later the same Sufis became veteran troops that formed the Safavid rule. In the period after Shah Ismail and the consolidation of Safavid power, while the need for Shiite jurisprudence was partially met by the migration of Shiite scholars to Iran, the status of jurists gradually raised. Shiite jurists were opposed to the rites of the Sufis and their non-observance of the rulings, and sought to reduce the Sufis' disregard for the rulings of the jurisprudence, even by appealing to the Safavid rule. Moghadas Ardabili, as the most prominent Shiite jurist in the tenth century, was among the staunchest opponents of the Sufis. The present study has been conducted to investigate the causes of Ardabili's holy opposition to Sufis in the book Hadith al-Shi'ah and emphasizes that according to the position of Sufis in Safavid society, Moghadas Ardebili's negative approach in the form of historical confrontation between jurists and Sufis has influenced this practice and situation that was specific to the Sufis of the Safavid era? The results of the research that are obtained from the study of library resources achieved by content analysis show that the historical atmosphere of the period of stabilization and the need for religious and governmental institutions intensified the competition between jurists and Sufis. Moghadas Ardabili, citing jurisprudential sources, considers the actions and behavior of Sufis to be illegitimate and criminal. While excommunicating the Sufis, he did not distinguish between the virtuous and the immorality of this group.

### **Research aims:**

١. Analysis of the causes of the conflict between Tariqah and Sharia in the Safavid period.
٢. Examination of relationship between Tariqah and Shari'a from viewpoint of Moghadas Ardabili, relying on the book of Hadighat-al Shi'ah.

## **Research questions:**

١. What were the reasons for the confrontation between Tarighat and Sharia in the Safavid period?
٢. What is the opinion of Moghadas Ardebili on Shari'a and Tariqah according to his book Hadighat-al Shi'ah?

Keywords: Shiite jurisprudence, Moghadas Ardebili, Sufism, Hadighat-al Shi'ah, Safavid.

## **Introduction**

Sufism, meaning secularism and love for people, found its place in Islamic civilization from the second century AH. onwards. The early Sufis were pious ascetics; however, over time, in the next several centuries, Sufis who combine asceticism and piety with love of God, and sometimes as a mystery and a need of love emerged as they progress to the stage of Sufi intoxication and become conscious. Since the Mongol invasion, groups of Sufis have turned their attention to social issues in addition to their ascetic and romantic lives. The arrangements for the line-up of these Sufis were made in earnest from the late ninth century. It is from this time that "Sufi" finds a different meaning than in the past. Safavid Sufis in the form of Ghezelbash were distinguished from most Sufis before them. Ghezelbashan committed suicide at the beginning of Safavid rule; But after the Battle of Chaldoran, with the defeat of the divine awesomeness and religious prestige of Shah Ismail, the bond between him and his followers faded. With the weakening of the Ghezelbashan's belief in the great Sufi, a new chapter in their relationship with the government began. On the other hand, the mourning and despairing king, his arrogance and grandeur turned into fear and mourning, so much so that most of the time he was drunk and busy with hunting. However, until the end of the Safavids, the Ghezelbas still considered themselves obedient to the perfect master and Safavid king; nonetheless, the competitions of the Ghezelbash tribes for the hand of the kings began and continued in earnest.

After the defeat of Chaldoran, Shah Ismail made the establishment of the government his priority. This policy continued during the reign of Tahmasb I (٩٨٤-٩٣٠ AH). Undoubtedly, the Safavids played an important role in the spread of Shiism in Iran. With the end of the wars and during the period of consolidation, the need arose for intellectual homogeneity through the guidance and

dissemination of Shiite culture. The need for various judicial, civil, and educational institutions in harmony with the official religion became a priority and the Safavids invited a group of Shiite jurists from Iraq and Lebanon to Iran to compensate for the lack of Shiite scholars inside Iran. From this time on, Shiite jurists found an important position in the Safavid system of government, which was not easy for the Ghezelbash Sufis. It was here that the competition between the people of the pen and the people of the sword commenced. The jurists were also dissatisfied with the non-observance of the rules by the Sufis of the Tariqah, insisting on the implementation of the Shari'a laws; Therefore, they informed the people about this issue and sometimes they used the government to help restrict the followers of the path. Moghadas Ardabili (d. ۹۹۳ AH) is one of the well-known jurists of the Safavid period who, although he left Ardabil and spent his education in cities in Iran, later settled in Najaf and gained a special reputation there. Moghadas Ardabili is considered as the initiator and reference of the controversy between jurists and Sufis in the book *Hadiqah al-Shi'ah*, as he devotes a chapter to the followers of Sufism. The importance of the differences between Sufis and jurists in the history of Shiism is not hidden from anyone, and the present time is not free from these differences. The beginning of these differences and finding the cause of the alterations between the two groups, can be a way for decision makers in politics and government at this time.

No independent research has been done on the causes of the differences and the role of political time on them; but then again some research has been done on the margins of this issue. Jafarian (۱۹۹۰) in an article entitled "Confrontation of jurists and Sufis in the Safavid era", has presented a report on the opposition of Sufis and their writings in rejection of Sufism. In this article, he only tells the story of the differences and does not mention political reasons and the role of historical circumstances. Jafarian later published the content of this article with a detailed description in a book entitled *Politics and Culture of the Safavid Era*, in which the present subject was not attacked. Aghajari (۲۰۱۰) in the book *Introduction to the relationship between religion and government in Safavid Iran*, narrates the political and cultural events of the reign of each of the Safavid kings and also expresses the story of the variances between jurists and Sufis in general. Sefatgol (۲۰۰۲) in his book "The Structure of Religious Institution and Thought in Safavid Iran" has dealt with the institutionalization of the religious system in this period; then again. he did not mention the conflicts between the Olema, especially Moghadas Ardebili and the Sufis.

## Conclusion

The Safavid period is a turning point in the history of Iran during the Islamic era. This government was established by the Safavid Sufis. The Sufi sect gradually moved over time from a purely ascetic form to a combination of asceticism and love. Later, during the Mongol period, it was influenced by the historical atmosphere after the fall of the Caliphate, and while diversifying in various ways, it also attracted the attention of the Shiites, and at the same time developed its social functions in the form of charitable activities. Although this historical space was an opportunity for asceticism and Sufism, the followers of Sheikh Safi al-Din, who after a few generations in the turbulent Mongol period and afterwards were able to emerge as a strong rival for the Turkmen, formed a national power in 907 AH with the departure of Shah Ismail Safavid. They said that its core was in the hands of the Ghezelbashis. With the occupation of Iran and the need for governmental and religious institutions, the rivalry between the Sufis began and the Shah gave his position of deputy to someone outside the Ghezelbash tribes. With the defeat of Chaldoran, not only the greatness of the Shah collapsed; On the contrary, the wall of distrust of the Ghezelbas rose higher, and their rivalry and interference increased the need to establish governmental and religious institutions. In a situation where the presence of religious scholars in the government apparatus and their insistence on the Shari'a was unpleasant for the followers of the sect, they even saw the scholars as their rivals, the efforts of the scholars to prove their views during and after this period are remarkable. Moghadas Ardabili was one of the Shiite scholars who did not enter the Safavid system of government; however, by authoring a book called "Hadiqah al-Shi'ah", in which in a chapter mentions the followers of Sufism, he became the center of attention of the Sufi opposition and he was mentioned as the flag bearer of this movement in the first half of the Safavid period. Moqaddas Ardabili, using the existing opportunity and historical atmosphere that was valued by the jurists against the Sufis, considered the Sufis to be non-Shiite and completely cursed. He considered all the denials attributed to some sects or committed by Sufi traitors as his own document and rejected them with jurisprudential and historical reasoning. This view is not only in the Safavid era; rather, it became the basis for opposition to the Sufis in later periods. It seems that the turbulent situation after Tahmaseb I and Ardabili's holy concern about the shaking of Shiite foundations in his intention to write this book has not been ineffective.

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