

Echoes of Guardianship: Examining the Convergences and Divergences Among Sunni, Sufi, and Shia Philosophies

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Abstract:

An examination of the doctrines of extremist Sufis and extremist Shia reveals that these two schools of thought nearly originate from a common source, ultimately pursue a singular objective, and share overarching beliefs and principles. Both extremist Shia and Sufis assert possession of esoteric knowledge that sets them apart from other Muslim sects, which remains inaccessible to the broader populace. A particularly perilous issue confronting both extremist Sufis and Shiites is the notion of *Wilayah* (guardianship). The assertions made by the Shiites regarding their Imams parallel those made by the Sufis concerning their saints. The idea of radical Sufis and Shiites posits that the Imams and saints are divinely appointed by God to guide the nation following the Prophet, endowing them with unique divine knowledge. They are infallible and possess a divine status attained through virtue, grace, distinction, and selection. Subsequently, they inflated the status of these Imams, elevating them to the status of deities and lords in every conceivable manner. This distortion of the concept of guardianship by extremists among the Sufis and Shiites has created a significant avenue for numerous malevolent influences to infiltrate the Muslim community, including the veneration of the Imams by radical Sufis and Shiites, along with various misguidances, deviations, and innovations that could potentially lead their followers astray from Islam.

Keywords: *Wilayah*, Guardianship, Extremist Sufis, Shiites, Imams.

Introduction:

The concept of *Wilayah* (guardianship) holds profound theological, spiritual, and political significance within the Islamic tradition, serving as a foundational element that connects faith, leadership, and community dynamics. Its interpretation and application, however, differ among Sunni Muslims, Sufis, and Shia, reflecting the rich diversity and, at times, the contention within Islamic thought. Among Sunni Muslims, *Wilayah* primarily embodies the ideas of love, support, and proximity to God and His guidance, with a strong emphasis on faith and piety as pathways to divine guardianship. Sufi perspectives, on the other hand, often elevate the concept to a mystical plane, portraying saints as recipients of divine favor and miraculous abilities, while occasionally intertwining guardianship with claims of infallibility and supernatural knowledge. Meanwhile, Shia Muslims incorporate *Wilayah* into a framework of religious and political leadership, assigning it to the Imams as divinely chosen figures who carry the authority to guide and govern the Muslim community.

This multifaceted exploration of *Wilayah* reveals not only theological depth but also critical implications for the unity and diversity within the Muslim *Imamah*. Both extremist Sufis and Shia demonstrate tendencies toward elevating their spiritual or political leaders to semi-divine statuses, which has sparked debates and criticisms from Sunni perspectives. The examination of these varying interpretations underscores the broader challenges of maintaining a cohesive understanding of leadership and spiritual guidance, especially when faced with doctrinal deviations and ideological conflicts. In navigating these complex discussions, *Wilayah* serves as a lens through which to examine the intersections of faith, authority, and community across Islamic traditions.

The Notion of Guardianship: The Religious Significance of Guardianship Among Sunnis

A-Linguistically: the term "wali," spoken with a fathah followed by a sukoon, denotes a correct root signifying closeness and proximity. "I was about to do such and such": meaning I was close to doing it. And "wilayah" is used in several meanings, including: loyalty, kingship, proximity, kinship, support, love, plan, emirate, sultanate, and the lands over which the governor has authority. Ibn al-Athir said: "The sources of these names may differ. Al-Wilaya with a fathah (open vowel) refers to kinship, support, and emancipation. It is said: they are in al-Wilaya, meaning they are united in support. Al-Wilaya with a kasrah (short vowel) refers to leadership, sovereignty, and governance.(Ibn Manzour,1994)" Imam al-Shawkani, said: "Al-walayah (alliance) is the opposite of al-'adawah (enmity), and the essence of al-walayah is love and closeness as mentioned by the linguists, while the essence of al-'adawah is hatred and distance." (Al Shawakany, 2001)It is clear from this that "al-walayah" with an open "waw" is the subject of this study, as "al-walayah" with a broken "waw" means leadership and sovereignty, while "al-walayah" with an open "waw" means support, love, closeness, and nearness. The definitions reflect God's protection over the faithful servant and His loyalty to him.

B-Terminologically : guardianship Term has elicited varied expressions from scholars, yet the underlying meaning remains consistent, whether general or specific. Ibn Taymiyyah articulated that "Al-Walayah (guardianship) is the antithesis of enmity; its essence is rooted in love and proximity, whereas enmity embodies hatred and distance." It has also been posited that a guardian is termed as such due to his support for acts of obedience, indicating his commitment to them, with the former interpretation being more precise. The guardian: the intimate one, it is asserted: this one follows this one, indicating proximity.(Ibn Taymiahha, 1985) He also stated: "The guardianship of God entails aligning with what He loves, detesting what He hates, disapproving of what He dislikes, being displeased with what displeases Him, forming alliances with those He supports, and opposing those He contests.(Ibn Taymiahha, 1983)" Ibn al-Qayyim remarked: "Guardianship is the concordance with the benevolent guardian in his preferences and aversions."(Al Jawziyyah, 1997)

Al-San'ani stated: "Understand that Allah, the Exalted, has revealed His allies in His illustrious Book, declaring: 'Indeed, the allies of Allah will have no fear, nor will they grieve.' He further elucidated this with His statement: 'Those who believe and were fearing Allah...' This verse serves as an explanatory continuation, as if to ask: Who are they? He responded: 'Those who believe and were fearing Allah...' Upon grasping this, one will recognize the allies of Allah, characterized by their reverence for Him, their inclination towards what pleases

Him, and their aversion to all else.(Al San'ani, 2000)" Ibn al-Qayyim noted that the guardianship of Allah, the Exalted, is categorized into two types: general and specific.

A-The general guardianship: pertains to every believer; thus, any individual who is a believer and pious towards God will have Him as their guardian, with the extent of this guardianship corresponding to their faith and piety.(Al Jawziyaah, 2019)" This is evidenced by the statement of Allah, the Exalted: [Al-Imran: 68], and His declaration, the Exalted: He brings them out of darkness into light} [Al-Baqarah: 257].In this type of guardianship, Ibn Taymiyyah said: "The oppressor of himself among the believers has the guardianship of God in proportion to his faith and piety, just as he has the opposite in proportion to his wickedness. For a single person can possess both good deeds that warrant reward and sins that warrant punishment, so he can be rewarded and punished. This is the opinion of all the companions of the Messenger of God, the Imams of Islam, and the people of the Sunnah" .

B-The special guardianship: "It is fulfilling all of God's rights, preferring Him over everything else in all circumstances, until God's pleasures and preferences become his concern and the focus of his thoughts, so that he wakes up and goes to sleep with the thought of pleasing his Lord, even if the creation is displeased" (Al Jawziyaah, 2019).In this type of guardianship, Al-Shawkani says: "The guardian in language means the close one, and the intended meaning of the guardians of God is the pure believers, because they have drawn closer to God Almighty through obedience and avoidance of disobedience" (Al Shawkani, 1994).

According to the first view: The guardian is the one whom Allah Almighty has taken under His care and protection, and He does not leave him to himself, as He said: "And He is the Guardian of the righteous" [Al-A'raf: 196].

And regarding the second: The saint is one who undertakes the worship and obedience of God, performing them continuously, during the hours of the night and the ends of the day. And this is what Al-Suyuti described him as: "He is the one who knows God Almighty as much as possible, who is diligent in acts of worship, who avoids sins, and who refrains from indulging in pleasures and desires.(Al Suyuti, 2000) "And also Al-Haythami's definition of saints as: "Those who uphold the rights of God and the rights of His servants, by combining knowledge and action, and being free from mistakes and errors" (Al Hatem,1971).

It is well known that their safety from mistakes and errors does not mean infallibility, as there is no infallibility except for a prophet. According to Ibn Abidin, this signifies that God safeguards the saint from continuing in faults and errors, should he commit them, by encouraging him to repent, so facilitating his repentance. Nonetheless, they do not diminish his sanctity. Through these definitions of guardianship (Wilayah), it is evident that most focus on attaining faith and piety, safeguarding God's boundaries, adhering to His directives, and eschewing His prohibitions.

As faith amplifies through virtuous actions and diminishes through transgressions, guardianship is dependent on it, given that faith constitutes the pathway to guardianship. Each believer has guardianship according with their faith; those who exhibit faith and piety are considered friends of God. Guardianship fluctuates with the nature of deeds; some possess full guardianship, whereas others have lessened guardianship owing to a decline in their faith. Imam al-Tahawi, may God have mercy on him, stated: "All believers are allies

of the Merciful, and those most esteemed in God's eyes are the most obedient and adherent to the Quran.(Al Hanafi, 1998)

From this, we can derive a technical definition of a wali as any believer who is pious, obedient to God, refrains from His prohibitions, and adheres to His limits, regardless of gender, and who dies in that state.

The Religious-Political Implications of The Concept of Guardianship Among Twelver Shia:

Shia Muslims assert that the term "wilayah" and its derivatives possess multiple meanings, which I will explore and analyze.

A- *The guardianship of love or kinship concerning the Ahl al-Bayt:* signifies that individuals must demonstrate loyalty to the family of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), and such loyalty necessitates the renunciation of their adversaries. Al-Majlisi, their scholar, devoted a chapter in his work "Bihar al-Anwar" to this topic, entitled "The Obligation of Loyalty to Their Friends and Enmity Towards Their Enemies," in which he cited "22" narrations. He stated: "It was reported to Abu Bakr: So-and-so is loyal to you but cannot renounce your adversary. He replied: How can one profess to love us while failing to disavow our enemy?" (Maglisi, 2009). They assert that loyalty to the Prophet's family necessitates the repudiation of Abu Bakr, Umar, and the majority of the companions . (Moghnia, 1971)

B- *The Muhammadan Imamate or the Imamate of religious and political leadership:* In this context, Muhammad Jawad Mughniyah states: "The established authority of the Imam is, without question, the Muhammadan authority. By Muhammadan authority, we refer to the rights conferred upon the Messenger of God (peace be upon him) over the Muslims, which are inherently conferred upon the infallible Imam, as he is the legitimate representative of the Messenger of God (peace be upon him) in all matters that permit representation and delegation.

Dr. Abed Jabri asserts that guardianship is perceived as a 'divine authority' conferred by God upon both prophets and saints. The distinction between a prophet and a saint, as narrated by Ja'far al-Sadiq, their foremost imam, lies in the allowance for a prophet to have more than four wives, a privilege not granted to a saint (imam). Furthermore, the wali — or imam — occupies a role akin to that of a prophet, disseminating his message and articulating his teachings, which are regarded as synonymous with those of the prophet.(Al Jabri, 2009) The wali is deemed one who must be obeyed and followed in matters of command and prohibition. Muhammad Baqir al-Kajuri asserts that the wali is the individual whom God has mandated to be obeyed and whose commands and judgments are to be followed by all of creation, necessitating belief in the obligation of obedience to him. This encapsulates the concept of wilaya. (Al Kajory, 1961)

Al-Khoei states that al-Tawalli involves acknowledging the authority of the Imams, who assume leadership over Muslims following the Prophet (peace be upon him) and serve as his successors in transmitting and receiving Sharia rulings.(Al-Khoei, 1997) Al-Jabri asserts that the concept of leadership (Wilayah) is a fundamental issue, indeed a cornerstone of Islam, with all other pillars being subordinate to it. However, while the Shiites equate leadership with prophet-hood, they differentiate between a prophet and a messenger. The

messenger receives revelation and is charged with conveying the message, whereas the prophet and the imam also receive revelation but are not tasked with delivering a new message; instead, they elucidate the message of the messenger in whose role they serve.(Al Jabri, 2009) It is posited that these two authorities—the authority of love and the authority of religious and political leadership—are recognized for the Imams by all Shiites. Muhammad Taqi al-Majlisi says: "The authority of Ali is for anyone who takes him as a leader and believes in his Imamate without separation, and his children from the infallible Imams or the mentioned authority with love." He also says: "The authority: the special guardianship, the succession without separation, the leadership of the Islamic nation after the Holy Prophet, and the obligation of love and affection for the pure and righteous progeny."(Al Isfahani, 2020)

C- The authority to act and seize a person or matter is either constitutive or legislative: The guardian is the one who is obeyed and has the right to be obeyed and to act in matters, and his actions are binding either constitutionally or legislatively. It is mentioned in the book "Tafsir al-Sirat al-Mustaqim": "Wilayah: It is the authority and mediation in the existential and legislative matters, and it is a general leadership and total authority in all existential and legislative matters, and it is the general mediation between the creature and the Creator" (Al Bouroujedri, 1996), "And since they are intermediaries of the divine grace, they have a form of ownership over things, and Allah Almighty has granted them the choice of action in this world and the Hereafter, so they are, from Allah's perspective, the owners of action in everything, even though the possessions belong to their owners, and this is a general and comprehensive authority concerning all beings" (Al Kemeni, 1998).

The assertion of the establishment of this guardianship in this sense is a matter of disagreement among the Shiites, and not all of them have said it. And in establishing the authority of the Imams in this comprehensive sense, Muhammad Sadiq al-Ruhani says: "Authority has meanings:

1. The formative state.
2. The obligation of obedience and acceptance of the guardian's word in religious rulings.
3. The government and the secular presidency manage the affairs of the nation.
4. The legal guardianship, meaning the authority to manage wealth and lives.
5. The obligation to obey customary personal commands, and it appears that the authority in all its meanings is established for the Prophet and the Imams, peace be upon them all.

And although it does not specify here the guardianship in the sense of love, the assertion of the establishment of these guardianships for the Imams is merely a result of their love; indeed, even an exaggeration in it.

Commentary on the concept of Wilayah among the Shiites: This concept of guardianship that some Shia attribute to their Imams is indeed a false notion, due to its exaggeration, extremism, and intense fanaticism towards them, equating them with the status of prophets and messengers by asserting their infallibility, not to mention their disdain for the companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and may Allah be pleased with them all. And exaggeration in loving any of them, nor disavowing any of them, Imam Al-Tahawi, says: "And

we love the companions of the Messenger of God, peace and blessings be upon him, and we do not go to extremes in loving any of them, nor do we disavow any of them, and we hate whoever hates them, and we mention them in a bad way, and we mention them only in a good way, and loving them is religion, faith, and goodness, and hating them is disbelief, hypocrisy, and tyranny.” (Al Hanfi, 1998) And the commentator says, commenting: “And we do not go to extremes in loving any of them, meaning we do not exceed the limit in loving any of them, as the Shiites do, so that we are among the aggressors

God Almighty says: {O People of the Scripture, do not commit excess in your religion} [An-Nisa’: 171] And his saying: And we do not disavow [any] of them, as the Rafidah did! For them, there is no loyalty except through disavowal, meaning that one does not take the side of the people of the house until one disavows Abu Bakr and Umar, may , And the people of the Sunnah are loyal to all of them, and give them the positions they deserve, with justice and fairness, not with whims and fanaticism, because all of that is from the oppression that is exceeding the limit, as God Almighty said: {And they did not differ except after knowledge had come to them - out of envy among themselves} [Al-Jathiyah: 17](Al Hanfi, 1998)

The Religious and Spiritual Significance of The Concept of Guardianship Among The Sufis:

Dr. Al-Jabri says: "It was natural for Sunni Sufis to begin their discourse on 'Wilayah' by working to establish it legally, seeking support for it from the Quran and the Sunnah. The Quran states: {Indeed, the allies of Allah will have no fear, nor will they grieve} [Yunus: 62]. This verse may not fully capture all the interpretations that Sufis ascribe to 'Wilayah,' yet the subsequent hadith, recorded in prominent hadith collections, nearly conveys their intended meaning: "Among God's servants are those whom the prophets and martyrs envy." The inquiry was made: Who are they, O Messenger of God? Elucidate their characteristics for us to cultivate affection towards them. He, peace be upon him, stated: They are individuals who cherish one another for the sake of God, devoid of any material gain or commerce, and their essence is illumination atop illumination. They remain untroubled when others are fearful, nor do they lament when others mourn" (Al Jabri, 2009).

Dr. Al-Jabri subsequently remarks on this hadith, stating: "Although it is not imperative to question the authenticity of this hadith concerning its chain of narration, the interpretation ascribed to it by the Sufis is not inherently valid. Al-Hujwiri, a historian of Sufism, elucidates: 'This signifies that one should recognize that Allah, the Exalted, has selected companions for His affection and supervision.' They are the rulers of His kingdom whom He has selected and made a sign of the manifestation of His actions, and He has distinguished them with various miracles, purified them from the defects of nature, and freed them from following the self, so they have no concern except Him, and no comfort except with Him." Al-Jabri says: "It is clear that a person who is proficient in Arabic, Quranic sciences, and Hadith sciences cannot derive from the text of that Hadith the meanings mentioned by Al-Hujwiri without having prior knowledge of them" (Al Jabri, 2009).

Then, the expressions of the Sufis have differed in defining Wilayah while agreeing on its importance, as Wilayah is both a goal and an objective, with a focus on attaining miracles. Miracles have a significant share,

to the extent that some consider them a condition for the validity of Wilayah. I will address some definitions of Wilayah by the extremist Sufis and comment on them.

A-Definition of Abu Yazid al-Bistami: He said: "The fortunes of the saints, despite their differences, are based on four names, and each group of them stands by one name: the First, the Last, the Manifest, and the Hidden. Upon transcending these experiences, one becomes the whole and perfect individual. Those whose destiny is aligned with His name, the Manifest, witness the marvels of His strength, while those whose fortune is associated with His name, the Hidden, perceive the events that have occurred in the inner realms illuminated by His light. Those whose destiny is in His name, the First, are engaged with what has transpired, while those whose fate resides in His name, the Last, are linked to what is yet to occur. Each individual is revealed according to their capacity, except for those whom the Exalted Truth has chosen to protect and act on their behalf. (Al Qushayri, 2015)

Commentary on Abu Yazid's definition: In his definition, Abu Yazid restricted himself to only four of Allah's names, and the saint received his portion of these names, despite the believer being instructed to worship using all of Allah's names, as stated: {And to Allah belong the best names, so invoke Him by them. And leave those who practice deviation concerning His names. They will be recompensed for what they used to do} [Al-A'raf: 180].

B-Definition of Abu Sa'id al-Kharraz: Abu Sa'id al-Kharraz states: "When God Almighty intends to favor one of His servants, He opens for him the door of His remembrance." Upon deriving joy from recollection, He grants him to the realm of proximity, thus elevating him to the assemblies of intimacy with Him. He subsequently positions him upon the throne of monotheism, removes the veils from him, and grants him entry into the realm of singularity. He reveals to him the magnificence and grandeur. Upon observing the beauty and grandeur, he experiences a loss of self. At that moment, the servant transitions into a transient state, succumbing to His preservation, and is liberated from the demands of his own self. (Al Qushayri, 2015)

Commentary on the definition of Abu Said al-Kharraz reveals that Al-Kharraz has confined the proximity of the servant to his Lord solely to remembrance. While we acknowledge the significance of remembrance, which indeed possesses considerable merit, this perspective constricts what is inherently expansive. The pathway to closeness encompasses not only remembrance but also all forms of supererogatory worship, as articulated in the renowned Hadith of Divine Wilayah. Abu Huraira reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) stated: 'Allah, Blessed and Exalted, said: 'Whoever shows hostility to a Wali of Mine, I declare war against him.' My servant approaches Me with nothing more cherished than what I have commanded, and he persists in doing more acts of service until I bestow My love upon him. In loving him, I am his auditory perception through which he hears, his visual perception through which he sees, his hand with which he hits, and his foot with which he walks. If he requests from Me, I will undoubtedly provide, and if he seeks sanctuary in Me, I will certainly offer him protection. I do not hesitate about anything I do, as I hesitate about taking the soul of My believing servant; he hates death, and I hate to disappoint him, but it is inevitable. "'Specifying dhikr (remembrance of God) over other voluntary acts suggests the glorification of dhikr over other voluntary acts among extremist Sufis, and it narrows a wide door, which is the door of voluntary acts. Voluntary acts are everything through which a servant draws closer to God Almighty in addition to obligatory acts, such as prayer,

fasting, charity, reading the Quran, and others. Therefore, drawing closer cannot be achieved through dhikr alone.

Another thing is the lifting of the veils with his saying: "Then the veils were lifted from him." So, is the veil lifted for the saint so that he can see the unseen and know what will happen?! The answer is: Certainly not, for the Prophet (peace be upon him), who was a Prophet, did not know the unseen, as will be explained later, God willing.

C- Definition of Al-Qushayri: Imam Al-Qushayri, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "The term 'wali' has two meanings. The initial term is 'fa'il' in the context of 'maful,' denoting an individual under the divine care of Allah, the Exalted. Allah states: {Indeed, my guardian is Allah, who has revealed the Book, and He safeguards the pious} [Al-A'raf: 196]. He does not abandon him for one instant; instead, Allah, the Exalted, provides for him. The secondary definition of 'fa'il' denotes an exaggeration of the doer, referring to an individual who persistently worships and obeys Allah. His devotion is unwavering and unimpeded by insubordination. Both descriptions are requisite for an individual to be regarded as a wali. He must diligently execute the rights of Allah, the Exalted, in their entirety and must be perpetually safeguarded by Allah, the Exalted, during both prosperity and adversity. One condition for being a wali is that he must be preserved, just as one condition for being a prophet is that he must be infallible" .(Al Qushayri, 2015)

Comentary on Al-Qushayri's definition: In this definition of the saint, it implies infallibility, as indicated by his statement, "without any disobedience intervening," meaning his infallibility from sins. He explicitly mentioned the term "preservation" by saying, "And it is a condition for the saint to be preserved." However, in other places, Qushayri indicates that what is meant by preservation is infallibility, as in his statement: "He cannot be a saint unless he is successful in all his obligations of obedience, infallible in every way from all slips." ([37]) So, is there anyone among humans who is infallible from all slips except those whom Allah, the Almighty, has made infallible among the prophets.(Al Qushayri, 2000)

D- Definition of Lisan al-Din Ibn al-Khatib : Ibn al-Khatib said: "Wilayah: It is for God to take care of the one who reaches the presence of His sanctity, with much of what the Prophet was entrusted with, such as preservation, guidance, empowerment, succession, and management."(Al Pakistany, 1986).

Commentary on Ibn al-Khatib's definition Ibn al-Khatib's definition suggests equality between the prophet and the saint in preservation and management, as his words imply that the saint experiences signs and miracles similar to those of the prophet. This does not align with the belief of the Sunni community, as we will discuss, God willing, in the distinction between the prophet and the saint.

E- Definition of Al-Hakim Al-Tirmidhi : Dr. Al-Jabri says: "Sufi sources agree that the first to speak among the Sufis about 'Wilayah' was Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ali Al-Hakim Al-Tirmidhi, who died in 285 AH, the author of the book 'Khatm Al-Awliya'. Shortly thereafter, Wilayah emerged as a fundamental principle of the Sufi path and knowledge in general.(Al Jabri, 2009) According to Al-Hakim Al-Tirmidhi, guardianship is defined as follows: "All of these are guardians of the rights of God, and they are the guardians of God who ascend to God Almighty in their ranks, where they settle and breathe the spirit of closeness, living in the spaciousness of monotheism and liberation from the bondage of the self." They conform to the hierarchy,

thereby refraining from any activities beyond those authorized in their tasks. When God guides them from one station to the labor of their bodies.(Al Pakistany, 1986)

He protects them, and they carry out their tasks under this protection, thereafter returning to their stations. Al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi recognizes the principle of infallibility in his definition, stating, "They do not engage in anything except what they have been permitted to do." He appointed angels to guard these saints, ensuring they act solely under their supervision. Furthermore, the angels themselves act only by divine command, as indicated by the phrase, "And we do not descend except by the command of your Lord." To Him belongs all that precedes us, all that follows us, and all that exists in between. And your Lord is not forgetful." [Maryam: 64].

These definitions do not suffice for their proponents with what is mentioned in the Quran and the Sunnah; rather, they have introduced attributes that take the Sufi saint out of the realm of legitimate guardianship into other meanings such as knowledge of the unseen and more. The proponents of these definitions focus on the issue of the infallibility of saints among the Sufis, and it is known that infallibility is only for the prophets and messengers, peace be upon them all, while other humans do not possess infallibility.

Such statements may mislead many ordinary people who receive them without understanding their meanings, but rather out of trust in their speakers, to the extent that many of them believe in the lies and superstitions surrounding the saints. Such claims open doors to evils against Islam and its followers in front of the enemies of the religion, presenting it in a distorted and priestly image that makes the enemies of Islam insult it, mock it, and attribute to Islam what does not belong to it. Even the Christian orientalist Nicholson said: "Muslims call the name 'wali' to the man who has reached the station of annihilation of his self and will, and remains by divine will.(Abu Al-Ala, 1947)

Conclusion and results

- 1- The authority of God Almighty is of two types: general and specific: As for general guardianship: "It is the guardianship of every believer. Whoever is a believer and pious to God, God will be their guardian, and their guardianship will be in accordance with their faith and piety." This is indicated by the words of Allah: {And Allah is the Guardian of the believers} [Al-Imran: 68], and His saying: {Allah is the Guardian of those who believe. He brings them out of darkness into light} [Al-Baqarah: 257]. As for the special guardianship: "It is fulfilling all of God's rights, preferring Him over everything else in all circumstances, until God's pleasures and loves become his concern and the focus of his thoughts, so that he wakes and sleeps with the thought of pleasing his Lord, even if the people are displeased."
- 2- The concept of Wilayah among the Shiites has a political dimension, as authority is considered divine, and the Imams are the only ones entrusted with it, starting from Imam Ali and passing through his descendants. This dimension has some pillars, including text, appointment, infallibility, and knowledge. These pillars manifest in certain aspects, such as not revolting against the Imam and blind obedience to him.
- 3- The religious dimension of the concept of guardianship among the extremist Sufis has evolved from the political dimension, as it was among the Shiites, to the spiritual dimension. The guardian among the

Shiites is a jurist, a political leader, and a spiritual leader at the same time. However, the Sufi guardian claims the basic gift of spiritual leadership as his main task. This spiritual dimension is consistent with the Sufi inner state. The authority in the Sufi inner structure consists of the pole, who is at the top of the spiritual-religious hierarchy, and ends with the elite and the commoners, indicating that the Sufis have their own organization and the authority based on it.

- 4- The claims of extremist Sufis about the saints open doors to evils against Islam and its people in front of the enemies of the religion, presenting it in a distorted and priestly manner that makes the enemies of Islam insult it, mock it, and attribute to Islam what does not belong to it.
- 5- There is nothing more dangerous to the Islamic nation than ideological deviations; through them arise disputes and doctrinal, intellectual, and political conflicts, and from them come generations whose utmost knowledge is the fanaticism for their opinions and hostility towards those who oppose them, and they educate those who come after them on what they have learned and mastered, and through them conspiracies, intrigues, plans, and deficiencies are hidden.

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