

SUFISM IN THE SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY OF ISLAM

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Abstract

Spread around the world due to its variety and presence of various scientific, cultural and philosophical movements since the Islamic revival Islamic culture laid the foundation for many new directions of human development and enriched its spiritual and cultural heritage. From this point of view in nowadays Sufism has got a great importance and carefully studied. The author notes that the concepts of Sufis of the early tasawwuf period Bayazed Bistami and Junade Baghdadi were systematized later in a more perfect form by Imam Ghazali and Seyyid Yahya Bakuvi. One of the most important persons in the history of Sufism was ibn Arabi, the follower of the era after Gazali and the creator of the philosophical tasawwuf.

The author emphasizes that the theory of wahdati-wujud created by Gazali left a deep mark on the world philosophical heritage and became the basic of the great Tasawwuf tradition (Morewedge 1995).

According to researches Khalwatiyya created by Bakuvi (died in 1463/1464) in Azerbaijan and widely spread in many countries is one of the most important movements in Islam. Bakuvi was a student and follower of the first founder of this movement Omar al Khalvati Shirvani known as Piri-Avvali.

Keywords: *Khalwatiyya, Seyid Yahya Bakuvi, Sufism, Islam, religion*

First mention of Tasavwuf as an independent philosophical teaching appeared in Basra. According to the notes of historical sources Abu Hashim –as-Sufi was the first person got the name of Sufi. Abu Hashim’s tekka located in the city of Raml in Syria can be called the first one. In a short time the tasawwuf wave started with Abu Hashim could spread to many countries (Schimmel 2012).

The spiritual and moral values of Islamic life in the religious and ethnic essence of Sufism are related to the conception of tasawwuf. This religious and philosophical study means man’s struggle with ego by providing for the improvement of moral qualities and as a result possibility to achieve the reunion with the Lord by correcting, educating and abandoning the carnal and material world. One of the reasons which make Sufism such attractive is the mystical thought containing divine secrets and sciences inside. It should be noted that the Sufis fought against all forms of sin. Their struggle often turned against those who threatening to weaken the

morality of the believers, especially intelligent people. In the early years the ally of the Prophet Muhammad Abu Zar was arrested by powers for blaming them (Ibn Arabi 2006).

Sufism unites Islamic Shariat, laws and truth. Allah is the highest essence in Sufism and only by loving it is possible to approach Him. The first use of tasavwuf is associated with Maruf Karha the famous Sufi of his time. Also mentions Zunnuna Misri, who introduced the conception of “marifat” into Sufi thought and Sari al Sakaaiti was the first who researched and discovered tasavwuf states. Bayazed Bistami introduced new criteria and concepts into tasavwuf (Yilmaz 1997).

Like all tasavwuf jamaats, Khalvatia also went through a phased development before becoming a tariqat. Researchers distinguish four stages of this period:

1. The period from Abdulgahir Sukhravardi to Sheikh Ibrahim Zahid Gilani. This period in the sources of Khalvatia is designated as the period of the Usul of khalvatia.

2. The period from Sheikh Ibrahim Zahid Gilani to Pir Omar (XIII-XIV centuries). This period is called the sectarianization period.

3. The period from Pir Omar to Sayyid Yahya Bakuvi, who formed the basis of the tariqa (XIV-XV centuries).

4. The period began to develop and spread with Sayyid Yahya (after the 15th century). This period is called the period of sectarianization and branching (Fatih 2010: 6).

The name “*Khalwatiyya*” is taken from the *nisba* (attribution) of the tariqah’s founder Siraj al-Din Omar Ibn Akmal al-Din al-Khalwati (d/ 800/1397-98). His full name in the sources is Siraj al-Din Omar Ibn Akmal al-Din al-Gilani al-Lahiji al-Khalwati (Tatci 2009). According to the sources, which give information about his life, Omar ibn Akmal al-Din practiced *khalwa* (spiritual retreat) and *zikr* (rememberence of God) in seclusion. It is mentioned that he was often meditating in a hollow of tree (Vicdani 2012). For this reason, the *tariqah* (Sufi order) founded by him was called *Khalwatiyya*. During his *khalwa* he was performing *zikr* using the seven names of Allah: *Lāilāha illā-llāh* (There is no god except Allah), *Hu* (He), *al-Haqq* (The Truth), *al-Hayy* (The Ever Living One), *al-Qayyum* (The Self-Existing One), *al-Qahhar* (The Subduer). This tradition of *zikr* was later adopted by some other tariqahs as well. *Al-Khalwatia* advised his *murids* (followers) to perform *khalwa*, *uzla* (seclusion and solitude) and *sukut* (silence), and also he explained the main principles of *Khalwatiyya* on the bases of the four types of dead which were expressed by the famous Sufi Hatim al-Asamm. For him, those who wish to enter the way of *sayr wa suluk* (spiritual path), should permanently struggle with their *nafs* (the self which commands to evil). He expressed it with the term of *al-Mawt al-ahmar* (the red death). Secondly, *the saliks* (mystic wayfarers) should bear all kinds of trouble. This, in

turn, is called *`al-mawt al-aswad`* (the black death). Thirdly, they should be satisfied with what they possess, and should never complain. This principle is called *`al-mawt al-akhdhar`* (the green death). The last principle is that they should eat less and be occupied with praying and meditation. Omar al-Khalwati expressed this principle with the term of *`al-mawt al-abyadh`* (the white death) (Taysi 2007).

Although Umar al-Khalwati was the founder of the *Khalwatiyya* order, it was systematized and spread by Seyyid Yahya Shirwani. For this reason, Shirwani is considered as the second founder (*pir-e sani*) of the *tariqah*. It could be said that Yahya Shirwani was the true founder of *Khalwatiyya*.

Seyyid Yahya Shirwani was born at the end of 14th century in Shamakhi in a prominent sayyid family. He was from the descendants of the imam Musa al-Kazim (d. 183/799). His father Bahauddin was *the naqib al-ashraf* (head of the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad) in the Shirwanshah State. After a certain time, Seyyid Yahya left Shamakhi to Baku, which was the capital of the Shirwanshahs at that time, and lived there until his death in 1463 or 1466. He had studied education in Muslim religious school (*Madrasa*) in Shamahi, which was scientific and educational centre of Islamic East. As-Seyid Jamaladdin Yahyaibn as-Seyid Bahaaddin ash-Shirvani al Bakuvi (whose forefathers used to be the Shirwanshahs' *naqibs*), had a perfect education and wrote works in three great languages: Turkish, Arabic and Persian for the intellects of his time. He created the peculiar pieces of the sect *Khalwatiyya* and the Gnostic (*irfani*) literature.

Bakuvi lived 40 years in Baku by means of I. Halilullah. He opened philosophical-religious school –*Khanagah* of sect *Khalwatiyya*. Thinker helped himself followers improve knowledge and science, he changed himself religious retreat in *madrasa*, where people studied spiritual and secular science. He is received as a founder of insignia in scientific literature and one of the important theories of his mystical doctrine, to mainly experience of *Khalwa*.

System of Bakuvi's worldview is reflected in generation who is continued thinkers in Azerbaijan, as a variety spiritual centre of regions of Islamic culture. Seyyid Bakuvi's mainly works is protected in fond of manuscript and library of Istanbul, these manuscripts are:

1. Acayibu`lKulub
2. Atvar`l-kalb
3. Beyanu`l-ilim
4. Esratu`l-vuduve`s-salat (risale ma la buddbatiniyye)
5. Gazelliyyat
6. Keşu`l-kulub

7. Kissa`i Mansur
8. Mekarim-I ahlak
9. Menakib`Iemiri`l-mü`minin Ali Kerremallahü Vecchü
10. Menazilü`l-aşikin
11. Makamat
12. Ramuzu`l-işaret
13. Salavtu`n-Nebi
14. Şerhumeratib-i asraru`l-kulub
15. Şerhusualat-i gülşen-i esrar
16. Şerhuesma`isamaniye
17. Şifau`l-esrar
18. Tasarrufat`umukaşafat
19. Virdüsettar

It is obvious from the content of his works that Seyid Yahya presented the human being as a creature consisting of heart, *nafs* and soul in *tasawwuf* literature, and thoroughly commented on the characteristics of these notions in his works *Atwarul-Qalb*, *Kashful-Qulub*, *Sharhi-Maratibi-Asraril-Qulub*, *Shafa al-Asrar* going further into details. One of them fundamental manuscript of Shifa Al-Asrar what is protected in Istanbul. This manuscript is written in Turkish language and this work is translated with interpretations to Azeri language in 2010 years.

In his work *Shafa al-Asrar*, Bakuvi emphasized the utmost importance of science for those who started the path of *tariqat* (sect). In his works he attached equal importance and value to science and *tasawwuf*, i.e. wisdom and heart. The path of those who wished to enroll in this outstanding Sufi's school definitely passed through the acquisition of science. His following lines clearly demonstrate the sheikh's high attitude to science.

Science is the grandest crown, make friends with science,
The crown of science is dignity, deserve it and put it on your head.
The one, who has perspicacity, should acquire science,
Those who want a contented life should turn into science's companion.
If you have a bit of science, you have as if the wealth of the world,
If you are ignorant, there is no use of you to your relatives and family.
If the scholar's science yields fruit, the world will be happy,
The world with an unhappy scholar is unhappy itself.
The scholar is the person who will take actions through science

And reveal the concealed secret and, thus will acquire the crown.

The sciences Bakuvi meant were sciences like *tafsir*, *hadith*, *fiqh* (Islamic law). The sheikh stated the impossibility of joining *tasawwuf* without acquiring these sciences. The followers of the trends that did not follow the stated, rolled down into secrecy, turned into a threat for both religion and society, and caused disturbances. In brief, Bakuvi's scientific notion of *tasawwuf* has yielded its fruit, his Sufi school of *Khalwatiyya* has never been registered in history for going astray from its faith, causing religious, social and political intricacies despite of its wide spread through time. Meanwhile, the sheikh of this sect had 20 thousand *murids*(followers) back in his life time.

The sheikh, who owned this giant sect, wrote about the foundations of the Islamic *tasawwuf* and ethics in general in his work *The Mysteries of Sufism (Shafa al-Asrar* of the manuscript of the work, pointed out, "While explaining the *tasawwuf* principles in this valuable source, between the lines the sheikh warns against some belief deviations disseminated then in Shirvan and its surroundings, draws attention to the religious-social bases frequently emphasizing the ethical values".

Thus, the human being stands in the centre of the sum of ideals adopted in Sufism which invites its followers to moral ethical principles having adopted high ideological and psychological views. This human being is a supreme creature created by *Allah* (God) in the most perfect manner and enriched with numerous moral and material senses. If human being's material and moral senses are not positively used and developed, they will be of no good and even can turn harmful, like the worthlessness of unprocessed ores. As explained by Bakuvi, if the heart, the strongest human sense, even the core of the senses is inclined towards the soul, the true leader in morality, and developed towards its goal, the human being can reach the true point of humanity, and find happiness both in the world and afterlife. There is also a sense called *nafs* controlling the human being, and if the heart is inclined towards it, it will involve itself in disaster following the wild desires and wills and become unhappy both in the world and afterlife. (*Shafa al-Asrar, Azerbaijani translation, page 4a-b*).

Order of *Khalwatiyya* was separated broadly to Caucasia and Turkey in XV century. It has reached to Egypt (firstly, *Khalwaty* were diffused by three Azeri: Shamsad-din Demirdash, Sahin al-Halvati and Ibrahim Gulshani) and Middle East. Even, this action surrounded Sudan, Ethiopia, Abyssinia and West Kenya and this mystical and religious sect has reached to border of Zanzibar.

Insignia *Khalwatiyya* had evaluated many times during century. It has created itself three basically currents:

1. Rushaniyye
2. Gulshaniyye
3. Demirtashiyye

In Afghanistan have been diffused studies of order of Sheikh Safiad-din al-Khalwati (died in 1381 years), in Middle East Kasim al-Anvari (died in 1451 years), in Indonesia- Sheikh Muhammed bin Abdulkarim Assaman (died in 1775 years), Sheikh from Damask Mustafa Kamal ad-Din al-Bakri founded in average of XVIII century himself private system of thought *Khalwatiyya-Bakriyye*. In the end of XVIII century, one of the flowers *Khalwatiyya* Sheikh Abu al-Abas Ahmed at-Ticani diffused order of *Tijaniyya* in The North-West of Africa in 1781 years (He died in 1815 years in Fes, Morocco where he is buried).

After died of Seyyid Yahya, his sons and students (flowers his studies were reached approximately 20.000 persons and 360 of them were continued his studies. There are some famous among them as a Dede Omar Roushani, Aladdin Rumi, Yusif Muskuri Shirvani his work was published “Bayan al-Asrar li-t-talibin fi-t-tasavvuf”) diffused his studies to The West and South-West of Caucasia to direction of Anatolia, direction of Balkans and Africa, by crossing Syria, Egypt and Sudan, to mountain of Kabuli in Alger where *Khalwatiyya* has reached there in XVIII century.

The Algerian Sufi School was the source of many saints and sufi sects. Among them the founder *Tijaniyya* Order Sheikh Ahmad Al-Tijani (1737-1815), the founder of *Rakhmaniyya* Order Mohammed Ben Abd al-Rahman al-Rakhmaniyya Gastuli (1715/1793) and the founder of the *Sanusiyya* sect Sidi Mohammad Ben Ali Al-Khayyabi Al-Mustaghanmi are to be presented in the first ranks. Sheikh Muhammed b. Abdar-Rahmanak-Gashtuli al-Azhari and where *Khalwatiyya* had taken itself name from creator and become called *Rahmaniyye*.

Should be noted in particular the role of women in the spreading the teaching of *Khalwatiyya*. Especially must be noted Laila Zaynab the daughter of Sidi Mohammed Ben Belkacem Al-Hamiliyya, who led enough the large *Zaviyya* and belonged to the Order *Rakhmaniyya* until 1914 year of death. His tomb is Saida valley.

After his death, his followers spread *Khalwatiyya* in the whole Islamic world, in particular, in Anatolia, and thus *Khalwatiyya* became one of the biggest Sufi orders in terms of its *khānqāhs* and followers.

After Shirvani, the *Khalwati* order divided into four branches: *Raushaniyya* which belongs to Dada Umar Raushani, *Jamaliyya* which is ascribed to Sheikh Muhammad Chalabi Jamali known as Chalabi Khalifa, *Shamsiyya* which was founded by Sheykh Shams al-Din Sivasi and *Ahmadiyya* which belong to Shekh Shams al-Din Ahmad Sivasi. These branches, in

turn, have divided into different sub-branches. In general, the *Khalwati* order has more sub-branches than other Sufi orders (Ashkar 1999).

The Basics of the *Khalwati* Order:

Like in other Sufi orders, the notion of *sayr wa suluk*, which is considered as a spiritual journey towards *Allah*, possesses great importance in *Khalwatiyya*. As it was mentioned above, the *Khalwati* system attaches great importance to the notions *zikh* and *khalwa*. In this respect, these two notions play a key role in *salik*'s achieving a spiritual purification by overcoming different stages in the way to *Allah*.

The basics of the *Khalwati* order are as follows:

1. Performing *zikh* by reciting *Lāilāha illā-llāh*
2. Performing *zikh* by reciting the above-mentioned seven names (*al-asma al-arbaa*) of *Allah*
3. Having our hearts purified from all kinds of evil and thus getting spiritual maturity (Kara 1998).

Murids (followers) of the *Khalwati* order have daily as well as individual and collective *zikh*s. One of the most common supplications is Seyyid Yahya Shirwani's famous book of supplication *Vird as-Sattar*. Like in all *alawi* orders, collective *zikh*s are performed audibly. The musical instruments like *nay* (reed-flute), *qudum* (kettle-drum) and *daff* (tambourine) are used during *zikh*s. *Dawaran* (*zikh* ceremonies in which dervishes move rhythmically in a circle) also has a great importance in the *Khalwati* order.

The spread of *Khalvatia* in the Balkans

Despite the well-known fact of the spread of Islam and its tariqats during the Ottoman period, there is an assumption that this story is somewhat ancient.

As a forerunner of Islam in the Balkans, a mythological figure under the name of Sari Saltuk is especially mentioned. This historical and mythological character lived much earlier than the Ottoman conquests in the Balkans. For example, Ahmet Yashar Odzhak, who conducted research in this area, believes that the activities of Sarah Saltuk in the Balkans occurred in the time of the Anatolian-Seljuk Sultan II Izzeddin Keikavus (1234-1280). The researcher also believes that after settling in Dobrudja, which is part of the territory of today's Romania and Bulgaria, Sari Saltuk, together with the dervishes who are subordinate to him, acted in the territory of today's Romania and Moldova, sought to preach and spread Islam (Odzhak 2011).

It should be noted that one of the most widespread and widely branched sects of Sufism is Khalvatia. Bulgarian researcher, Ina Merjanova, notes that with the conquest of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans, Sufi tariqats also began to spread in these areas. Thus, along with the Naqshbandi sect, the Khalvatia was able to penetrate the Balkans, as well as Bulgaria (Merdjanova 2013).

Jane Hethaway notes that in the XVII-XVIII centuries, along with Anatolia, Halvatia was divided into several branches also in the Balkans (Hathaway 2008) The issue of the wide distribution and branching of the Khalvatian sect in the Balkans, which was further developed by the followers of Sayyid Yahya Bakuvi, who is from Azerbaijan, also affects Side Emre (Emre 2017). Some researchers attribute the date of the spread of Khalvatiya on the Balkans to the XVIII century. For example, N. Aleskerova relates the date of distribution of the said tariqat to this century (Aleskerova 2015).

It should be noted that in the Balkans, Sufism was not limited to the sect of Khalvatia. For example, famous for his research on the history of the spread of Islam, including Sufism in Eastern Europe, and especially in the Balkans, H.T. Norris writes that in the Eastern Balkans, especially Macedonia and Bulgaria, the Sufi sect of Bektashiya also played an important role (Norris 2006). One of the main areas of distribution of Bektashiya are precisely the Balkans and Bulgaria. H.T. Norris also addresses the issue of widespread in Bulgaria purely esoteric (internal) sects of Sufism - Hurufism and Alevism (Norris 2006). As a result, Hurufism, which was founded by Fazlullah Naimi - Astarabadi (1340-1394), after facing intense criticism in the Islamic world, was able to continue its existence exactly in the Balkans.

Conclusion.

Sufism has great contributions to the formation of Islamic culture and cannot be accepted just like Islamic mysticism. After the formation of Sufi tarikats these powerful scientific schools also formed as a military-political and constituent institutions and played an important role in creating the socio-political structure of that time. Sufism has got great importance not only in Islam but also in a whole global history and today it turns into a powerful spiritual school and thinking system.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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СУФИЗМЪТ В ДУХОВНАТА И КУЛТУРНА ИСТОРИЯ НА ИСЛЯМА

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Резюме

Широко разпространена по целия свят, благодарение на своето разнообразие и присъствието в нея на различни научни, културни и философски движения от времето на Ислямското възраждане, ислямската култура, свързана с възраждането на исляма, поставя основата на много нови направления на човешкото развитие и обогатява неговото духовно и културно наследство.

Във връзка с това в днешно време суфизмът придобива все по-голямо значение и все по-задълбочено се изучава. Авторът на статията показва как понятието „суфи” от ранния „тасаууф” период на Б. Бистами и Дж. Багдади е било систематизирано по-късно и развито в по-съвършена форма от А. Газали и Сейид Яхя Бакуви. Една от най-важните личности в историята на суфизма е Ибн Араби, последовател на Ахмад Газали и създател на философския тасауууф.

Авторът посочва също така, че теорията за „уахдат ал-уджуд”, създадена от Газали, оставя дълбок отпечатък върху световното философско наследство и се превръща в основа за голямата традиция на „Tasawwuf” (Morewedge 1995).

Според изследователите орденът „Халватия” е създаден от Бакуви (починал около 1463/1464 г.) в Азербайджан и широко разпространил се след това в много страни по света. Поради това той се счита за едно от най-важните движения в исляма. Бакуви е бил ученик и последовател на първия основател на това движение Омар ал Халвати Ширвани, известен като Пири-Аввали.

Ключови думи: Халватия, Сейид Яхя Бакуви, суфизъм, ислям, религия.

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