Narine Gevorgyan

JAMI'-I 'ABBASI: BAHA AL-DIN AL-'AMILI'S MANUAL OF RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN THE CONTEXT OF STATE- AND CONFESSION- BUILDING IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY SAFAVID IRAN AND BEYOND

MA Thesis in Comparative History, with a specialization
in Interdisciplinary Medieval Studies.

Central European University

Budapest

May 2013

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by

Narine Gevorgyan
(Armenia)

Thesis submitted to the Department of Medieval Studies,

Central European University, Budapest, in partial fulfillment of the requirements

of the Master of Arts degree in Comparative History, with a specialization in

Interdisciplinary Medieval Studies.

Accepted in conformance with the standards of the CEU.

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Chair, Examination Committee

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Thesis Supervisor

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Examiner

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Supervisor

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External Supervisor

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I, the undersigned, **Narine Gevorgyan**, candidate for the MA degree in Comparative History, with a specialization in Interdisciplinary Medieval Studies declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information as properly credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on any person's or institution's copyright. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

Budapest, __ May 2013

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Signature

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INTRODUCTION

A. General Introduction to the Topic and Previous Scholarship

In 1501 Isma'il I (r. 1501-1524), the spiritual head of the Safavi Sufi order, conquered Tabriz and established the Safavid polity with the support of the Turkmen population of Anatolia, generally known as the Qizilbash (lit. "redheads"), who venerated him as *mahdi*, the long awaited Hidden Imam in Shi'ite Islam. After the conquest, aspiring to conquer the world, Isma'il assumed the pre-Islamic title of the *shah* and proclaimed Twelver Shi'ism as the official religion of his realm, the main population of which at that time were adherents of Sunni Islam.[1] The scholarly discussion of the possible reasons for Isma'il's adoption of Twelver Shi'ism at the expense of Qizilbash Islam—which was an amalgamation of unrefined notions of extreme Shi'ism (*ghulluw*) distinguished for the deification of the religious leader, Sufism with its mystical dimensions, and Turco-Mongol cultural elements—has mainly pointed to Isma'il's sense for *Realpolitik*.[2] On the one hand, Isma'il's religious policies addressed the expediency need to withstand the political and ideological challenges from his rivals, the Sunni Ottoman and Uzbek Empires. On the other, adherence to Twelver Shi'ism allowed the transition from a Safavid military mystical order to an imperial rule, as it provided a stable and legitimate basis for a centralizing and bureaucratizing state and led to elimination of the alternative loci of power. It has also been suggested that Isma'il's decision

[1] On the inception of the Safavid rule and further references, see: H. R. Roemer, "The Safavid Period," in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, ed. P. Jackson and L. Lockhart, vol. 6 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 189-90; Gh. Sarwar, *History of Shāh Ismā'il* (Aligarh: Muslim University, 1939); R. M. Savory, "The Consolidation of Ṣafawid Power in Persia," *Der Islam* 41, no. 1 (1965): 71-94; S. A. Arjomand, "The Rise of Shah Esmā'il as a Mahdist Revolution," *Studies in Persianate Societies* 3 (2005): 44-65; A. Newman, *Safavid Iran: Rebirth of a Persian Empire* (London: I.B Taurus 2009), 13-25. For a detailed bibliography of sources on the Safavid period, see JahanbakhshSavagheb, *Tarikhnegāridaraṣr-e Safaviyyevashenākht-e manābe' vamakhāz* [Historiography of the Safavid Period and the Study of the Related Sources] (Shiraz: Enteshārāt-e Navid (Navid Publications), 2001), esp. 26-165, and 165-316 for European sources.

[2] See K. Babayan, "The Safavid Synthesis: From Qizilbash Islam to Imamite Shi'ism," *Iranian Studies* 27, no. 1/4 (1994): 136. On the religious environment of Anatolia prior to the inception of the Safavid rule, see: K. Babayan, *Mystics, Monarchs, and Messiahs. Cultura Landscapes of Early Modern Iran.* Harvard Middle Eastern Monographs 35(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003). Babayan also shows the transformation of the Safavid order into imperial rule with the adoption of law-oriented Twelver Shi'ism. She shows the gradual marginalization of the Qizilbash as a result of centralizing policies of the Safavid Shahs who were constantly

was dictated by the widespread worship of Shi'ite Imams among the Qizilbash and Iranian population.[3]

The emergence of the Safavid polity with a different ideology and universal aspirations turned into a serious challenge to the political legitimacy of the Ottomans and changed the power balance in the region. The ensuing confrontation between the two empires for political supremacy in the region forced both states to engage in competing rhetoric of legitimization. This confrontation and the ways both polities defined themselves in opposition to each other played an important role in the further articulation and transformation of their religious identities, putting particular emphasis on religion in their state-building projects.[4] This inter-imperial confrontation took place against the background of millenarian expectations, concerns with spiritual renewal, and aspirations to the Universal Monarchy that informed the religio-political atmosphere of not only these states, but those around the Mediterranean and beyond as well.[5]

Although Shi'ism became a major factor within the Safavid polity and the basis of Safavid legitimacy, there was a wide array of other important religious, ethnic, and political constituencies in play in Safavid Iran in the course of the sixteenth and the beginning of the

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negotiating between this mystically and messianically oriented elements of their polity and the concerns for the centralizing state.

[3] K. Babayan, "The Safavid Synthesis," 146-147.

[4] M. Dressler, "Inventing Orthodoxy: Competing Claims for Authority and Legitimacy in the Ottoman-Safavid Conflict," in Hakan T. Karateke and Maurus Reinkowski, ed., *Legitimizing the Order: The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 151-173. Dressler argued that the "religious dichotomy" between the Ottomans and Safavids was a consequence of their religious and political competition for the domination of Anatolia. Focusing on the competing rhetoric of both sides, he demonstrated that in the initial stage of the confrontation their respective worldviews, self-images and even terminologies stemmed from the same symbolic order and discursive fields, sharing millenarian and Sufi imagery. He argued that it was due to the further justification and legitimation of their respective actions against each other that both sides resorted to religious rhetoric and started to label each other as 'apostates,' and, thus, define and articulate their own "orthodoxies." The further developments of legalistic Sunnism and Shi'ism as state doctrines of the Ottomans and Safavids respectively were corollaries of these processes. However, Dressler acknowledged that in the Safavid case the institutionalization of Shi'ism was influenced also by a set of internal developments (ibid., esp. 171-172). On the Ottoman-Safavid confrontation, see: A. Allouche, *The Origins and Development of the Ottoman-Safavid Conflict* (906-962/ 1500-1555) (Berlin: Klaus Schwartz Verlag, 1983).

[5] C. H. Fleischer, "The Lawgiver as Messiah: The Making of the Imperial Image in the Reign of Süleymân," in *Soliman le magnifiqueet son temps*, ed. Gilles Veinstein (Paris: La Documentation Française, 1992), 159-177. See also, Tijana Krstić, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 7-8, and Chapter Three, 75-97.

seventeenth century that the Safavids had to contend with. They did so by resorting to a range of legitimizing devices, including ancient, ʻAlid messianic rhetoric, Turco-Mongol symbols, apocryphal legends, etc.[6] The development and crystallization of a Shiʻite identity based on a legalistic state-supported Twelver Shiʻism, as well as a theological and practical "orthodoxy" in the Safavid Empire was a gradual process, and it was an integral part of the "formational" reigns of Ismaʻil I, Tahmasp (r. 1524–1576), and ʻAbbas I (r. 1589–1629). It was enhanced by Safavid monarchs in collaboration with the Shiʻite religious scholars hailing from famous centers of Shiʻite learning of the time in Jabal ʻAmil (in nowadays Lebanon), as well as Iraq and Bahrain, who were appointed to the highest religious positions in the Safavid state.[7] These scholars played an important role in the Safavid imperial project: they provided the needed doctrinal validation and legal coherence to the Safavid state-building project. Besides their expertise in Shiʻite law, these scholars professed profound knowledge of Sunnite doctrine, jurisprudence and polemical literature, and provided the Safavids with a source of religious and political legitimation in their ideological confrontation with the Ottoman Empire.[8]

Building on the existing literature, one of the main questions that will underline this thesis relates to the extent to which the Ottoman-Safavid imperial confrontation in the course

[6] For an extensive discussion of the shifting legitimacies of the Safavids in the course of the sixteenth century, see: C. Mitchell, *The Practice of Politics in Safavid Iran: Power, Religion and Rhetoric* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2009). Sholeh Quinn's *Historical Writing during the Reign of Shah 'Abbas: Ideology, Imitation and Legitimacy in Safavid Chronicles* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2000) also deals with the legitimizing strategies of the Safavid Shahs, demonstrating the nature of their multi-dimensional ideology and the characteristic features of their imperial propaganda.

[7] D. Stewart, "Notes on the Migration of ʻAmili Scholars to Safavid Iran," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 55 (1996): 81-103; Albert Hourani, "From Jabal ʻĀmil to Persia," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies* 49 (1986); see also A. Newman, "The Myth of the Clerical Migration to Safawid Iran: Arab Shiʻte Opposition to Ali al-Karaki and Safawid Shi'ism," *Die Welt des Islams* 33 (1993), 66-112.

[8] On the process of the institutionalization of Twelver Shiʻism in Safavid Iran and the role of Shiʻite scholars, see: S. Arjomand, *The Shadow of God and the Hidden Imam: Religion, Political Order, and Societal Change in Shi'ite Iran from the Beginning to 1890* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 105-214; R. Abisaab's monograph *Converting Persia: Religion and Power in the Safavid Empire* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004); Abisaab discusses at length the main features of the gradual adoption of state-operated legalistic Shiʻism. Focusing on the activities and scholarly production of nine ʻAmili jurists holding highest religious positions in the Safavid Empire and the social and political context they acted within, Abisaab demonstrates how these jurists redefined Shiʻite juridical concepts to suppress the folk and heterodox notions of Shiʻism and define "orthodoxy," thus

of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century influenced the state building project of the Safavids as well as the institutionalization of Twelver Shi'ism and its "(re)definition" as a state doctrine.

B. General Framework of Inquiry and the Justification of the Topic

So far, Safavid scholarship has looked at the process of religio-political transformation in Safavid Iran within the narrow framework of Safavid history. As mentioned, several studies have acknowledged the role of Ottoman-Safavid military and ideological confrontation with regard to Safavid adoption and institutionalization of Twelver Shi'ism, and it has even been suggested that the Ottoman ideological challenge was the possible reason for some institutional developments in Iran, like the consolidation of the office of *shaykh al-Islam* (chief jurisconsult) of the Safavid capital.[9] However, a study that discusses the religio-political dynamics of both empires and attempts to delineate their main characteristics with regards to functional and developmental similarities as well as differences within a coherent comparative framework is missing.

Thus, my question is what if we enlarge our field of inquiry and look at the state- and confession-building processes in the Safavid Empire in relation to their immediate neighbors, the Ottomans, and even further expand the horizon to include a broader zone, once conceptualized by A. al-Azmeh as "Irano-Mediterranean frontier," in the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century.[10] Recently T. Krstić has suggested a theoretical

aiming at a tighter religious and political integration of larger segments of population, as well as at providing doctrinal legitimation for the Safavids in their ideological confrontation with the Ottomans.

[9] R. Abisaab, *Converting Persia*; see also: D. Stewart, "The First Shaykh al-Islam of the Safavid Capital Qazvin," *Journal of American Oriental Society* 116, no. 3 (1996): 405.

[10] The concept of an "Irano-Mediterranean frontier" aimed to argue that in the medieval period Christianity and Islam seemingly absolutely different units distributed over a vast geography comprising the entire Mediterranean zone and Iran actually shared common conceptual frameworks of society, politics, and religion, a product of the post-Hellenistic period that influenced the formation of both Mediterranean and Iranian civilization during late Antiquity (see: A. al-Azmeh, *Muslim Kingship: Power and the Sacred in Muslim, Christian, and Pagan Polities* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1997), 9). Recent scholarship dealing with the Mediterranean in the Early Modern period has also acknowledged the *long dureé* linguistic, cultural, and religious contacts within this zone and the shared conceptual frameworks influential in shaping the confessional communities. On the issue of the Mediterranean as a unit of analysis, see: F. Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*. tr. Sian Reynolds (New York: Harper and Row, 1972); see

framework of "the age of confessionalization and empire building" to interpret the "connected histories"[11] of the early modern Ottoman and Safavid Empires and their Mediterranean counterparts. Her study has argued that parallel to the concurrent establishment of confessional entities of Lutheranism, Calvinism, and reformed Catholicism in post-Reformation Europe (second half of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries), the contemporary Ottoman and Safavid Empires emerged as distinct Sunni and Shi'ite Muslim "confessional and territorial blocks." Their gradual confessional and political polarization was informed by the inter-imperial rivalry, millenarian tendencies and expectations of spiritual renewal.[12] Trying to go beyond the Eurocentric interpretations of the notion of the "Early Modern" and the drawbacks of comparative history, and building on S. Subrahmanyam's framework of "connected histories" that strives to identify certain, mostly non-economic, "linchpin" trends experienced across the early modern Eurasia, Krstić has argued that "confessionalization" and "social disciplining" were "linchpin" trends of the historical period defined as Early Modern. This framework suggests focusing on the intertwined nature of the state- and confession-building processes in the connected early modern polities—in this case the Ottoman and Safavid Empires (as well as their European Christian interlocutors)—while keeping in mind social, religious, cultural, and political specificities of each polity.[13]

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also: Adnan Husain, "Introduction: Approaching Islam and the Religious Cultures of Medieval and Early Modern Mediterranean," in *A Faithful Sea: The Religious Cultures of the Mediterranean, 1200-1700*, ed. Adnan Husain and K. E. Fleming (Oxford: Oneworld, 2007), 1-26.

[11] The concept coined by Sanjay Subrahmanyam in "Connected Histories: Notes towards Reconfiguration of Early Modern Euroasia," *Modern Asian Studies* 31, no. 3 (1997): 735-762.

[12] Tijana Krstić, "Illuminated by the Light of Islam: Ottoman Self-narratives of Conversion," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51, no. 1 (2009): 35-37. Eadem, *Contested Conversions*, esp., 12-16. Putting the Ottoman Empire at the center of the investigation, the book proposes to define the "age of confessionalization" based on the Ottoman experience of state and confession building, as well as the key moments in the Ottomans' interaction with their rivals, as an era that lasted from the 1450s, when Ottomans attained their capital with its imperial legacy, to the 1690s, when the Kadizadeli movement collapsed in the aftermath of the failure of the Second Siege of Vienna (1683).

[13] Ibid.

The "confessionalization" paradigm was developed by German historians H. Schilling and W. Reinhard in the 1980s to provide a methodologically and theoretically more enhanced, societal approach to the problem of the parallel formation of Lutheran, Calvinist and Reformed Catholic confessions in post-Council of Trent Europe. As opposed to the postulate of the socio-economic primacy in German historiography, the paradigm suggested that the confessional factor was a leading force in the societal developments of Early Modern Europe, which was defined as a period of "thorough theologizing." The advocates of this paradigm sought to convey a social process that represented the full interaction of religious, political, economic and other interpersonal dynamics in a given region. The paradigm suggests that the political elites in various early modern German states strove to impose official religious reforms, based on the precept of "whose realm, his religion" (*cuius regio, eius religio*). The religio-political integration that was considered the basis for community and state building was achieved through religious indoctrination imposed by state and religious authorities, delineation and crystallization of doctrinal and ritual differences and social disciplining.[14]

Historians from many other fields and geographical contexts undertook to consider the utility of the concept of "confessionalization" in their geo-political and historical contexts. As a consequence, the applicability and universality of the paradigm has been challenged and criticized, especially the idea that confession was always imposed "from above," by the state.

[14] H. Schilling, "Confessionalization: Historical and Scholarly Perspectives of a Comparative and Interdisciplinary Study," In *Confessionalization in Europe, 1555-1700, Essays in Honor and Memory of BodoNischan*, ed. J.M. Headley, et al (Burlington: Ashgate, 2004), 22-24, 29; Idem. "Confessionalization in the Empire: Religious and Societal Change in Germany between 1555 and 1620," in *Religion, Political Culture and the Emergence of Early Modern Society: Essays in German and Dutch History* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 205-245; T. Brady, "Confessionalization - The Career of a Concept," in *Confessionalization in Europe, 1555-1700*, ed. J. M. Headley, H. J. Hillerbrand, and A. J. Papalas (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 1-20. See also: Jorg Deventer, "Confessionalization' – a Useful Theoretical Concept for the Study of Religion, Politics, and Society in Early Modern East-Central Europe?," *European Review of History* 11, no. 3 (2004): 403-425; J.F. Harrington, H. W. Smith, "Confessionalization, Community, and State Building in Germany, 1555-1870," *Journal of Modern History* 69, no. 1 (1997): 77-101.

In my thesis I want to use the framework of the "age of confessionalization" as a theoretical background when discussing the religio-political dynamics in Safavid Iran in the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century. I want to explore whether the paradigm of "confessionalization" can be a useful heuristic device for the study of Safavid history and early modern Islamic history in general, while keeping in mind the peculiarities of Islam, such as the absence of the institution of the church, and the fact that the major doctrinal divisions between the branches of Islam transpired already in the medieval period. My discussion will try to place the state- and confession- building processes in Iran, that were enhanced through a close collaboration of the Safavid shahs and Shi'ite religious scholars, within the broader framework of the Ottoman-Safavid "connected histories" (and to a lesser extent that of their Mediterranean counterparts).[15] This close interaction of the state and religious authorities in both Ottoman and Safavid Empires led to the imposition of respective religious "orthodoxies." In both cases these "orthodoxies" were articulated in terms of clearly defined religious and legal doctrine and were imposed upon the subjects by instructing them in proper social and ritual conduct ("orthopraxy") that stood in opposition to the morally misguided behavior of the enemy.

Thus, through the study of a particular prescriptive text from the first half of the seventeenth century seeking to regulate the behavior of the faithful I will try to delineate the main features of the gradual "Shi'itization" of the Safavid polity in dialogue with the process of "Sunnitization" in the contemporary Ottoman polity to examine both similarities and differences in the manifestation of these processes.[16]

[15] Within the limited scope of an MA thesis, I cannot address in a proper manner the issue of Safavid-Uzbek, as well as Safavid-Mughal inter-imperial rivalries and the respective religio-political developments in these polities. In this respect, Safavid-Uzbek competition in the field of political and religious ideology, as well as numerous military encounters played an important role in shaping the respective policies of the Safavid shahs (see: M. B. Dickson, "Shah Ṭahmāsp and the Uzbeks," PhD Dissertation (Princeton University, 1958).

[16] R. Abisaab, *Converting Persia*; T. Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, esp. Chapter One, 26-50; D. Terzioğlu, "Where *'Ilmiḥāl* Meets Catechism: Islamic Manuals of Religious Instruction in the Ottoman Empire in the Age of Confessionalization," *Past and Present* (2013): forthcoming; L. Pierce, *Morality Tales: Law and Gender in the Ottoman Court of Aintab* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 1-18. Thus, I will also address the

C. Introducing the Source, Research Questions and General Plan of the Study

With this goal in mind, I want to focus on the manuals of religious instruction that gained wide circulation in the Safavid Empire in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, and were aimed at imparting knowledge of the main precepts of the faith and correct ritual practice upon larger segments of the Safavid society.[17] Almost simultaneously, religious manuals of faith (*'ilmihals*) started to proliferate also in the Ottoman Empire, particularly from the second half of the sixteenth century. Ottoman *'ilmihals*, a genre that had developed on the basis of medieval Arabo-Persian polemical creeds (*'aka'id*),[18] started to be composed in simple Ottoman Turkish from the beginning of the fifteenth century and were aimed at instructing the expanding Muslim community and new converts to Islam on how to be pious Muslims.[19]Ottoman scholars have demonstrated particular sensibilities to the historical context they were written in. Thus, those '*ilmihals* that appeared from the mid-sixteenth century already addressed not the converts and novices in religion but the Sunni Muslim community in general, and they tried to correct the existing ritual practices with a special emphasis on "orthopraxy."[20]

What were the functional and content peculiarities of the genre of religious manuals that started to appear in the Safavid Empire and how did they reflect the changing religious sensibilities and social and political trends of the times when they were composed? What perspectives can we obtain when addressing these questions within the framework of "age of confessionalization and state-building"?

concept of "social disciplining", which according to R. Hsia is directly connected to the process of "confessionalization" and preconditions for the latter (see: R. Po-chia Hsia, *Social Discipline in the Reformation: Central Europe 1550-1750* (London, New York: Routledge, 1992). R. Abisaab has already used this concept with regards to the Safavid Iran, however, not in connection with the concept of "confessionalization."

[17] R. Abisaab, *Converting Persia*, 28-29.

[18]See: A. J. Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed: its Genesis and Historical Development* (Cambridge, 1932), see also: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition (hereafter EI2), s.v. 'Akīda.

[19] T. Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 26-50, esp. 26-27.

[20] Ibid.; see: D. Terzioğlu, "Where *'ilmiḥāl* Meets Catechism: Islamic Manuals of Religious Instruction in the Ottoman Empire in the Age of Confessionalization," *Past and Present* (2013) (forthcoming).

The genre of manuals of religious instruction and how it emerged in the Shi'ite tradition is a little studied topic in itself and cannot be fully addressed within the limited scope of an MA thesis. Thus, as a point of entry into this discussion, my study will focus on one of the most famous and most circulated religious manuals of Shi'ite jurisprudence (*fiqh*) titled *Jami'-i 'Abbasi* ("The [Legal] Compendium for Shah 'Abbas") commissioned by Shah 'Abbas I from one of the leading religious authorities of his time, Baha al-Din al-'Amili (d. 1629). I will focus on a contextualized reading of Chapter Seven of this manuals, *On the Religious Visitation (ziyaret) of His Holiness the Refuge of Prophecy Muhammad and his family, The Commander of the Faithful Ali, the Infallible Imams, on the times of their birth and death*,[21] which is not a subject matter typically addressed in Islamic manuals of jurisprudence, and as argued in a study, appears in such a manual for the first time.[22]

To bring in a comparative perspective and to discuss this possible dialogue between the confession-building processes of the two empires, I will also analyze a near-contemporary religious manual, an *'ilmihal*, written by a member of the Ottoman learned establishment Birgivi Mehmed (d. 1573), namely the treatise titled *Ziyâretü'l-kubûr* (*The Visitation of Shrines*).[23] This text explains the correct conduct and ritual practice during visitation of shrines and tombs of saints.

I will, thus, engage with the argumentations and main propositions of both manuals in order to see how and to what extent they reveal shared sensibilities towards the historical context in which they were written. As my discussion will demonstrate, these manuals showed striking similarities in their argumentation and denial of the precepts of one another. Should they be viewed as a part of the tradition of Shi'ite and Sunni polemic that existed for

[21] Baha' al-Din, Muhammad ibn Husayn *Kitab-i Jami'-i 'Abbasi* (Tehran: Entesharat-e Farahani, 1985), 163-191.
[22] *Encyclopeadia Islamica*, entry: *Jāmi'i 'Abbāsī*, http://www.encyclopaediaislamica.com/madkhal2.php?sid=4383 (accessed, May 2013).

centuries, or are they informed by the ongoing Ottoman-Safavid political and ideological confrontation? Was the proliferation of these religious manuals comparable but basically independent development, or were some of the actors on both sides of the Ottoman-Safavid divide aware of each other's' activities, particularly when considering that another "linchpin" trend of the early modern period was the "elite circulation" across political boundaries?[24]

In Chapter One of my thesis I will delineate the main features of the early Safavid policies of "Shi'itization," enhanced through collaboration of the Safavid Shahs with Shi'ite religious scholars, within the context of the Ottoman-Safavid political and ideological confrontation. I will also draw parallels between the Ottoman and Safavid experiences of the state- and confession-building process.

In Chapter Two I will focus on the religious policies of Shah 'Abbas I and present the historical context when *Jami'-i 'Abbasi* was commissioned. My discussion also focuses on the life and activities of the author of *Jami'-i 'Abbasi*, Baha al-Din Muhammad al-'Amili and the 'Amili scholarly tradition he was a part of.

Chapter Three will engage with the discussion of religious instruction and delineation of confessional boundaries in the second half of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century, focusing on the two religious manuals discussed above.

[23] The work has been published in Turkish translation from Arabic under the title *Bid'atveMüstehâb: KabirZiyaretleri*, tr. A. Muhammad Beşir. I am using this translation, available at http://gift2shia.files.wordpress.com/2011/02/27.pdf

[24] S. Subrahmanyan, "Connected Histories," 748.

CHAPTER ONE:
FASHIONING A SHI'ITE IDENTITY FOR THE SHAH'S STATE: EMPIRE- AND CONFESSION-BUILDING WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE OTTOMAN-SAFAVID CONFRONTATION IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

A. Ottoman-Safavid Conflict in the Sixteenth Century

In the mid-fifteenth century the quietist Safavid Sufi order from Ardabil that exerted wide religious and political influence in Anatolia adopted an extreme Shi'ite ideology and gradually transformed into a militant movement with messianic aspirations. In 1501, the spiritual and military head of the order, Isma'il I (r. 1501-1524), conquered Tabriz and established the Safavid polity with the support of the Anatolian Turkmen population who venerated him as *mahdi* (the long-awaited Hidden Imam in Shi'ite Islam). After this momentous event, Isma'il, aspiring to establish universal domination, assumed the pre-Islamic title of the *shah* and proclaimed Twelver Shi'ism the official religion of his new polity, the main population of which at that time were adherents of Sunni Islam.[25] The emergence of the Safavid polity with universal aspirations and claims to leadership in Islam not only challenged the religious and political legitimation of the Ottoman dynasty, but also turned into an explicit threat to the territorial integrity of their Empire, mainly because of the large following that the Safavids commanded among the Ottoman subjects in Iraq and Anatolia, generally referred to as the Qizilbash (lit. "redheads"). Discontented by the centralizing policies of the Ottoman government, these elements of Ottoman society perceived the Safavids as a political as well as territorial alternative capable of redeeming them from the Ottoman oppression.[26] As a subsequence, a number of millenarian uprisings, initiated by the supporters of the Safavids, swept through the Ottoman lands. The biggest of these uprisings was the Shahqulu rebellion in the province of Teke Ili in 1511. These rebellions, though cruelly suppressed by the Ottomans, had a strong impact on the subsequent

[25] Cf. the references given in the footnote 1.

development of the political and religious agendas of both states and the legitimation of their rule. The Safavid threat forced many key political and religious figures in the service of the Ottoman state, including an Ottoman prince, Shehzade Korkud (ca. 1468-1513), and important religious authorities, such as Ottoman chief jurisprudents Kemalpashazade (1525-1534) and Ebussu'ud Efendi (15451576) to engage in polemical debates providing intellectual and ideological justification for the Ottoman attacks against the supporters of the Safavid cause. The discourse promulgated by these authors in various polemical treatises and official juridical rulings (*fatawa*) resorted to religious terminology depicting their enemies as "heretics" and "apostates."[27] The public denunciation of the "unbelief" (*kufr*) of the Safavids and their Qizilbash followers became particularly emphasized during the reign of Selim I (1512-1520), when after the conquest of the Mamluk Sultanate and the holly shrine cities of Mecca and Medina, the Ottoman sultan started to fashion himself as the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and the upholder of the Islamic law, *shari'a*. After Selim I temporarily averted the Safavid threat by defeating Ismail in 1514 at the Battle of Chaldiran, legitimizing again his offensive in terms of apostasy, the Ottoman state began to systematically purge Shi'ite elements and rebellious heterodox dervishes in its own territories.[28]

M. Dressler argued that the Ottoman-Safavid confrontation and the rhetoric of legitimation that the competing parties resorted to, initially centered within identical symbolic order and discursive field, turned into a pivotal factor in their self-identification and further articulation of mutual differences. This served as a basis for the eventual institutionalization

[26] R. Yildirim, "Turkomans Between Two Empires: The Origins of the Qizilbash Identity in Anatolia, (1447-1514)", PHD Dissertation (Bilkent University 2008): 150-415.
[27] N. Al-Tikriti "Kalam in the Service of State: Apostasy and Defining of Ottoman Islamic Identity," In *Legitimizing the Order*, Ed. H. Karateke and M. Rainkowski (Leiden: Brill, 2005): 131-149, idem Nabil Al-Tikriti. *Şehzade Korkud (CA. 1468-1513) and the Articulation of Early 16th Century Ottoman Religious Idenity*. Phd Thesis. Chicago (2004), esp. 184-185. See also E. Eberhard, *Osmanische Polemik gegen die Safawiden im 16. Jahrhundert nach arabischen Handschriften* (Freiburg: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1970), 164-202.
[28] Allouche, *Ottoman-Safavid Conflict*, 65-99.

of Sunnism and Twelver Shi'iism as state religions in the course of the sixteenth century in the Ottoman and Safavid Empires, respectively.[29]

The Ottoman rhetoric against the Safavids and debates over issues related to dogma remained an integral part of the self-image of the Ottoman sultans.[30] These debates over dogmatic issues appear to be influential in the state- and confession-building trajectories of both states. The main criticisms directed by the Ottomans against the Safavids and their Qizilbash followers concerned the latter's entering into a state of *ibdba*, i.e. not abiding by Islamic laws, their rejection of the *shar'ia* and ritual duties; their ritual gathering with women, indifference to the normal bonds of marriage (criticism of temporary marriage), alteration of the direction of the prayer (*qibla*), and their veneration of their rulers as incarnations of the divine. Ottoman criticisms also touched upon the Safavid refusal to observe the canonically obligatory Friday prayer due to the absence of a legitimate Imam, their ritual cursing of the first three Sunni caliphs (Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthman), and their alleged lack of reverence to the Holy Qur'an and preference for hadith of 'questionable origin' concerning the Prophet's appointment of 'Ali as his successor.[31]

Thus, with the articulation of the characteristics of the Qizilbash heresy and the legitimization of their persecution, Ottoman intellectuals and religious authorities gradually started to draw boundaries between their "orthodoxy," which started to be identified with upholding Hanafi Sunnism, while and Muslim "others" among which the Shi'ite followers of the Safavid shah were the arch-heretics. As we will see below, this religious rhetoric and activities of the Ottoman Sunni legal scholars in drawing the boundaries of what was acceptable and correct in religion did not remained unanswered by the Safavids. Mutually

[29] See M. Dressler, "Inventing Orthodoxy," 151-152. M. Dressler also argued that the reasons for the Ottoman sternness against the Qizilbash, which formed the basis of their accusations were threefold: 1) the Qizilbash rejection of the Ottoman rule, which had resulted in a number of rebellions challenging Ottoman authority; 2) Their devotion to the Safavid shah who chased universal aspirations for expanding his power over the Ottoman realms; 3) Their condemnation of the Qizilbash in heresy, which served as the main basis for legitimizing the persecution of the latter (ibid.: 155-156).

informed religious rhetoric and debates around doctrinal issues greatly influenced the closely intertwined confession- and state-building processes.

B. The Collaboration of the Safavid Shahs and the Shi'ite 'Ulema from Jabal 'Amil

After the conquest of Tabriz, Shah Isma'il I proclaimed Twelver Shi'ism the official religion of his new polity and mandated the dissemination of the new faith over all the regions that came under his control. However, the process of conversion of Iran that was concomitant to the evolution of the non-scriptural pietistic Shi'ism of the early Safavids and their Qizilbash followers into a scripture-based urban Twelver Shi'ism was a long process that received a particular impetus during the reign of Ismai'il's son and immediate successor Shah Tahmasp (1524-1576) and continued throughout the reign of 'Abbas I (1587-1629). As scholars of Safavid history have suggested, the emphasis on imposition of legalistic Shi'ism was dictated by internal and external expediencies, namely the need to eliminate the authority and jurisdiction of all alternative centers of power, as well as to suppress millenarianism, shamanism, popular Sufism and Sunnism and to create a centralized state capable of thwarting its rivals—the Sunni states of the Ottomans Empire in the West and the Uzbeks in the East—on both political and ideological levels.[32]

In this section I will try to delineate the process of establishment of Twelver Shi'ism in Iran, which was enhanced through collaboration of the state, elites and religious scholars, within the larger context of the Ottoman-Safavid inter-imperial rivalry. Particularly, I will focus on the doctrinal issues contested between the rivaling parties and see how these polemics influenced the re-definition of respective doctrines and the subsequent institutional developments, especially regarding the (re)definition of the role of religious authority.

[30] See Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 27.
[31] Eberhard, *Osmanische Polemik*, 48-53.
[32] R. Abisaab, *Converting Persia*, 8-10; see also Arjomand, *Shadow of God*, 105-159.

Recently scholars of Ottoman history have contended that in the first half of the sixteenth century the inter-imperial confrontation between the Ottomans and the Safavids took place against the background of millenarian expectations, concerns with spiritual renewal, and aspirations to the Universal Monarchy that informed the religio-political atmosphere in the sixteenth-century "Irano-Mediterranean frontier,"[33] since the year 1592/93 was the end of the first Millennium according to the Muslim calendar.[34] Until the end of Shah Isma'il's reign, in the mid-1530s, there was an intense competition between him and Ottoman sultans Selim I (1512-1520) and particularly Suleyman I (1520-1566) for the title of the prophesied messianic Last Emperor who could conquer the world and renew Islam. However, as the military encounters between them demonstrated that neither side is capable of achieving the ultimate victory over the enemies, new ideological developments started to be visible in their policies.[35] As a result, there was a shift in imperial ideology from emphasis on the ruler's messianic charismas to his image as a rightful implementer of Islamic law. Both Ottoman and Safavid rulers began to strive for the consolidation of their states, articulation of an "orthodox" religious doctrine, and religious homogenization through imposition of legalistic Sunnism and Shi'ism as their respective state religions. The legitimacy of the Ottoman polity thenceforth started to be based on a legal order that was set mainly against that of their ideological rivals.[36] The projection of the Sunni Islam and Twelver Shi'ism

[33] I use the term "Irano-Mediterranean frontier" following Aziz al-Azmeh, *Muslim Kingship*, 9.
[34] S. Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories," 746-747; C. Fleischer, "The Lawgiver as Messiah: The Making of the Imperial Image in the Reign of Süleymân," in *Soliman le magnifique et son temps*, ed. Gilles Veinstein (Paris: La Documentation Française, 1992), 159-77.
[35] C. Fleischer, "The Lawgiver as Messiah"; Tijana Krstic, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011): 13-14, 80-82.
[36] G. Necipoğlu with reference to Ottoman court historian Talikizade writing in 1593-94 and his identification of the twenty qualities that bolstered the legitimacy of the Ottoman sultans. To mention a few: "their unwavering adherence to Sunni Islam and the Hanefi legal school, their emphasis on maintaining a strong standing army, no other contemporary dynasty in the Islamic East or in Europe had 80,000 *kuls* paid full-time by the state treasury, in addition to provincial fief (timar) holders; their adherence to the 'noble shari'a', in no other Islamic dynasty had the 'luminous shari'a' been honoured to such a degree along with the respect paid to the *'ulema* after Mehmed II's establishment of a centralized system of state-sponsored madrasas (16), their maintenance of a full treasury, unlike the example of the Safavid ruler Shah Isma'il, who merely left behind 60,000 aspers when he died; their absolute power and ability to enforce imperial laws even in remote areas simply by sending written

became an essential part of the Ottoman and Safavid imperial building projects and paralleled the increase in the importance of the '*ulema* in the intellectual and political life of both empires. Religious scholars were assigned judicial positions by the Ottoman administration. Their activities and studies were directed to the great extent to solving problems arising from the application of religious law.[37] Similarly, in the Safavid case, this process was enhanced through a close collaboration of the Safavid Shahs with Shi'ite émigré religious scholars originating from Jabal 'Amil (in nowadays Lebanon), Iraq and Bahrain who gradually formed the new religious "hierocracy," and started the "re-definition" of Twelver Shi'ite doctrine in compliance with the state-building goals of the Safavids.[38]

One of the main questions raised by the Safavid historians refers to the reasons for the preference of the first Safavid Shahs for the Shi'ite religious scholars originating from Jabal 'Amil, a Syrian town at the periphery of the Ottoman Empire, which by the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century had become one of the most prominent centers of Shi'ite learning.[39] R. Abisaab has suggested several explanations for the Safavid partiality to the 'Amilis.[40] Thanks to the scripture-based urban Shi'ism they adhered to, they were capable of providing a much-needed source of legitimacy for imperial sovereignty of the Safavids and for the conversion of the Persian aristocracy from 'Sunnism' to 'Shi'ism.' Secondly, their profound knowledge of Sunnite doctrine, jurisprudence and polemical literature was essential in withstanding the ideological assault of the Ottoman Empire.[41]

decrees bearing their monogram, in contrast to the Safavid Shahs and the doges of Venice who were subject to the control of prominent patricians; their 'respect for individual property' and the right of even a simple villager in the Ottoman lands to accumulate money without any interference, unlike in the domains of the Safavid Shahs who greedily and unjustly appropriated the income of their subjects (see Necipoğlu, *Age of Sinan*, 30).

[37] Atcil, A. "The Formation of the Ottoman Learned Class and Legal Scholarship (1300-1600)", PhD. Thesis (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 2010), 144-200.

[38] S. Arjomand, "The Clerical Estate and the Emergence of a Shiʿite Hierocracy in Safavid Iran: A Study in Historical Sociology," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 28, no. 2 (1985): 169-219

[39] R. Abisaab, "Shi'ite Beginnings and Scholastic Tradition in Jabal 'Āmil in Lebanon," *The Muslim World*, vol. LXXXiX, no. 1 (1999): 15-16.

[40] R. Abisaab, "The Ulama of Jabal ʿAmil in Safavid Iran, 1501–1736: Marginality, Migration and Social Change," *Iranian Studies* 27 (1994): 109.

[41] Ibid., 104; eadem, *Converting Persia*, 12.

Another important factor that fostered the collaboration of the Safavid rulers with Syrian scholars from Jabal ʻAmil was their use of *ijtihad*, rational inference of legal precepts, that would permit new interpretations of *shariʻa* and Tradition and adjusting the doctrinal issues to the concerns of a secular ruler.[42] In this respect ʿAmili school was closely affiliated with Shafiʻi Sunni legal school (*madhab*), mainly because of both traditions' reliance on scripture with rationalist tools of analysis regarding the interpretation of certain aspects of Islamic Law. Moreover, most of the ʿAmili jurists obtained their legal education in Cairo under the supervision of the leading Shafiʻi jurists of their time.[43] To foster this "cooperation," the Safavid monarchs realized the need of vesting religious scholars with imperial authority. This was done by assigning them positions in institutions such as that of *shaykh al-Islam* (the highest religious dignitary of the important cities), whose main task was to undertake the religious education of the populace, and *pish-namaz* (prayer leaders for the royal court and the great city mosques). ʻAmili scholars and their Iranian descendants also served as custodians of religious practice (*vakil-i halaliyyat*), judges (*qadis*), etc.[44]

The collaboration with ʻAmili scholars started during the reign of Isma'il I with the arrival to Iran of the first émigré scholar Nur al-Din Abu'l-Hasan ʻAli b. al-Husayn b. ʻAbd al-ʻAli al-Karaki (henceforth al-Karaki, d. 1533), known as *al-Muhaqqiq al-Thani*. He was the first scholar in the service of Shah Ismaʿil and Shah Tahmasp to become a key figure in the process of imposition of the Imamite doctrine in the Safavid Empire.[45]

[42] Ibid.
[43] D. Stewart, *Islamic Legal Orthodoxy: Twelver Shiite Responses to the Sunni Legal System* (Salt Lake City: Utah University Press, 1998), 63-65.
[44] Abisaab, *Converting Persia*, 8-9,
[45] The migration of the Syrian Shiʻite scholars had serious institutional consequences in Safavid Iran. The early Safavid Shahs purposely appointed the émigré scholars and jurists to important religious and quasi-administrative positions (*shaykh al-Islam* (the highest religious dignitary of the important cities), and *pish-namaz* (prayer leaders for the royal court and the great city mosques), etc.) in order to disseminate the Shiʻite creed based on the Shi'ite School of law or madhhab. Thanks to the Safavid patronage they accumulated significant power and prestige (R. Abisaab, *Converting Persia*, 8; S. Arjomand, "The Clerical Estate and the Emergence of a Shiʻite Hierocracy in Safavid Iran: A Study in Historical Sociology," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, vol. 28, no. 2 (1985): 184-185.).

The religious treatises, that al-Karaki wrote with the commission or consent of the Safavid rulers, articulated both external and internal prerogatives of the Safavids. They were aimed at providing the Safavids with legitimacy and fashioning their new imperial and religious ideology. Here I will mention a couple of them that are directly related to the Ottoman-Safavid ideological conflict.

After Isma'il's conquest of Tabriz in 1501, the Muslims throughout the Safavid realm were obliged to renounce, by cursing and vilifying, the first three Sunnite caliphs. For this purpose, special state-sponsored missionaries, *tabarrai'iyan*, would proceed in public places and publicly curse and vilify the first three caliphs while pursuing the mission of converting the masses to the new religion.[46] Al-Karaki's treatise *Nafahat al-lahut fi l'an al-jibt wa al-taghut* ("Breath of Divinity in Cursing Magic and Idolatry") that was commissioned in 1511 by Shah Isma'il provided the Safavid practice of ritual cursing with legal basis.[47] R. Stanfield-Johnson views the treatise of al-Karaki as a sanction of the royal decree ordering the abandoning of *taqqiya* (precautionary religious dissimulation) in favor of the public enunciation of the *tabarra'*. According to R. Ja'afariyan, copies of this treatise became very soon available in the Ottoman empire, causing the indignation of the Sunnite population.[48] Later, during the reign of Shah Tahmasp, *tabarrai'iyan* formed a corporate organization supported by the shah himself. The practice of ritual curse became one of the main polemical issues between the Ottomans and Safavids, and its abandonment became one of important preconditions later in the Peace Treaty of Amasya between the two Empires.[49]

[46] R. Stanfield-Johnson, "The *Tabarra'iyan* and the Early Safavids," *Iranian Studies* 37/1 (2004), 5659; R. Ja'afariyān, *Naqš-e ḵanedān- Karakī dar ta'sīs-e va tadavom-e dowlat-e ṣafavi* [The Role of Karaki Family in the Establishment and Continuity of the Safavid State], (Tehran: Maharat, 1967), 317-318.
[47] Ibid., 174-175.
[48] Ibid.
[49] M. Köhbach, "Peace of Amasya," *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, available online http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/amasya-peaceaccessed (accessed May 5, 2013).

Al-Karaki was the first Shi'ite cleric to abandon the prohibition of Friday prayer held by a designated *mujtahid,* advocating the merits and special status of this worship in Islamic tradition. His views on Friday prayer and its special status in Islamic tradition and means of reinforcement of the authority of the ruler are reflected in another treatise, *Risala al-Ja'afariyan,* composed approximately in 1511. In 1515, he defended his position in another treatise, *Risalat salat al-jum'ah*, making the observance of Friday prayer 'optional' rather than 'obligatory'. Important point in the treatise concerned the role assigned to the *mujtahid.* According al-Karaki, the congregational prayer must be held by a designated *mujtahid* who is qualified to act as the general deputy of the Hidden Imam, with no mention that the sovereign should identify the deputy of the Imam.[50]

The issue of the Friday prayer was another fundamental polemical issue between the Ottomans and Safavids. As it had direct relation to the ruler's legitimacy, Islamic scholars have considered the delegation of the leadership of Friday prayer as the most important function of the caliphate, and the *khutba* (Friday sermon) pronounced during the Friday prayer as the ultimate symbol of sultanic and caliphal authority. However, in Shi'ite tradition the performance of the Friday prayer during the period of Occultation (the period absence of the Twelfth Imam would appear only on the Day of Judgment) was not permitted. This gave Ottomans an occasion to accuse the Shi'ites in falling astray of mainstream Islam, and by implication 'heretical'. On the contrary, Ottoman Sultans, starting from Suleyman, promoted the conduct of Friday prayer and patronized the construction of Friday mosques.[51]

[50] Abisaab, *Converting Persia*, 22. Al-Karaki's positions has been viewed as an attempt to expand the jurisdiction of the Shi'ite jurists and provide him with authority independent from the sovereign (ibid.: Ja'afariyan, *Naghsh-e Khanedan-e Karaki*, 198-199). Ja'afariyan says that *Salat al-Jum'a*, one of the most famous treatises of al-Karaki, was the first example of a single treatise to be dedicated to the Friday prayer (Ja'afariyan, 307.) Ja'afariyan suggests that this treatise was the first exposition of the idea of *vilayat-i faqih*, 'The Guardianship of the Islamic Jurists,' in the Shi'ite political thought (ibid.).
[51] Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan*, 35.

Al-Karaki also argued against the existing Safavid practice of prostration to the Shah, arguing that this practice also gave rise to Ottomans accusations of the 'heresy.'[52]

The process of "Shi'itization" of Iran acquired new dimensions the reign of Shah Tahmasp (1524-1576). The latter gave up the messianic aspirations of his father, and gradually started to assume the role of upholder of the right religion. In his *Memoirs* (completed in 1561), Tahmasp started to represent himself as the "Shadow" of God on earth," whose main obligation was to promulgate the sacred law.[53] With his *Memoir*, Tahmasp confirmed the Safavid break with a messianic and godlike father image.[54]

At earlier stage of his reign Tahmasp had bestowed unprecedented authority upon religious scholars. In 1533, the Shah granted an unprecedented authority to this scholar in a special *farman* (decree). Declaring al-Karaki as the *Seal of Jurisconsults* (*khatam al-mujtahidin*) and the Deputy of the Imam (*na'ib*), Shah Tahmasp granted him the power of appointment and dismissal of religious and military officials anywhere in the country. All officials and notables of the realm were ordered to consider him "their guide and model" and to obey him in all affairs. Twice Shaykh 'Ali is referred to as the *shaykh al-Islam*. According to this decree, the authority of the *Seal of Jurisconsults* rests on his unparalleled knowledge of the Sacred Law.[55] By this time, al-Karaki's opinions had become authoritative and binding in remote parts of the empire. He provided the governors with a manual (*dustur al-'amal*) instructing them on various socioeconomic matters. He set the legal punishments (*hudud*), and with the encouragement of Friday prayer he called for the appointment of a prayer leader in every village and city and gave him clear instructions as how to carry out his tasks.[56]

[52] Abisaan, *Converting Persia,* 25.
[53] K. Babayan, *Mystics, Monarchs and Messiahs: Cultural Landscapes of Early Modern Iran* (Cambridge: Harvard Middle Eastern Monographs, 2002): 302-303.
[54] Ibid.: 303.
[55] S. Arjomand, (tr. and ed.), "Two Decrees of Shah Tahmasb Concerning Statecraft and the Authority of Shaykh ʿAli al-Karakī," in *Authority and Political Culture in Shiʿism*, ed. S. A. Arjomand (Albany, 1988): 250-251. In the later period, one of al-Karaki's sos, 'Abd al-'Ali, and his grandson Husayn, were each given the appellation the 'Mujtahid of the Age,' which was not afterwards extended to other '*ulama*.
[56] Abisaab, *Converting Persia*, 28.

Although in his decree Tahmasp twice refers to al-Karaki as *shaykh al-Islam*, the Safavid sources make no mention that the scholar ever held the position of the *shaykh al-Islam.*[57] D. Stewart suggests that even if he did not hold a formal position in the government, his officially recognized status was similar to that which would later develop into the "shaykh al-islamate" of the Safavid capital, and then later in the seventeenth century into the position of mulla-bashi.[58] Elsewhere, the same scholar has argued that the formalization of the office of the *shaykh al-Islam* of the Safavid capital as the institutionalized locus of the highest religious authority had been launched during the reign of Shah Tahmasp, with the appointment of Shaykh Husayn b. ʻAbd al-Samad al-Harithi as *shaykh al-Islam* of Qazvin 1552-53. He was later replaced by the grandson of al-Karaki, Mir Sayyid Husayn al-Mujtahid (d. 1592–3) known for his strong anti-Sunni stance.[59] D. Stewart also contented that with the promulgation of this office Shah Tahmasb probably wanted to rival the Ottomans on the ideological level by creating a post nearly parallel to that of the Ottoman *shaykh al-islam,* and to find a scholarly spokesman to oppose the influential Ottoman jurist Ebussuʻud Efendi (d. 1574), who held the office of the *shaykh al-Islam* of Istanbul (1545-1574).[60]

Indeed, by the mid-sixteenth century the office of *shaykh al-Islam* (mufti) of Istanbul, became the supreme office in the Ottoman judicial hierarchy and chief source of authority in the Ottoman Empire.[61] Sultan Suleyman I with the help of Ebussuʻud was fashioning the imperial and religious identity of the Ottoman Empire, by presenting the Sultan as caliph,

[57] Jaʻafariyān, *Ḵanedān- Karakī*. Referring to the *Memoirs* of Shah Tahmasp, the scholar points out that he had the intention of appointing al-Karaki to the highest religious post in the empire. However, al-Karaki, according to Jaʻafariyan, for some unknown reasons must have refused any position and preferred to return to Najaf where he could pursue his scholarly activities.

[58] Stewart has pointed out that the secondary literature has paid little attention to the religious positions occupied by the ʻAmili jurists under the Safavid rule, except to the position of *shaykh al-Islam* of Isfahan, during the seventeenth century. He assumes that relatively little attention accorded to them is because they were little mentioned by the chroniclers who infrequently wrote about legal scholars in posts other than the *sadarat.* However, there was no mechanism for the incorporation of Arab Shiʻi jurists into the state apparatus; it developed only over time (D. Stewart, "Notes on the Migration of ʻAmili Scholars to Safavid Iran," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 55 (1996): 84-85).

[59] D. Stewart, "The First Shaykh al-Islam of the Safavid Capital Qazvin," *JAOS* (Jul-Sept. 1996), 387.

[60] Ibid.: 405.

which implied universal sovereignty over the Muslim community and introducing a regime of justice based on the promulgation of *shari'a* . Ebussu'ud was reforming the legal system of the empire harmonizing the Ottoman imperial law (*kanun*) with *shari'a*. One of the most important aspects of Suleyman's policies of "Sunnitization" was construction of communal mosques and obliging all subjects to regularly attend the prayers.[62] Friday mosques testified to the Suleyman's image of the prophesied 'renewer of religion'and the culmination of the triumph of religious orthodoxy and royal justice.[63] As pointed out by C. Fleischer, this change was still dictated by the ongoing perception of the eschatological mission of Suleyman, who was to put the world into perfect order before the end of times.[64]

One of the components of Shah Tahmasp's policies of "Shi'itization" became the persecution and suppression of the extreme Turkmen tribes and Sufi groups of his realms on the accusation of their "irreligion" (*ilhad*).[65] In the similar manner Ottomans also promoted their "Sunnitizing" policies through persecution and suppression of suspected Qizilbash supporters and the destruction of Sufi dervish lodges and convents.[66]

Attempts were made for the standardization of the acts of worship (*'ibadat*). To facilitate the dissemination and the acceptance of the precepts promulgated by al-Karaki among the Persian population, and to accelerate the conversion of the populace and the standardization of religious practices, Shah Tahmasp was actively encouraging the translation of Shi'te legal works, , *hadith* traditions, Qur'anic exegeses and popular literature into Persian.[67] Thus, religious instruction starts to become one of the chief instruments employed

[61] C. Imber, *Ebu's-su`ud: The Islamic Legal Tradition (Jurists: Profiles in Legal Theory)* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 7-8; Atcil, *Ottoman Learned Hierarchy*, 189-205.
[62] See, C. Imber, *Ebu's-su'ud*, 65-114; Necipoghlu, *Age of Sinan*, 27-47.
[63] Necipoglu, *The Age of Sinan*, 35.
[64] C. Fleischer, "The Lawgiver as Messiah," 159-77.
[65] Tahmasp started a ordered the suppression of the presumably extremist Turkman tribe of Sarulu on account of their "irreligion" (*ilhād*) in 1531, and also put down the heresy of a Sufi group who proclaimed him the Mahdi (1554-1555). Later the member of other Turkmen clan were put to death or imprisoned in the fortressof Alamut.
[66] D. Terzioğlu, "Sufis in the Age of State Building and Confessionalization, 1300-1600," in *The Ottoman World*, Ed. C. Woodhead (Routledge, 2011), 86-102.
[67] Ja'afariyān, *Kānedan-e Karakī*, 195-196; Abisaab, *Converting Persia*, 27-28.

by Safavid shahs and ‘Amili jurists for the purpose of spreading Shi‘ism and instructing larger segments of Persian- (and Turkish-) speaking population of Iran in the systematic application of the precepts of the faith.[68]

The previous discussion showed that the Ottoman and Safavid conflict during the sixteenth century brought their state- and confession- building enterprises into a direct dialogue together and eventually led to the transformation of the religious landscapes of the two empires. The parallel discussion of these multi-faceted processes shows similarities in the religio-political initiatives of the Ottomans and Safavids, particularly in defining their state doctrines and religious identities

[68] R. Abisaab, *Converting Persia*, 28-29.

CHAPTER TWO:
BAHA AL-DIN AL-'AMILI (D. 1629) AND THE POLITICS OF SHI'ITIZATION IN THE REIGN OF SHAH 'ABBAS (1588-1629)

A. Religious Policies in the Time of Shah Abbas

Shah 'Abbas I (r. 1588-1629) ascended the Safavid throne at the time when the foundations of the dynasty were weakened after the unstable reigns of Shah Isma'il II (r. 1576-1577) and Muhammad Khudabanda (r. 1577-1587).[69] He had to deal with internal challenges arising from the dissent of the Qizilbash elite and other unruly power-holders of his Empire at the height of the ongoing military and ideological confrontation with the Ottoman Empire and the Uzbek Khanate. The earlier Safavid legitimacy that presented the shahs as representatives of the Hidden Imam, shadows of God on earth in line with the pre-Islamic Iranian notions of kingship, as well as heads of the Safavid Sufi order, had lost its viability in light of a new state of affairs.[70]

As a result of a coherent campaign of "re-conquering" and centralizing his state, the Shah gradually marginalized the political and military power of the Qizilbash elite by creating for himself a new social and military base from converts of Caucasian origin, *ghulams* ('royal household slave'), who did not have alternative allegiances.[71] He also altered the picture of the tribal distribution across his realm by introducing Christian populations from the newly conquered territories, thus offering incentives for the economic growth of the country. Furthermore, he initiated diplomatic exchange and trade relations with early modern

[69] For a recent discussion of the policies of Isma'il II and Muhammad Khudabanda and further references, see C. Mitchell, *Practice of Politics*, 104-174. See also Shohreh Golsorkhi, "Ismail II and Mirza Makhdum Sharifi: An Interlude in Safavid History," *IJMES* 26/3 (1994): 477-488.
[70] Sh. Quinn, *Historical Writing*; 13-29.
[71] To marginalize the Qizilbash and limit their political and military power, Shah 'Abbas also dismantled the Safavid *appanage* system and introduced a new conception of sovereignty based on exclusive loyalty and devotion to the person of the Shah, as formulated by the concept of *shahsevan* "the love for shah," which stood in opposition to the notion of spiritual allegiance that the Qizilbash extended to all the family members of the Safavid Sufi household. On this see K. Babayan, *The Waning of Qizilbash*, 141-144; S. Babaie; K. Babayan, *Slaves of the Shah: New Elites of Safavid Iran* (I.B. Taurish: London, New York (2004): 1-19.

European powers. As a result of all these initiatives, the Safavid Empire emerged as a major power in the region.[72]

The political and social transformations introduced by the Shah, as Sh. Quinn demonstrates, were reflected in the historical narratives of the period pointing to the aforesaid ideological shifts and the emergence of new conceptions of sovereignty and dynastic rule.[73] Thus, having restored the territorial integrity of his Empire, Shah ‘Abbas started to enhance his legitimacy as the upholder of Twelver Shi‘ism and promulgator of Shi‘ite legalism and *sharia*.[74] Adherence to the principles of “orthodox” Twelver Shi‘ism, thus, became the major factor in further shaping the Safavid state. The religious policies of the Shah were carried out in collaboration with the ‘Amili ‘*ulema*, who continued to provide religio-legal foundations to the imperial project of Shah ‘Abbas.[75] Particularly close association with the court of Shah ‘Abbas had the leading scholars of his time, including Baha’i al-Din al-‘Amili (d. 1621), the *shaykh al-Islam of Iṣfahan*, Sayyid Muhammad Baqir b. Mir Shams-al-Din Muhammad HusayniAstarabadi, known as Mir Damad (d. 1631), and Sadr al-Din Muhammad b. Ibrahim Shirazi, known as MullaSadra (d. 1640), Ahmad b. Zayn al-‘Abidin al-’Alawi (d. 1644CE), and Lutfullah al-Maysi (d. 1622–23). Mir Damad had a close relationship with the Safavid court and advised Shahs on religious matters during the reigns of both ‘Abbas I and Shah Safi (1629-42). Another prominent jurist, who was invited to Isfahan by ‘Abbas and appointed as Friday prayer leader, was Shaykh Luṭfullah al-Maysi (d. 1622).[76]

[72] See Sh. Quinn, *Historical Writing*, 3-29; R. Abisaab, “New Ropes for Royal Tents: Shaykh-i Baha’i and the Imperial Order of Shah ‘Abbas,” *Studies on Persianate Societies* 1 (2003): 29-56.
Sh. Quinn; Ch. Melville, “Safavid Historiography,” in *Persian Historiography*, ed. Ch. Melville, E. Yarshater, (I.B. Tauris: London, New York, 2012): 209-258.

[74] On the reign of Shah ‘Abbas see Abisaab, *Converting Persia*, 53-59, K. Babayan, *Mystics, Monarchs and Messiahs*, 349-402.

[75]Abisaab, *Converting Persia*, 55-56. Although, as K. Babayan shows, the chroniclers continued to refer to the shah as the perfect guide (*murshid-i kamil*) and to the Qizilbash as sufis, they did so sentimentally and piously. Another source of legitimacy promoted by the contemporary chronicles was the linkage drawn between Shah ‘Abbaṣ and Temur (Quinn; Melville, “Safavid Historiography,” 214-216).

[76] S.H. Nasr, “Spiritual Movements, Philosophy and Theology in the Safavid Period,” in *Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 6.*Safavid Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 666-687.

With the religious and legal support of the 'Amili *'ulema*, Shah 'Abbas continued the policies of suppression of Sufi orders and other heterodox movements launched by his predecessors, denouncing these practice as 'heretical', 'irreligious,' and deviating from the mainstream 'orthodoxy' the political order was based upon.[77]

From 1587 onwards Shah 'Abbas initiated the relocation of his capital from Qazvin to Isfahan, which started to develop as a major center of Twelver Shi'ism and became treated as an alternative to the Twelver shrine cities that were still under Ottoman control. He paid considerable attention to the protection of the Shi'ite Holy Shrines, the *'atabat* ('the thresholds') in Iraq-i 'Arab, Najaf, Karbala, and Kazimayn. These shrines had been in Sunni Ottoman hands since the 1530s, a situation that served as a constant reminder of the privileged position the Ottomans enjoyed within the Islamic world.[78] 'Abbas launched a huge architectural project, patronizing the construction of a number of mosques and madrasas.[79] 'Abbas was the first Safavid Shah to patronize the construction of a monumental Friday mosque in 1612 with two adjacent theological seminaries, *madrasas*. Thus, 'Abbas reinstated Friday prayer, which had been abandoned since the reign of Shah Tahmasp, as an official practice. Presumably an important role during the construction of Isfahan and in the legal justification of the projects was played Baha al-Din al-'Amili, who is considered the foremost religious authority of the period.[80] The Safavid capital, as G. Necipoğlu argues, was partly inspired by the Ottoman model. However, the continuing disagreement within the community only permitted limited attempts to establish the Friday prayer, and thus lend legitimacy to the

[77] On the suppression of the Nuqtavi movement, see Babayan, "The Waning of Qizilbash"; on the repression of Sufi groups during the Safavid period, see S. Arjomand, "Religious Extremism (Ghuluww), Sūfism and Sunnism in Safavid Iran: 1501-1722." *Journal of Asian History* 15, no. 1 (1981): 1-35.
[78] I will address the question of the Shi'ite Holy shrines in more detail in following chapter.
[79] On the educational institutions of Safavid Isfahan, see M. Moazzen, *Shi'ite Higher Learning and the Role of the Madrasa-yi Sulṭānī in Late Safavid Iran*, PhD dissertation (University of Toronto, 2011), 43-49.
[80] I will dicuss the activities of Baha al-Din al-'Amili in the following section.

Safavid identification with the faith.[81] According to an inscription on the walls of the New Friday mosque, the Maydan-i Naqsh-i Jahan was presented as the second Ka'aba.[82]

To popularize Shi'ism, Shah 'Abbas resorted to public displays of religiosity, too. He promoted the Muharram ceremonies, which are huge public celebrations of Shi'ite mourning rituals, as well as the commemorations of 'Ali's martyrdom, which reflected imperial conceptions of power and royal prerogatives.[83]A number of times he went on pilgrimage to the holy Shrines of Twelve Imams, the most notable among which was the twenty-eight day pilgrimage that the shah undertook on foot to Mashhad, to the shrine of Imam Reza in 1601.[84]Mashhad was gradually developing into a Safavid holy city.[85]In the spring of 1608, Shah 'Abbas created an enormous trust (*waqf*) of his personal property, which was called "The Trust of the Fourteen Immaculate Ones" to the shrine, the property placed in the trust included many properties and buildings in Isfahan, such as the Qaysariyyah bazaar and the bazaars, saray and bathhouse at Maydan-i Shah, as well as royal lands throughout Iran. The deed for this enormous transaction was drafted by Baha' al-Din.[86]

As he strove to consolidate his state and achieve political cohesion and religious homogenization throughout the domains under his control, particularly at the height of the ongoing Ottoman-Safavid military and ideological confrontation, Shah 'Abbas attached increasing importance to the popularization of Shi'ite legal literature and the imposition of a uniform legal conduct and ritual practice among the population, commissioning works from religious scholars. The translation of the Shi'ite doctrinal works, Tradition (*hadith*), Qur'anic exegesis and popular literature from Arabic into Persian, as well as production of concise

[81] G. Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan*, 35.
[82] K. Babayan, *Mystics, Monarchs, and Messiahs*, 362-363.
[83] J. Calmard, "Shi'i Rituals and Power: The Consolidation of Safavid Shi'ism," in *Safavid Persia: The History and Politics of an Islamic Society* (London: I.B. Tauris), 143-154.
[84] Melville, "Shah 'Abbas and the pilgrimage to Mashhad," *Safavid Persia: The History and Politics of an Islamic Society* (London: I.B. Tauris), 78.
[85]McChesney, "Waqf and Public Policy: the Waqfs of Shah 'Abbas: 1011-1023/1602-1614, *Asian and African Studies*. vol. 15 (1981):

religious manuals in Persian ranging from commentaries to the authoritative works to abridgements of Shi'ite works of jurisprudence *(fiqh)*, especially works with particular emphasis on the acts of worship (*'ibadat*), continued. Abisaab also points out that at the turn of the seventeenth century the imposition of social discipline was not primarily a top-down process in Iran. Like in the Ottoman Empire, after several decades of "Shi'itization" from above, which was marked by an increase in the number of religious colleges, by the time of Shah 'Abbās the initiative in social disciplining was appropriated and demanded by the lower social strata as well, namely merchants and artisans.[87]

B. Baha al-Din al-'Amili, the Author of Jami'-i 'Abbasi—The Career of an 'Amili Scholar in the Context of Late Sixteenth-Century Shi'itization Politics

The author of *Jami'-I 'Abbasi*, Baha al-Din Muhammad b. Husayn al-'Amili (1547-1621), often referred to as Shaykh Baha'i, was one of the most prominent and influential religious scholars during the reign of Shah 'Abbas. He belonged to the second generation of Arab Shi'a *'ulema* hailing from Lebanon (mainly the province of Jabal 'Amil),[88] Iraq and Bahrain, who played an indispensable role in establishing the legitimacy of the Safavids as a Shiite dynasty and in the ideological warfare against the Ottomans since the early reign of the Safavids.[89]

Shaykh Baha'i was the son of Shaykh Husayn b. 'Abd al-Samad al-Harithi al-'Amili (d. 1576), the leading authority of Iran during the reign of Shah Tahmasp; he served as the

[86]D. Stewart, "Bahā al-Dīn Muḥammad al-'Amilī," *Essays in Arabic Literary Biography 1350-1850*, ed. J. Lowry and D. Stewart (Wiesbaden: Harrassowithz Verlag, 2009), 42.

[87]Abisaab, *Converting Persia*, 28-29.Not only Safavid rulers but also provincial governors would commission the translation of legal works of the Shi'ite *'ulema* into Persian and support their dissemination. In this sense one of the most widely circulated texts in the sixteenth century was al-Karaki's treatise *Risalah-i al-Ja'fariyya fi al-Salat*, translated by Sayyid al-Amir Abu al-Ma'aliAstarabadi (see C. Mitchell, *Practice of Politics*, 69-70).

[88] M. Salati suggests a distinction between Jabal 'Amil as a political and geographical unit and Jabal 'Amil as a "cultural and religious entity identified by a community of *mujtahids.*" As a community of *mujtahids*Jabal'Amil stretches well beyond its geographical limits encompassing a network of individuals, families and clans from Syria to Yemen, to Iraq and to India. (Marco Salati, "Presence and Role of the *Sādāt* in and from Gabal 'Āmil (14th – 18th Centuries)," 597).

[89]For major studies on Shaykh Baha'i see D. Stewart, "Biographical Notice on Baha al-Din al-Amili (d. 1030/1621)," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 111, No. 3 (Jul. - Sep., 1991): 563-571; also idem, "The lost biography of Baha' al-Dīn al-'Amili and the reign of Shah Isma'il II in Safavid historiography," *Iranian Studies* 31/2(1998): 177-205.

shaykh al-Islam of the then capital Qazvin, as well as in Mashhad and Herat.[90] Shaykh Baha'i was born in Ba'albek in Jabal 'Amil and moved to Iran with his family at an early age, where he received his education, studying Shi'ite law and jurisprudence under his father. Apart from legal education and the skills he acquired in Sunnite legal theory and in the study of canonical Sunnite works of Hadith, Baha' al-Din became well versed in the rational sciences, whichhad highly developed in Sunni circles in Iran and Transoxiana by his time.[91]

The activities of Shaykh Baha'i, mirrored those of al-Karaki and his father Shaykh Husayn, and lent support and legitimation to the political and social goals of the Safavid dynasty in creating a socio-political order that would be based on proper implementation of the *shari'a*.[92] Baha'i received the post of *shaykh al-Islam* of Isfahan in 1576, together with another post, *wakil-e halaliyyat* ("counsel on permissible conduct"), possibly in charge of the supervision of the correct ritual conduct ('*ibadat*).[93]

Between 1583 and 1585 Baha al-Din made a pilgrimage to Mecca travelling through Ottoman lands. One of the possible purposes of his journey might have been his intention to partake in the long Shi'ite tradition of study and scholarly debate with Sunni scholars, as in

[90] D. Stewart, "The First Shaykh al-Islam of the Safavid Capital Qazvin," *JAOS* (Jul-Sept. 1996): 387-405. A. Newman notes that as a *shaykh al-Islam* of Herat, Ḥusayn was ordered to undertake the religious instruction of the populace, considered ignorant of the tenets of Twelver Shi'ism, which was being newly established, as well as to be the tutor of the heir-apparent, Muhammad Khudabanda. The provincial governor was ordered to ensure the heir's attendance at Friday congregational prayer services whereHusayn taught. Husayn lent also legal service to the state. In 1555 Husayn composed an answer for Tahmasp to a letter sent by the Ottoman ruler Suleyman. Husayn also dedicated a work on the *akhbar* (the sayings of the Shi'ite Imams) to Tahmasp. In his famous work *al-'Aqd al-Tahmaspi* composed at the order of Shah Tahmasp, he emphasizes the importance of holding the Friday congregational prayer during the occultation (A. Newman, "Towards a Reconsideration of the Isfahan School of Philosophy: Shaykh Baha'i and the Role of the Safawid Ulama," *Studia Iranica* 5, no. 2 (1986): 165-199).

[91] See, for example, D. Stewart, "Biographical Notice on Baha al-Din al-Amili"; idem. "Bahā al-Dīn Muḥammad al-'Amilī."

[92] D. Stewart suggests in a recent article that Baha'i belonged to a lineage of scholars going back to Zayn al-Dīn al-'Āmilī (d. 1558), whose viewpoints were in opposition to those of al-Karaki and his descendants, which resulted in warfare between the representatives of the two scholarly dynasties for the highest religious positions in the Safavid state. See D. Stewart, "Polemics and Patronage in Safavid Iran: The Debate on Friday Prayer during the Reign of Shah Tahmasp," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 72/3 (2009): 425-547, esp. 425-426.

[93] Abisaab, *Converting Persia*, 28.

the Safavid Empire Sunni learning was restricted.[94] Interestingly, his travels took place at a time when Ottoman-Safavid relations were strained. During his travels, Baha al-Din practiced *taqiyyah* ("precautionary dissimulation"),[95] presenting himself as a Sunni, particularly when engaging in debates over the authenticity of the Sunni and Shiite traditions with Sunni religious scholars or Sufis in Aleppo, Damascus, Cairo, Jerusalem, and Mecca.[96] He took part in the debates over the authenticity of the Sunni and Shi'ite traditions. He wrote a treatise on the exegesis of verse 23 of *Surat al-baqarah*, which he probably dedicated to the Ottoman Sultan Murad III (1574-1595).[97]

Shaykh Baha'i's active association with the Safavid court started during the second period of Shah 'Abbas's reign. By the mid-1590s he already gained an exalted position over other high-ranking scholars associated with Shah 'Abbas and remained the foremost religious authority in the Safavid Empire till the end of his life.[98] Presumably, it was during his tenure that the office of *shaykh al-Islam* started to denote the highest religious authority.[99] Iskandar Beg Munshi provides biographical details on Shaykh Baha'i, pointing to his close relationship with the shah and describing his accomplishments until the time Munshi was

[94] One of the characteristic features of Shi'ite intellectual history was the tradition of Twelver Shi'ite scholarsstudying under Sunni teachers of the Shafi'i legal school. In these studies, the range of topics varied from grammar, rhetoric, recitation of the Qur'an, etc. to doctrinally marked topics, such as hadith and law. See D. Stewart, *Islamic Legal Orthodoxy: Twelver Shiite Responses to the Sunni Legal System* (Salt Lake City: Utah University Press, 1998), 63-95. On Baha al-Din's travel to the Ottoman lands, see his "Taqiyya as Performance: The Travels of Baha' al-Din al'Amili in the Ottoman Empire (991–93/1583–85)," *Princeton Papers in Near Eastern Studies* 4 (1996): 1–70.

[95] Taqiyah here denotes the complex patterns of behavior adopted by Shi'ites to modify their identities when living and working in Sunni environments. It is a type of dramaturgical discipline controlling a careful and sustained role that the performer adopts in order to conceal discrediting information about himself from a the inimical other (see, D. Stewart, "Taqiyya as Performance", 1-35).

[96] D. Stewart mentions that in Jerusalem, Baha'i received an ijazah from the Shafi'i mufti of Jerusalem, Muḥammad Ibn Abi al-Luṭf al-Maqdisi, the text of which indicates that Baha' al-Din presented himself a Sunni, a descendant of the famous Sunni scholar al-Ghazali (d. 1111) (See, Baha al-Din, Literary Biographies, 36)

[97] D. Stewart, *Islamic Legal Orthodoxy*, 94-95. Stewart also notes that Baha al-Din received an *ijazah* (authorization by a higher authority), from the Shafi'i mufti of Jerusalem, which shows that he claimed to be a Sunni and presumably a Shafi'i as well. The document states that he was a descendent of the famous Shafi'i jurist al-Ghazali. According to some reports, Baha al-Din pretended to be a Shafi'i in an encounter with a Sunni scholar in Damascus.

[98] Ibid., 39.

[99] S. Arjomand noted that during the reign of Shah 'Abbās the *shaykh al-Islam* of Isfahan "emerged as *primus inter pares* among the Shi'ite dignitaries and thus tended to be regarded as the chief religious authority of the realm." See Arjomand, "The Mujtahid of the Age and Mullābāshī," 84.

writing his history. He reports that Baha' al-Din was the favorite of the Shah and always stayed by his side. The Shah would even visit his residence to enjoy his company.[100] Thus, most probably, Shaykh Baha'i stayed with the royal camp throughout Shah 'Abbas' reign and left it only rarely. He accompanied the Shah to the latter's famous pilgrimage on foot to Mashhad in 1601, as well as on his campaign against the Ottomans, between 1603 and 1607. During this period he wrote a treatise on daily prayer, *al-Ithna'ashariyyah fi l-ṣalah* ('The Twelver Treatise on Daily prayer'), which was followed by five more treatises on ritual purity, alms, fasting, and pilgrimage. The emphasis on *Ithna'ashariyyat* in the title of the treatise was indicative of the Shi'ite's adherence to the Twelve Imams.[101] He also composed a treatise on Friday Prayer, entitled *Risalah fi-salat al-jum'ah*.

The policies of Shah 'Abbas of forced migration and deportation of different tribes and Christian populations of the newly conquered Safavid peripheries raised questions, which needed to be addressed from the standpoint of Shi'ite legalism. In the summer of 1611 in Ardabil, during the campaign against the Ottomans, Shah received an Ottoman ambassador, Khiḍr ibn Ḥusayn al-Mardini, who posed a question whether the Shi'ites violate the consensus of Muslim jurists in claiming that the meat slaughtered by the People of the Book—Jews and Christians—was forbidden. Baha al-Din penned an answer immediately, entitled *Hurmat dhaba'iḥ ahl al-kitab* ('The Illicit Status of Meat Slaughtered by the People of the Book'), which was presumably sent to Sultan Aḥmad (r.1603-17) along with the Safavid embassy that concluded peace in Istanbul in December that year. The main point of the work was to defend Twelver Shi'ites against the accusation of violating the consensus, which would imply through a close reading of Qur'anic texts that they were unbelievers. As pointed out by Abisaab, the argumentation advanced by Shaykh Baha'i was based on a more "puritanical reading of Islamic worship and rituals than the Sunnite Hannafite school of law,"

[100]D. Stewart, "Baḥa al-DīnMuḥammad al-'Amilī," 40.
[101] Ibid.

which the Ottomans were following, and was motivated by the Ottoman-Safavid ideological rivalry and the imperative to differentiate the Safavids from the Ottomans.[102] In light of this opposition, the doctrinal issues that otherwise allowed for more flexibility, were marked by more strict reading.

Shaykh Baha'i's main contributions to the development of Twelver Shiite legal scholarship are considered to be his works entitled *al-Ḥabl al-matin* and *Mashriq al-Shamsayn*. In these works, he expounds on the application of the science of hadith criticism with regards to Shi'ite connections of *Hadith*, pointing out that it could undermine Shi'ite legal positions if applied excessively.[103] Another work by ShaykhBahā'ī that was used as a textbook and was popular in the following centuries, as the huge number of extant commentaries on the work shows, was another manual of jurisprudence, *Zubdat al-uṣūl* ("The Essence of Jurisprudence"), which was a condensation of the author's earlier works.

Shaykh Baha'i was an active participant in the development of Isfahan. He presumably participated as an architect in the planning stage and designs of the Naqsh-i Jahan square, the central square in Isfahan, as well as Masjid-i Shah ("The King's Mosque") and the *Sulaymaniyya* school adjacent to it in 1611. He also made the calculations for the directions of many of the city's new mosques (*qibla*s).[104] He might have been instrumental also in setting the *qibla* of the mosque, as later in the same year he composed a treatise on determining the direction of the *qiblah*. He was one of the most erudite scholars of his time, whose scholarly output ranged from Qur'anic exegesis (*Tafsir*) and Arabic grammar and cosmography, to a number of *masnavi* poems reflecting his Sufi proclivities. He wrote many treatises to lend ideological support to Shah 'Abbas and the Safavid state.

[102] R. J. Abisaab, "New Ropes for Royal Tents: Shaykh-i Baha'i and the Imperial Order of Shah 'Abbās," *Studies on Persianate Societies*, vol. 1 (2003): 45.
[103] Ibid., 41.
[104] Newman, "Shaykh Bahā'ī and the Safawid 'Ulamā," 175.

D. Stewart suggests that it was presumably in the early 1610s that Baha al-Din was commissioned to work on a manual of jurisprudence entitled *Jami'-i 'Abbasi*. As the meaning of the title can be read as both "The Legal compendium for Shah 'Abbas" and "The 'Abbasid Congregational Mosque," Stewart suggests that it might have been a reference to the *Masjid-i Shah* itself. Baha'i may as well have been responsible for the endowment deed of the mosque.[105]

[105]Stewart, Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad al-'Āmilī," 42-43.

CHAPTER THREE:
JAMI'-I 'ABBASI: RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION AND DELINEATION OF CONFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES IN THE BEGINNING OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

A. Jami'-i 'Abbasi and Manuals of Religious Instruction in the Safavid and Ottoman Contexts

As mentioned earlier, the emphasis on religious instruction through translation of Shi'ite doctrinal works, *hadith* traditions, Qur'anic exegeses and popular literature from Arabic into Persian, as well as production of concise religious manuals in Persian ranging from commentaries to the authoritative works to abridgements of Shi'ite works of jurisprudence *(fiqh),* especially works with particular emphasis on acts of worship (*'ibadat*), was one of the chief instruments employed by Safavid shahs and 'Amili jurists for the purpose of spreading Shi'ism and instructing larger segments of Persian- (and Turkish-) speaking population of Iran in the systematic application of the precepts of the faith.[106] During the reign of Shah 'Abbas, this practice, as R. Abisaab pointed out, became more articulated, since 'Abbas had to resort to the image of a guardian of Twelver Shi'ism and upholder of Shi'ite legalism as one of the basic sources of his legitimacy.[107] As he strove to consolidate his state and achieve political cohesion and religious homogenization throughout the domains under his control, particularly against the backdrop of the ongoing Ottoman-Safavid military and ideological confrontation, Shah 'Abbas started to attach more importance to the popularization of Shi'ite legal literature and the imposition of a uniform legal conduct and ritual practice among the population, commissioning works from the religious scholars. The high-ranking 'Amilii religious scholars supported and legitimized

[106] R. Abisaab, *Converting Persia*, 28-29.

[107] R. Abisaab, *Converting Persia*, 58-59. The author also mentions that until the end of the seventeenth century smaller collections and manuals of hadith with commentaries continued to appear, particularly on chapters of Ibn Babuya's (d. c. 931) *Usul al-Kafi and Man la Yahduruh al-Faqih* [*For him not in the Presence of a Jurisprudent*] and Shaykh Tusi's *Tahdhib al-Ahkam* (The Refinement of the Laws) and *al-Istibsar*. Abisaab also provides a detailed enumeration and categorization of the scholarly production of the Amili 'ulema during the Safavid period (ibid,: 156-173).

"Shi'itizing" policies of the monarch through their legal works, treatises, and edicts, with works on *hadith* gaining a particularly wide circulation.[108]

One of the most famous and widely circulated religious manuals became a compendium of Shi'ite jurisprudence entitled *Jami'-i 'Abbasi* ("The [Legal] Compendium for Shah 'Abbas") commissioned by Shah 'Abbas I from one of the leading religious authorities of his time, Baha al-Din al-'Amili (d. 1629). Safavid scholars have long acknowledged it as a manifestation of Shah 'Abbas's policies directed towards the political integration of the population and religious homogenization. It has been noted that the work was exceptional in terms of its popularity and influence, having become a part of the traditional Shi'ite instruction in Iran for centuries after.[109] S. Arjomand has underscored that *Jami'-i 'Abbasi* remained the official legal manual in Safavid Persia throughout the seventeenth century: "As it was the officially recognized guide for the religious courts of the realms as well as for the cautelary advice given by religious jurists to individual believers, its ethico-legal provisions with their political implications may be referred to as the 'official' political ethic of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries."[110] It has been copied numerous times and has been popular not only in Iran but also in Mughal India.[111]

[108] R. Abisaab, *Converting Persia*, 57-58. Translation of the authoritative books from Arabic also continued on the same scale. This led to the "Persianization" of Shi'ism in attempt to make the basic works available to the general population.

[109] E. Bosworth, *Bahā' al-Dīn al-'Āmilī and His Literary Anthologies* (Manchester: University of Manchester, 1989), 12. On the extant copies of *Jami'-i 'Abbasi*, Bosworth mentions H. Ethé's *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in the Library of the India Office* (Oxford, 1903-37; I, cols. 1391-2, no. 1581). H. Modarressi-Tabatabai provides the following information on the existing manuscripts of the work: Sipahsalar 2531 (cat., I, p. 15); Bodleian Pers. 1784 (cat., III, pp. 1031-2); Vatican Pers. 15 (Cat. Persian, p. 41); Leiden 1283 Schult. (cat., IV, p. 178). The work was translated into Arabic (anonymous, MS: Khaliṣi, cat., p. 56). Completion: (1) by Nizam al-Dīn Muhammad b. Husayn al-Sawaji (d. 1038), edited repeatedly; (2) by Zayn al-'Abidīn al-Husaynī (mid-eleventh century), on pilgrimage (*mazār*) and inheritance, MSS: Fayḍiyya 847/17 (cat., III, p. 30); Astana 6054 (cat., p. 192); Majlis 45 (cat., I, p. 13). Commentaries: (1) by 'Ala' Burhan al-Tabrizi (d. after 1054), MS: Aṣafiyya 176 Shi'i law (cat., IV, p. 481); (2) by Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Khwātun al-'Amilī (d. 1057), MSS: Malik 1434, 5878 (cat., , II, p. 499); Tabrīz,, Millī 3076 (cat. of microfilms of Dānishgāh, II, p. 75) (see, H. Modarresi Tabataba'i, *Introduction to Shī'ī Law: A Bibliographical Survey* (London: Ithaca Press, 1984), 96. The editions available to me are the 1905 lithograph edition: Baha' al-Din Muhammad ibn Husayn *Kitab-i Jami'-i 'Abbasi*, edited by Muhammad Jåfar and Mawlana Muhammad Husayn Lari (Bombay, Gulzar), and a recent edition published in Tehran by Entesharat-e Farahani in 1985, which is based on the Bombay edition.

[110] S. Arjomand, *The Shadow of God*, 175, 207-208.

[111] D. Stewart mentions that Baha' al-Din's nephew, Muḥammad ibn 'Ali ibn Khatun al-'Amili, who was in the service of the Quṭbshah dynasty in the Deccan and stayed in the Safavid court at Qazvin for two years (1618-

The emphasis on the religious instruction of the populace through simplified manuals of faith written in an accessible language was not a uniquely Safavid development during the period under discussion. Almost simultaneously, religious manuals of faith (*'ilmihals*) started to proliferate also in the heartland of the Ottoman Empire, in the Lands of Rum.[112] Such manuals of faith written in a simple Ottoman Turkish language that were aimed at serving as a medium of communication for the expanding Muslim community and new converts to Islam and instructing them in the principle of Islamic piety, started to appear early in the fifteenth century.[113] It has been argued that Ottoman *'ilmihals*, along with a wide range of authoritative religious texts (hagiographies of holy men, dogmatic literature, etc.), played an important role in the whole process of the Islamization of the early Ottoman polity.[114]

However, *'ilmihals*, which began to appear in the mid-sixteenth century started to show peculiar features. By this time their target audience were not the converts and novices in religion but the Sunni Muslim community in general, and they tried to correct the existing

1620) to negotiate an alliance with the Safavids against the Mughals, translated the scholar's treatise *Arba'ūn ḥadith* ("Forty Traditions") into Persian, and later also wrote glosses on *Jami'-i 'Abbasi* that were collected into a commentary by one of his students in Hyderabad (D. Stewart, "Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad al-'Amilī," 44). E. Bosworth also mentions the closeness of cultural relations between Safavid Persia and the South Indian sultanates and the patronage of sultans of émigré Persian poets, referring to H. K. Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty* (New Delhi 1974), 525-6, and Aziz Ahmad, "Safavid poets and India," *Iran, JBIPS,* XIV (1976): 128.

[112] See, D. Terzioglu, "Where *'ilmiḥāl* Meets Catechism: Islamic Manuals of Religious Instruction in the Ottoman Empire in the Age of Confessionalization," *Past and Present,* 2013 (forthcoming). Ottoman *'ilmihal* literature started to develop since the beginning of the fifteenth century on the basis of the medieval Arabo-Persian polemical genre of *'aka'ids* (creeds). The latter, though basically dedicated to the doctrinal elucidation of the faith and/ or to the intellectual discussion of the doctrine, by the late medieval period started to incorporate also a discussion of ritual practice as well. Ottoman '*ilmihals*, initially translations-cum-adaptations of the *'aka'id* literature, exposing the basic knowledge of Islamic faith and practice that was incumbent on all Muslims, since the beginning of the fifteenth century started to be designed to impart religious knowledge on ritual. D. Terzioglu suggests that the latter development might have been a uniquely Ottoman innovation. On the emergence of *'ilmihal* literature, see T. Krstic, *Contested Conversions to Islam*, 26-50; also D. Terzioglu, "Where *'ilmiḥāl* Meets Catechism," forthcoming.

[113] T. Krstic, *Contested Conversions*, 26-27. Krstic has pointed to the significance in numbers of *'ilmi hal* and *'aka'id* literature constituting Ottoman manuscript collections and particular popularity of certain works. In the most prominent Rumeli collections in Sarajevo and Sofia, the most copied works after the Qur'an were Birgivi Mehmed Efendi's (d. 1573) *Vasiyetname* (*Risale-yi Birgivi*) (The Testament or Birgivi's Treatise) and *Tarikat-i Mahammediye* (Ar. *Al-Tarīqa al-Muhammadiya*) (The Muhammadan Path). Similar to *Jami'i 'Abbasi*, the two *'ilmihals* penned by Birgivi became the corner stones of the Sunni education in *mektebs* (Qur'anical schools) and remain so to this day (ibid.: 29).

[114] Krstic, *Contested* Conversions, 26-50, and Terzioğlu, "Where *ilmiḥāl* Meets Catechism," forthcoming,

ritual practices with a special emphasis on "orthopraxy."[115] Written by marginal members of the Ottoman learned establishment, as D. Terzioğlu suggests, these works were particularly sensitive to the historical context they were written in and tended to reflect the socio-political conditions of the time.[116] The author suggests that the revival of the genre owed a lot to the changing social and political context in the Ottoman lands, when as a result of the economic growth, urbanization, bureaucratization, as well as state-led campaign of construction of mosques, theological seminaries (*madrasa*) and elementary schools (*mekteb*) throughout the central lands of the empire, there had emerged a new reading public in major cities like Istanbul, comprised of not just *'ulema*, learned sufis and scribes, but also some merchants, artisans and soldiers, for whom these works in vernacular could be written.[117] Behind the rush to compose as well as to consume '*ilmihals* was a new "turn to piety," grounded in adherence to the *shari'a*, which became pronounced among the Ottoman ruling elite and urban populace by the end of the sixteen and particularly in the seventeenth century.[118]

While in the Ottoman lands the initiative to enhance the religious instruction of larger segments of the populace came to a large extent from the margins of the Ottoman learned establishment and was not centrally orchestrated, in the Safavid case this enterprise was led by the shah and religious scholars. However, in terms of function, pursued aims, and intended audience these works reveal similar characteristics. In this sense, the royal commissioning of *Jami'-i 'Abbasi* serves as an outstanding example.

The exact date when Shah 'Abbas commissioned *Jami-'i 'Abbasi* is not known. D. Stewart has suggested that it probably followed the construction of a monumental new mosque in the *Naqsh-i Jahan Square*, in Isfahan, known as *Masjid-i Shah*, a project

[115] Krstic, *Contested Conversions*, 26-50, and Terzioğlu, "Where *ilmiḥāl* Meets Catechism."
[116] Krstic, *Contested Conversions*, 29; Terzioglu, "Where *'ilmiḥāl* Meets Catechism
[117] In a similar manner, to direct and accelerate the propagation of Shi'ism, Isma'il I and later Safavid rulers actively lent support to educational complexes. A number of madrasas, such as the Ghiyathiya, Sulṭaniya, Ikhlaṣiya, built during the Timurid period in Herat, Khvaf, and other places, continued functioning as educational centers during Safavid rule (M. Moazzen, *Shi'ite Higher Learning*, 39-41).

supported by Baha' al-Dīn in several ways.[119] The title of the compendium itself, meaning "The [Legal] Compendium for Shah 'Abbas," as well as "The 'Abbasid Congregational Mosque," i. e, *The Masjid-i Shah,* also suggests a link between the two projects.[120] By the time of his death (d. 22 august 1621) Baha' al-Din managed to finish only the first five chapters (*bab*) of the manual. Following his death, his disciple, Shaykh Muhammad Nizam al-Din Sawaji (d. 1638), was ordered by the Safavid Shah to complete his teacher's work according to the latter's initial layout.[121] Shaykh Nizam al-Din Sawaji succeeded in completing the twenty chapters of the work and dedicated it to Shah 'Abbas some time before the king died (ca. 1629/30).[122]

In the short introductory part preceding the main corpus of the compendium following the invocation of Allah, the Prophet and 'Ali, Shaykh Baha'i writes that he has received the most sacred command of the "the highest authority," i.e. Shah 'Abbas al-Husayn al-Musavi al-Safavi, "the dog at the threshold of 'Ali (*kalb-e āstān-e 'alī*), who was preoccupied with "the propagation of the precepts of religion" (*enteshār-e masāel-e dīnī*) and "glorification of the instruction of the true knowledge" (*eshtehār-e ma'āref-e yaqīnī*), to compose a manual on central questions of the Islamic faith and introduce the precepts of religion and the rulings of

[118] Terzioğlu, "Where *ilmiḥāl* Meets Catechism."
[119] D. Stewart, "Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad al-'Amilī," 27-47; R. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, (Cambridge, 1980), 154-155.
[120] D. Stewart, "Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad al-'Amilī," 27-47.
[121] The chapters are distributed in the following way: Chapter 1: On ritual purity, namely partial ablution, full ablution, ablution using sand and their appurtenances; Chapter 2: On prayer, obligatory and optional; Chapter 3: On alms and one fifth tax (khums), obligatory and optional; Chapter 4: on ritual fasting: obligatory and optional Chapter 5: on pilgrimage (*hajj*); Chapter 6: On endowments, waqf, giving alms, giving loans and manumission of slaves, and holy war against the infidels, Chapter 7: On the Religious Visitation (ziyaret) of His Holiness the Refuge of Prophecy Muhammad and his family, The Commander of the Faithful Ali, the Infallible Imams, on the times of their birth and death Chapter 8: on vow undertaken towards God, taking oath, and swearing; Chapter 9: on bargains, pledging, redemption and their appurtenances, Chapter 10: hiring and leasing, lending, usurpation and their appurtenances; Chapter 11: On marriage: lasting one and temporary, annulling a marriage and similar issues; Chapter 12: on divorce, divorce by which wife redeems herself from the marriage for the consideration; Chapter 13: Hunting and its conditions; Chapter 14: Ritual slaughter; lawful or prohibited; Chapter 15: On manners of eating and drinking and dressing; Chapter 16: on arbitration and its conditions; Chapter 17: on acknowledgement of debt, legacy and their conditions; Chapter 18: On sharing the inheritance of the diseased; Chapter 19: on penal laws concerning theft, adultery, pederasty, etc.; Chapter 20: on The blood-money for killing a person, blood-money for amputating parts of body, blood-money for inflicting wounds, blood-money for hunting dogs, sheepdog and the dog guarding household and agriculture.
[122]

all the Infallible Imams to all the creatures and Shi'ites and the *ghulams* (slaves) of the Holly Commander of the Faithful, 'Ali. After the long invocation, the author writes that he received an official command to compose a work on central questions of Islamic ritual, the dates of birth and death of the Imams, *waqf* (pious endowments), *tasaddoq* (charity), *bay'* (sale), *nekah* (marriage), *talaq* (divorce), etc. Shah 'Abbas ordered religious questions to be delivered in the *Jami'-i 'Abbasi* in a "clear and comprehensive language" so that all people, "the learned and the lay" (*'amm va khaṣṣ*), could benefit from it."[123]

With regards to its genre characteristics, *Jami'-i 'Abbasi* is a manual of Shi'ite jurisprudence (*fikh*). Some scholars consider the work to be the first comprehensive manual of its type to be originally written in Persian and intended to serve as a ready legal reference manual for public.[124] The genre of manuals of religious instruction, its emergence and evolution in the Shi'ite tradition is a little studied topic in itself. For instance, it is not clear how it is to be distinguished from the collection of *fatwas*, or legal opinions issued by major Shi'ite jurisprudents.[125] Although the limits of the present work do not permit a detailed investigation on this topic, some words must be said about the historical development of the genre. What were the functional and content peculiarities of the manuals that started to appear during the Safavid period and how did they pertain to the historical context in which they were written? Scholars who have discussed the specific contents of *Jami'-i 'Abbasi* and legal issues discussed in it have acknowledged that it reflected the socio-political situation

[123]Bahā' al-Dīn Muhammad al-'Amilī, Jami'i 'Abbāsī (Tehran, *Entesharat-e Farahani*, 1985), 1-2.
[124] See, *Encyclopaedia Islamica*, s.v. *Jami'-i 'Abbāsī*. Tabataba'i lists works on acts of devotion, as well as other manuals in Persian, dating from the seventh century.
[125] For instance, M. H. Modarressi Tabataba'i and R. Abisaab classify *Jami'-i 'Abbāsī* as a "Collection of Fatwas" dedicated to the acts of devotion. Modarressi-Tabataba'i, *Introduction to Shi'a Law*, 86; Abisaab, *Converting Persia*, 158. Modarressi-Tabataba'i includes also other references to similar collections in Persian dating to the seventeenth century, namely al-Damad's *Shar'-i al-Najat*, al-Majlisi's *Hadiqqāt al-muttaqīn*, etc. (see Modarressi-Tabataba'i, *An Introduction to Shi'i Law*, 96.). As mentioned earlier, during the reign of 'Abbās apart from concise manuals on devotion (*'ibādat*), particularly popular became the works on *hadith* and *usūl al-dīn*. In this respect, there was a particularly rich output by Mīr Damād (see, A. Newman, Damad, Mir (-e), Sayyed Moḥammad Bāqer, *Encyclopaedia Iranica* online, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/damad-mir-e-sayyed-mohammad-baqer-b
(last accessed April 25).

and the position of the author with regards to the disputed legal issues of the time. In this sense, A. Newman notes that Baha'is view on alms (*zakat*), the fifth (*khums*), and Friday prayer testifies to the continuation of his support for increasing the authority of the Shi'ite '*ulema* and their discretionary power by allotting both the collection and distribution of the Imam's shares to the clergy. Regarding the issue of Friday prayer, the author acknowledges the ongoing debate about its permissibility during the Occultation, saying that the more correct view is that the individual believer should take his own choice.[126]

In terms of classification of legal subjects, works of Shi'ite jurisprudence reveal a variety of arrangements of the chapters, depending on the preferences of the scholar and his adherence to a particular school of law. The chapters that constitute the works of Shi'ite law and legal manuals are called books (*kutub*, sing. *kitab*) and are concerned with various legal subjects. Alttogether they provide a catalogue of the personal and social duties of a Shi'ite Muslim.[127]

In terms of the classification and arrangement of the legal subjects in the manual, it has been noticed that *Jami'-i 'Abbasī* follows the traditional pattern of Shi'ite manuals of *fiqh*, starting with the chapter on ritual ablution (*ṭaharat*) and finishing with the one on blood money (*diyat*). However, scholars have noted that in its contents, particularly in the arrangement of certain legal subjects and the length of their discussion, the work shows variations. A particular novelty seems to be Chapter Seven of this manuals, *On the Religious Visitation (*ziyaret*) of His Holiness the Refuge of Prophecy Muhammad and his family, The Commander of the Faithful Ali, the Infallible Imams, on the times of their birth and death*,

[126] A. Newman, "Towards a Reconsideration of the "Isfahān School of Philosophy": Shaykh Bahā'ī and the Role of the Safawid 'Ulamā," *Studia Iranica*, vol, 15/2 (1986): 191-196. Newman suggests that this stance of Baha'i might have been an instance of opposition to the conduct of Friday prayer during the occultation, along with the opposition to the exercise of *ijtihad* and the assumption by the clergy of other Imam's duties, as element of increasing Akhbari polemic.
[127] Modarressi-Tabataba'i, *An Introduction to Islamic Law*, 13-22; W.B. Hallaq, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 28-30.

which is not a subject matter typically addressed in Islamic manuals of jurisprudence and, as it has been argued, appears in such a manual for the first time.[128]

The tradition of z*iyara* (pl. *ziyarat*, "visit")–the visitations that Muslims undertook to shrines or other places endowed with an aura of sanctity—is traced back to the eighth century. Unlike *hajj*, the canonically prescribed pilgrimage to Mecca, and *'umra,* "the lesser pilgrimage," *ziyara* is not authorized by the Qur'an. However, in the Shi'ite tradition, *ziyara* to *'atabat*, the major cities in Iraq where the Shi'ite Imams are buried, acquired special significance within the context of the Sunni-Shi'ite polemics after the massacre of Husayn and his followers, and it was endowed with obligatory status similar to *hajj*, as well as merits and rewards. The Shi'ite '*atabat*, containing the tombs of six of the imams, thus, acquired the status of "secondary *qibla.*"[129]

In the early sixteenth century Iraq became a contested territory between the Ottoman and Safavid Empires, as both sides strove to assert their supremacy in the Islamic world and take control of the holy shrine cities and patronize them. In 1516-1517, Ottoman sultan Selim I (1512-1520) eliminated the Mamluk sultanate of Syria and Egypt thus bringing the holy cities of Islam, Mecca and Medina in Hijaz, under the Ottoman control. Selim I assumed the protection of these sanctuaries along with the title of the 'Servant of the Two Noble Harams,' and 'the caliph of God on earth." [130] In 1534, Suleyman I (1520-1566) conquered Iraq along with the Shi'ite shrine cities and took under his protection the Shrines of Imams 'Ali (in Najaf) and Husayn (in Karbala), which were also revered by the Sunnis, while the Safavids desecrated Iraqi monuments associated with the memory of the orthodox caliphs.[131] In line with his policies of Sunnitization, after his conquest of Baghdad Suleyman commissioned

[128] Encyclopeadia Islamica, *Jāmi'i 'Abbāsī.*
[129] See EI^2, s.v. Ziyāra The most important places for ziyāra for the Shi'is are situated in Iraq, namely, the shrine of the first imām ʿAlī (d. 661) in Najaf, and of his son Husayn (d. 680) in Karbalā', where he was martyred. Another important pilgrimage center in Iraq was the town of Kāzimayn, where the seventh and ninth imāms, Mūsa al-Kāzim (d. 802) and his grandson Muhammad al-Jawād (d. 834) are buried.
[130] G. Necipoglu, *The Age of Sinan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 27.

two Friday mosques with adjoining hospices and convents and announced the inauguration of Sunni Ottoman rule in the former capital of the Abbasid caliphs.[132] After that, the Ottomans started to elevate themselves as the protectors of the "Two Noble Harams," a title that required universal obedience from all the Muslims.

Even though they were under Ottoman control, the Safavid shahs continued to patronize the Shi'ite *'atabat*. This patronage was particularly manifest during the reign of Shah 'Abbas. He established *waqfs*, pious endowments, in order to publicly promote his legitimacy as the upholder of Twelver Shi'ism and undertook the protection and preservation of the holy shrines in Iraq as well as those in Mashhad. The fact that the *'atabat* had been in Ottoman hands since the 1530s, as R. McChesney pointed out, served as a constant reminder of Safavid inadequacy in its commitment to the Twelver tradition. The other shrine city, Mashhad, belonged to the Safavids during the entire sixteenth century but fell to the Uzbeks in 1589, which was a major blow to the Safavid prestige. Thus, after the restoration of the Safavid rule, Shah 'Abbas strove to mend the Safavid prestige and his numerous visitations to the shrine of Imam Reza (the most famous one being the pilgrimage on foot in 1601), as well as *waqf* endowments, testify to these policies.[133]

In these circumstances, the appearance of a separate chapter having as its subject matter the instruction of the laity in the proper conduct during the visitation is not surprising. The chapter and the precepts promoted in it can provide an interesting insight into the issues central to Safavid religious policies at the time and provide and interesting insight into the questions of practice and belief that were considered central to the delineation of

[131] The region was returned to Safavids only in 1613 who managed to maintain it only for fifteen years

[132] These mosque complexes were built next to two resuscitated domed mausoleums that had been desecrated by the Safavids: those of the legal scholar Abu Hanifa (d. 767) and the Sufi shaykh 'Abd al-kadir al-Gilani (d. 1166). Abu Hanifa's complex, protected from the 'heretics' by a fortified enclosure, symbolically confronted the Shi'ite shrine of al-Kazimayn on the other side of the Euphrates. Now under Ottoman control, that shrine contained the tombs of the seventh Imam (Musa al-Kazim, to whom the Safavid shahs traced their holy descent) and the ninth Imam (see Necipoglu, *Age of Sinan*, 63).

[133] R. McChesney, "Waqf and Public Policy: the Waqfs of Shah 'Abbas: 1011-1023/1602-1614," *Asian and African Studies*. vol. 15 (1981): 184-185.

confessional boundaries between the Sunnis and Shi'ites in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

B. Visitation of Shrines in Baha'i's Jami'-i 'Abbasi and Birgivi's Ziyâretü'l-kubûr

In the following section, I will discuss the main themes and arguments that this particular chapter of *Jami'-i 'Abbasi* aspired to impart to the Safavid Shi'ite subjects. To bring in a comparative perspective and to discuss a possible dialogue and similarities between the confession-building processes of the Safavids and Ottomans, I will also analyze a near-contemporary religious manual, an *'ilmihal*, written by a member of the Ottoman learned establishment, Birgivi Mehmed (d. 1573). This text titled *Ziyâretü'l-kubûr* (*The Visitation of Shrines*),[134] which explains the correct conduct and ritual practice during the visitation of shrines and tombs of saints, shows striking similarities in its concerns to Chapter Seven of Baha'i's manual.

The arguments developed in the two manuals both explicitly and implicitly deny the precepts of one another. Is this a particular concern with the practice of shrine visitation and explicit attempts to rethink and regulate an old practice existing in both Sunni and Shi'ite tradition, that shows sensibilities peculiar to the historical context, namely the ongoing Ottoman-Safavid confrontation? Can we speak of the emergence of these texts and religious manuals in general as comparable but basically independent developments? Or were some of the actors on both sides of the Ottoman-Safavid divide aware of each other's efforts, particularly when considering that another "linchpin" trend of the early modern period was the "elite circulation" across political boundaries? Both Birgivi and Baha'i propose to regulate in great detail, and in very different ways, the traditional practice of *ziyara*, revealing

[134] The work has been published in Turkish translation from Arabic under the title *Bid'at ve Müstehâb: Kabir Ziyaretleri*, translated by A. Muhammad Beşir. I am using this translation available at http://gift2shia.files.wordpress.com/2011/02/27.pdf (accessed, May 15, 2013).

in the process, as I argue, both the concerns of their respective confessional projects and their dialogic nature.

Since it predates Baha'i's work, I will start with Birgivi's manual. Birgivi Mehmed Efendi (d. 1573) became one of the key proponents of the Ottoman Sunnitization in the second half of the sixteenth century. Initially a member of the Bayrami Sufi order, Birgivi adhered to a Sunni Sufi path as articulated by al-Ghazali, although with some important modifications, and started to sharply criticize the innovation (*bid'at*) and superstitions (*huriife*) introduced to Sufism by some dervish orders of his time. Birgivi insisted on the annihilation of those superstitions, insisting that Qur'an and *sunna* (the deeds and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad) can be the only sources of Muslim faith. His scholarly output, particularly the '*ilmihals* entitled *Vasiyetname* (*Risale-yi Birgivi*) (The Testament or Birgivi's Treatise) and *Tarikat-i Muhammediye* (in Arabic, *al-Tariqa al-Muhammadiya*) (The Muhammadan Path) gained unprecedented popularity.[135] *Tarikat-i Muhammediye*, written in Arabic, was used as a manual by imams and judges (*kadis*) and reflected the problems and concerns of the Ottoman Muslim society, which by the mid sixteenth century was marked by diversity of practice and different conceptions of Islamic piety. Birgivi's works displayed his explicit efforts in social disciplining of the population, imposing certain explicit rules of worship and belief, as well as proper conduct, including the rules on what is improper to say, look at, or do. Later in the seventeenth century, Birgivi and his articulation of distinct piety became an inspiration for the Islamic reform movement of the Kadizadelis, a movement of mosque preachers, who argued for a return to a puristic Islam from the time of the Prophet, devoid of the reprehensible innovations and divergences from the tradition.[136]

This tendency towards the articulation of Sunni orthopraxy and "*shari'a*-mindedness" since the mid-sixteenth century is considered one of the most vivid repercussions of the

[135] T. Krstic, *Contested Conversions*, 31-32.
[136] Ibid.

comprehensive process of Ottoman Sunnitization. One of the most important aspects of this was the marginalization of the non-Sunni elements among the empire's Muslim subjects and attempt at their disciplining.[137] In this respect, Birgivi's *Ziyâretü'l-kubûr* is another work of *'ilmihal* genre that is intended to point out how the people have diverged from the right path, *sunna*, by embracing pernicious innovations (*bid'at*) in their practice of visitation of the shrines, and to impart knowledge on the proper ritual conduct.

Birgivi starts his treatise with a short preface (*sebeb-i te'līf*) where he introduces the reasons for undertaking his work. He says that he prepared "these pages" selecting from the work of Şeyh Allâme İmâm İbn Kayyim el-Cevziyye entitled *İğâsetu'l-Lehfân min Masâidi'ş-Şeytân*. He says that he wrote the work for some of his late friends and attached a set of virtues/profits from the trustworthy sources that he found. According to Birgivi, in his times many people idolized graves, prayed there and made sacrifices, and, thus, became addicted to the words and behavior that is not appropriate for the faithful (*ehl-i iman*).[138] It is for this reason that he wrote his treatise for those who wanted to correct their beliefs, desired to be saved, and enter the paradise by escaping the tricks of the Satan and the torments of hell. Birgivi's goal was to explain the rulings of Islam and to show the difference between the truth and the superstition. Taking up this enterprise, Birgivi emphasizes that he submits to Allah who shows the right path.[139]

Birgivi's treatise is directed towards correcting the practice of visitation. The main argument revolves around the worship of shrines, which the author considers a pernicious innovation (*bid'at*) and the biggest trick of the Satan that leads the believer astray onto the path of idolatry (*shirk*) and violation of *tavhid* (Oneness of God)—the fundamental concept of Islam. Citing as main authoritative sources two major Sunni hadith collections, those of

[137] Birgivi, *Ziyâretü'l-kubûr*, 13.
[138] Ibid.
[139] Ibid., 13-14.

Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj and Muhammad al-Bukhari,[140] Birgivi points out that the descendants of Noah have diverged from the tradition by making the tombs of their ancestors and prophets into places of worship (*mescid*) and veneration of idols. Birgivi, thus, brings evidence about the Prophet and his companions who strove to protect the fundamental concept of the Oneness of god (*tevhid*) and warned the community against turning the tombs into places of worship, and reprimanded the the People of the Book, Christians and Jews, for perpetuating the practice of veneration of the tombs of their dead and their prophets.[141] Birgivi emphasizes that the Prophet has warned against plastering the graves, erecting any kind of constructions above them, making any inscriptions on them, and adding soil over them. Other prohibitions refer to the women's visiting the shrines, lighting candles there, conducting prayers while sitting next to the graves and praying in their direction, turning the tombs and shrines into places of celebration.

He describes the conduct of those idolators in minute detail with reference to the practice of making the tombs places of celebrations, an act which he labels as corruption (*fesad*). Here the main arguments are against their beliefs that the reward (Tr. *sevab*/ Ar. *thawab*) for visiting the shrines is greater than for the canonical pilgrimage, *hajj*; asking for intercession and help from those who are buried there; doing two *rakats* (set of prescribed movements and words during the prayer) of *namaz* (ritual prayer) at the shrine, in two directions, namely towards the *Kaaba* (the Sacred House) and al-Aqsa[142]; asking for the favor, forgiveness, and a solution to their needs. Another reprehensible set of practices

[140] *Sahih al-Bukhari* and *Muslim Sahih (Al-Musnadu Al-Sahihu bi Naklil Adli*) are two of the six major hadith collection (*Kutub al-Sittah*) in Sunni Islam, collected respectively by Iranian Muslim scholar Muhammad al-Bukhari and by Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, also known as Imam Muslim.
[141] Birgivi, 19.
[142] Refers to Al-Aqsa Mosque ("The Farthest Mosque"), the third holiest site in Islam and is located in the Old City of Jerusalem, also known as Al-Aqsa and Bayt al-Muqaddas

emphasized by Birgivi is kissing of the graves, rubbing of one's face against them, and making sacrifices, cutting hair, etc., at the grave as a form of worship (*'ibadet*).[143]

Birgivi mostly makes references to the Christians and Jews when discussing the practice of worshipping the shrines, but he also refers to non-Sunni Muslim groups, particularly to Shi'ites, whom he calls *rafiziler*.[144] When specifying the divergence of the Shi'ites, he points that these people make places of worship over the tombs and name them saint shrines. They abandon the mosques and prefer these shrines instead. Moreover, they even write books on how to visit and worship at saints' shrines.[145] Thus, they go furthest astray from the knowledge and religion.[146] They contradict Allah and the Prophet in the precepts that are considered lawful in religion (*meshru'*) and give preference to innovations. Shi'ites are accused of *shirk*, and Birgivi points that it is forbidden by God to make friends with them and to marry, however, their women are permissible (*halal*) for *ehl-i tevhid* (those who believe in the Unity of God) and they are also permitted (*mubah*, meaning religiously neutral) to be enslaved.[147] To support his claim, Birgivi cites the Prophet's words in the *Sahiheyn*, claiming that it is not allowed to visit other places except for three mosques, namely *Mescid-i Haram* (The Grand Mosque located in Mecca), Mescid-i Aksâ (The Mosque in Jerusalem) and his own mosque (The Prophet's Mosque, Al-Masjid al-Nabawi in Medina).[148] As a solution, the author emphasizes the importance of knowledge of sciences and Islamic law (*ilim ve fıkıh*), as anyone who has the slightest education would not succumb to innovations and aberration.[149] He writes that he visitation was initially allowed by the Prophet; however, the innovators have changed its purpose and started to ask for the intercession of the dead and the saints for themselves. Birgivi continues with the *hadith*

[143] Birgivi, 35-36
[144] Birgivi, *Ziyâretü'l-kubûr*, 39. This is also the term used for the Shiites in the *fatwas* authored by Ottoman jurisprudents Kemalpashazade and Ebussuud Efendi (E. Eberhard, *Osmanische Polemik*, 163-167).
[145] Birgivi, *Ziyâretü'l-kubûr*, 38.
[146] Ibid., 39.
[147] Ibid.

related to the proper conduct during the visitation of tombs according to the tradition of the Prophet. He cites the prayers allowed during it and states that it should be aimed to asking God for the welfare of the soul of the dead and forgiveness of sins.[150] Birgivi contrasts the conduct of those who have been led astray and succumbed to innovations (*dalâlet ve bid'at ehli*) with that of the righteous people and righteous ancestors (*selef-i sâlihi*), and stresses the importance of sincerely following the word of God and tradition of the Prophet. He is also a proponent of demolishing the domes erected over the tombs.

Let us now look at how the author of *Jami'-i 'Abbasi* handles the same issue. He divides the chapter on the visitation of shrines (*ziyaret*) into four sections (*faṣl*). In the first section he enumerates extensively the rewards and merits offered to the believers for visiting the shrines of the Prophet, Fatima and Ali and the rest of the Infallible Imams.[151] This can be viewed as an attempt to encourage the practice of *ziyara*, since most of the visitations—especially to the shrines of the Prophet, Ali and Husayn—are described as compulsory (*wajib*) and their frequent practice is encouraged. Abandoning the practice of visitation is equated to abandoning religion. The merits and rewards offered for the visitation are great, equaling and at times surpassing those promised for conducting the *hajj* or lesser pilgrimage, '*umra*. Imams are regarded as intercessors for the believer on the Day of Judgment.[152]

The author writes that the visitation on particular days is especially meritorious and brings sizeable rewards in the afterlife. Thus, for those visiting 'Ali on the day of *Eid al-Ghadeer* (the day when according to Shiite tradition Ali was appointed the immediate successor of Muhammad), it is promised that God would forgive their sins for 60 years, which is a redemption allowance twice as big as the reward a believer gets for visiting during the Month of Ramadan, on *Shab-e-Qadr* (lit. "Night of Power," the night when the Qur'an

[148] Ibid., 41-42.
[149] Ibid., 37.
[150] Ibid., 43-45.
[151] Bahā al-Din al-'Amilī, *Jāmi'i 'Abbāsi*, 163-166.

was revealed), or *Shab-e Fitr* (lit. "the night of breaking the fasting," the night when the Ramadan is over).[153] A visit to the shrine of Husain on the day of *'Arafa* (the day when Religion was perfected) equals 20 *hajj* and 20 *'umra* performances. It also equals the visit to Muhammad's grave on the same day. Another interesting emphasis is put on the visitation of the shrine of Imam Reza, which is said to be more meritorious than a visit to the shrine of Imam Husayn and other Imams. The primacy given to the shrines of the Imams is evident from the statement that one should turn towards the shrine to pray rather than towards the *qibla*.[154]

To enforce his argument the author refers to the *hadith* and quotes the sayings of Muhammad and various Imams. Other authorities cited in the chapter are Ibn Bababuya's *Man la yahduruhu al-Faqih* ("For him not in the Pretense of Jurisprudence") and *Tazhib al-hukm* ("Refinement of the Laws"), both pertaining to the authoritative four books of Twelver Shi'ites, and Ibn Quluye's *Kitab-i Kamel al-Ziyarat*.[155]

The next section is dedicated to the etiquette (*adab*) of visiting the shrines: twenty one act of proper conduct is described, including putting on new clothes, stepping into the shrine with right leg after having performed a prayer and leaving with left, turning the face towards the shrine while exiting and walking out backwards, etc. The proper conduct promoted by the author of *Jami'-i 'Abbasi* stands in direct opposition to the rules promoted in Birgivi's *'ilmihal*. Thus, it is said that it is correct to lean on the tomb and kiss it when entering the shrine, and the kissing of the threshold is said to be permissible. The author cites another opinion [not specified by whom] that prohibits the kissing and states that the visitor should stand afar from the tomb; however, this opinion is rejected on the grounds that it is not in line with the *hadith*. When leaning on the tomb one should ask for forgiveness in the name of God

[152] Ibid.
[153] Ibid., 164.
[154] Ibid., 165-166.
[155] Ibid., 168.

and in the name of the one who the shrine belongs to, and solicit intercession on the Day of Judgment. Another precept that is mentioned by Birgivi and considered as *bid'at* is the performance of two *rakat*s of the special prayer during *ziyara*, asking for everything that comes to mind concerning the worldly and religious matters. Recitation of the Qur'an during the visitation is said to bring a *thawab* to the owner of the tomb and elevate him.[156]

In the third section, the author describes in detail the etiquette of the visitation of the Fourteen Infallibles one after another, pointing to the specific features of each visitation. In some cases he mentions divergences of opinions concerning some important parts of visitation. At times he cites two opinions pointing to the one that is more correct, though sometimes he just refers to two opinions without giving priority to either. He mentions the places of the imams' burial, the ways to enter there, particular prayers performed for each Infallible Imam, and the proper way of leaving the shrines.

Again for each case, if there is a controversy, he gives different opinions and most of the time points to the one he deems most correct. For example, with regards to the visitation of Fatima, he states that there is a controversy regarding the place of her tomb. The author says that according to some of the *hadith*s of *Ahl-e bayt* it has been attested that the saint is buried in Baqi', while others state that her grave is in between the grave of the Prophet and his pulpit (*minbar*). However, with reference to Ibn Babawaih, he says that the correct (*sahih*) opinion is that she was buried in her house, which later, during the times of Bani Umayya (Umayyads) was incorporated into the Mosque of Medina. Thus, every time when in Medina, the believer should pay a visit to the saint in accordance with the proper etiquette.[157]

Section four discusses the times of birth and death of the Prophet, 'Ali and the Imams and their families, as well as their places of birth and burial, pointing again to the inconsistencies in the existing opinions. The most controversial issue here relates to the time

[156] Ibid., 166-167.
[157] Ibid.,189-190.

of the birth of Muhammad. The author sets an exact date for the birth of the Prophet, stating that the latter was born in Mecca, on Friday, during the sunrise, on the seventeenth of the Rabi‘ i in the year of Elephant, and that the dates provided by the Sunnites are incorrect.

Although in this chapter of *Jami‘-i ‘Abbasi*, which was commissioned decades after Birgivi's treatise was written, there is no indication of the near-contemporary Sunnite attempts of producing religious manuals and attempts of correcting the religious practice in general and the practice of religious visitation in particular, one might assume that the author[158] might have known about Imam Birgivi and his activities, as Shaykh Baha'i and 'Amili Shi'ite scholars in general were part of Islamic scholarly networks and apart from receiving religious expertise in Sunni law and jurisprudence, travelled to Ottoman lands, engaged in scholarly debates and even had connections with Istanbul and received posts there.[159]

The discussion above reveals the differences between the two confessional projects. As the Safavids did not have the control over their holiest shrines, they had to create a new holy geography to base their legitimacy on. Thus, promoting a network of imams' shrines and making the visits to them holier than visits to Mecca became of central importance to the shahs' ideological and religious agenda. *Jami‘-i Abbasi* directly supports this intention and seeks to regulate and encourage but also redefine an already existing practice that gained new significance in this particular historical moment. In contrast, the Ottoman Sunnitization project focused on defining what is not permissible anymore, on circumscribing the variety of existing practices and determining which ones among them were to be considered lawful and permissible. The impulse in Birgivi's manual is therefore not to extend the limits of a practice but to circumscribe it. It is also, arguably, as innovative in its tendency to "invent the

[158] As it has been mentioned, Baha al-Din completed only the first five chapters of the work, and the rest was penned by his student, Sawaji, reportedly, according to Baha'is initial layout.
[159] See in these regards, D. Stewart, "Husayn b. `Abd al-Samad al-`Amili's Treatise for Sultan Suleiman and the Shi'i Shafi'i Legal Tradition." *Islamic Law and Society* 4 (1997): 156-199.

tradition" as what the Shi'ites were doing, although there are certainly precedents on which Birgivi was drawing (most notably, the fourteenth-century Hanbali jurist writing in the Mamluk domains, Ibn Taymiyya). Nevertheless, the appearance of the Shi'ites in Birgivi's manual points to the new historical context for the ideas that he was promoting.

CONCLUSION

The institutionalization of Shi‘ism in Iran was a gradual and complex process. It was enhanced by Safavid monarchs in collaboration with the Shi‘ite religious scholars from Jabal Amil. However, it did not transpire in isolation and this thesis proposed that this process could and should be viewed within the framework of “connected histories” of the Safavid and Ottoman Empires. One of the characteristic features of this process was the articulation and imposition of theological and practical “orthodoxy” in both rivaling states and in a close polemical dialogue with each other. Moreover, the religio-political initiatives of both states in terms of imposition of their “orthodoxies” and elimination of other loci of power followed highly similar trajectories.

One of the questions that I asked in the introduction to this thesis concerned the extent to which the Ottoman-Safavid imperial confrontation influenced the state building project of the Safavids that run parallel to the institutionalization of Twelver Shi‘ism and its “(re)definition” as a state doctrine. As a possible way of addressing this question, I proposed to examine usefulness of the paradigm of “confessionalization,” recently employed in the Ottoman historiography, as a concept for discussing the religio-political transformations in the early modern Safavid Empire, and more broadly, early modern Islamic world. On the basis of my research heretofore I conclude that this paradigm is a useful framework for drawing parallels between the state- and confession- building trajectories of the Ottoman and Safavid polities.

A picture that emerges is that, although the processes of Shi‘itization and Sunnitization in the Safavid and Ottoman Empires, respectively, were informed by different internal social, cultural, and religio-political factors, a focus specifically on the nature of religious instruction and genres used for its promulgation suggest significant parallels between the two contexts. As the discussion in the final chapter showed, production of

manuals of religious instruction was one of the key developments in the imposition of "orthodoxy" and "orthopraxy" shared by the Ottomans and Safavids. This was essential for the religio-political integration of the people and it served as a means of articulating and crystallizing doctrinal and ritual differences and social disciplining of the population. In terms of function, pursued aims, and intended audience the two manuals analyzed reveal similar characteristics. The discussion of their contents regarding a specific topic of visitation of shrines demonstrated that these texts should not be treated only as a part of Islamic tradition of religious instruction, but as the texts that reflect contemporary ideological challenges. A point to be emphasized is that, while in the Ottoman lands the initiative to enhance the religious instruction of lay public came to a large extent from the margins of the Ottoman learned establishment and was not centrally orchestrated, in the Safavid case this enterprise was led by the shah and religious scholars.

In terms of future research and further attempts to test the usefulness of the confessionalization paradigm in the early modern Islamic context, it would be essential to extend the framework of analysis to other the polities connected with the Ottomans and Safavids, especially the Uzbeks and the Mughals, and see whether and how the phenomenon of fashioning of a state-embraced and promoted orthodoxy and orthopraxy transpired there.

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