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# Shia and Sufi Mystical Interpretation of Systematic Integration from Seyyed Heydar Amoli's Perspective

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#### **Abstract**

A knowledge of the mechanism behind Shia and Sunni mystical interpretation of systematic integration, something from a learned commentator such as Allameh Seyyed Heydar Amoli, making the due efforts for reconciliation between the true Sufi and mystic and real Shiite...and linking the sacred law (Sharia), Sufi path and the truth, possesses the theoretical Quranic necessity. The present research implements descriptive and analytical methodology to understand his interpretation known as "Al-Moheit Al-Aazam" and other writings. Amoli believes the literal meaning of the expressions in perceiving the macrocosm and microcosm realities through the discovery of Quranic teachings and teachings of these three books, acquired the knowledge of God and Divine Names and Attributes using the tools of Qur'an, demonstration and mysticism. The systematic integration he has in mind has been somehow reflected in the views of the great famous scholars such as Imam Khomeini, Allame Tabatabaee, Ayatollah Javadi Amoli, and Ayatollah Hassan-zade Amoli. Undoubtedly, such attitude clarifies the connection and continuity between various worlds and levels of being and the issue, i.e., the mystical interpretation of Qur'an will get more valuable and a more charming status.

**Keywords:** Shia and Sufi Systematic Mystical Interpretation, Seyyed Heydar Amoli.

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#### Introduction

Allameh Seyyed Heydar Amoli Ibn Ali Ibn Heydar Ibn Ali Al-Alavi Al-Hosseini Amoli Mazandarani with the title Rokn Al-Din, the descendant of Imam Zayn Al-Abeddin (AS) and as reiterated in the first introduction out of the seven-part introduction of the interpretation of Moheit-e-Aazam: for about 30 years, he lived in his hometown and then in Khorasan, Isfahan and Astarabad studying the sciences on Sharia, whether movable and reasonable and due to some mystical spirit and enthusiasm transformation, he left serving the fair and wise kings, called, Faqr Al-Dole, the son of King Key Khosro and his two brothers, Jalal Al-Dole and Sharaf Al-Dole and abandoned the education of public authorities, material facilities and socialization with relatives and became the pilgrimage of the Sacred House of God and Jerusalem. Later, he returned to Isfahan and after that he put on Sufi cloak and participated in the mystic and ascetic circles and then he got back to Baghdad and Mecca for pilgrimage. From there, he returned to Iraq again and in the years 751-771 A.H., he resided in Najaf and being inspired by Ali's (AS) grace and favor. Therefore, he started asceticism, solitude and worship. He learned the sciences of the Prophet's Household in Najaf and from the years 759 A.H. onwards, he became the student of Faqr Al-Mohagheghin, the son of Allame Heli (Khaledi, 2002: 143).

### Allame Amoli and His Scientific Status in the Greatest Shiite Scholars'Pespective

- 1. Faqr Al-Mohagheghin, the son of Allame Heli, submitted a permit to Seyyed Heydar regarding the acquisition of all intellectual and traditional sciences and ability to teach these books in addition to allowing him to narrate traditions from around 50 traditional scriptures including the Four Books of Shia. Concerning the accuracy and subtlety in expressing his views, he addressed him Zayn Al-Abeddin II and called him with the titles such as, the master of seekers, the helper of the scholars, the Revivalist of his pure ancestors' rituals, the assembler of the logical and traditional sciences, principles and branches, the holder of divine breath and Prophetic ethics of the holy Messenger's Family (ibid: 144 and Amoli, 1989: 42-43).
- 2. In Favaed Al-Razavieye quoting Qazi Noor Allah Testari, Haj Sheikh Abbas Qomi praises Seyyed Heydar as the Hazrat-e-Pir (presence of master) and the ultimate exaltation of ambition and self-eminence, as if he overwhelmed the rivals in the austerity field, that most of his supernatural features emerged such as melting iron in his hand (Qomi, 1273 AH: 164).
- 3.Ayatollah Marashi Najafi countersigned on his manuscript, i.e., Moheit-e-Azam interpretation, which is available in Amoli's own handwriting in Qom based library, accepting

his scientific and mystic evolution, considered his writing as 24 books and introduced him as an exceedingly learned man, jurist, traditionalist (scholar of hadith), a mystic getting to the rank of mystics circle, the scholar and assembler of the divine sciences, a reliable and expressive document proving his jurisprudence (Amoli, 2001: 15/1-17).

4. Ayatollah Abdullah Javadi Amoli, writing Tamhid Al-Qavaeed, called Seyyed Heydar the mystic of the Prophet Household and considered his work, behavior and writing and speaking style the result of being rigid and ....of loyalty to the holy offspring (AS). Thus he believes that such style is less found in others' words (quoting Mansouri Larijani, 2002: 46).

### Basics and Presuppositions of Amolie's Perspective in Esoteric Commentary of Qur'an

He views esoteric commentary as the principle of religion and for rational and traditional reasons, the first obligation God imposes on the creature in religion and the last authorities before the mystics and masters of discovery and considers the esoteric commentary of Qur'an as the superior and the greatest science (Amoli, 2001: 10). He explicitly condemned many Quranic verses such as verse 24 of Surah Muhammad (PBUH):

"They don't reflect on Qur'an or they have locks on their hearts", addresses those reflecting on Qur'an and do not evade its esoteric commentary (ibid: 27 and Khanjar Ali Hamie, 2013: 28).

# 1. The sacred law (sharia), sufi path and the truth, the inseparable facts of a united reality

Seyyed Hydar similar to many Shia mystics and scholars believes that the Sacred Law (Sharia), Sufi Path and the Truth are the inseparable facts, so that it is impossible to be from Sufi Path or reach the Truth without observing the legal rules, since one is the appearance and the other is the innermost part and the third one is the inside of the innermost part; one is for the common people and the other for the elite and another for the super-elect (Amoli, 1989: 351). He uses these three mystical terms as Shia scholars and jurisprudents assumed. In his example, he takes the people of Sharia as those realizing the Truth through the light of the sense and Sufi Path, the ones getting to know the Truth via the light of wisdom and the people of the Truth and those getting familiar with the Truth by the light of holiness (ibid: 357-359 and 362).

Expressing the full range of legal and mystical issues through three methods as Sacred Law (Sharia), Sufi Path and the Truth are exclusively done by Seyyed Heydar and it is why he is a master of jurisprudence and principles (Mansouri Larijani, 2002: 59).

Seyyed Heydar cites Imam Ali (AS) stating: the Sharia of sea and the Sharia of lake, that is, jurists move around the lake and the philosophers swim in the sea and the mystics are on the rescue ship; so he refers to the words of the Prophet (PBUH) stating (Amoli, 1989: 357-359, 362):

Allame Amoli as one of the greatest Shia scholars considers Shiism all Islam having its base on the sacred law (Sharia), Sufi path and the truth. Through getting fully familiar with rules from the master of Unity, and Twelve-Imam Shiism, he tries to conciliate the true Shia and the right Sufi (ibid: 478 and Yadaoolahi, 2002: 431/1). Therefore, he claims that the true Sufi cannot be anything except the right Shia (Mansour Larijani, 2002: 73). He adds that: in case of the spiritual leader or pole not being the comprehensive path of Sharia, Sufi Path and the Truth, not only he isn't the pole but also following him leads the Sufi disciple towards atheism and heresy. He condemns false sects of Sufism and constructs a united foundation for true Sufi and Shiite mystic by expressing sweet and everlasting statements (Mansour Larijani, 2002: 45-46).

# 2. Belief in the unity of religions, baseless religious prejudices and doctrine tolerance while believing in the fundamental principles of Islam and the Prophet's Household

Despite keeping loyal to the right Shiite and enforcing the extrinsic rules, like all true mystics considers love as the driver of all the particles of the universe, which in case of not existing, the existence would lack meaning and conception. He views global love superior to and more pervasive than all rituals and religions and all existence under its control, thus in his mind, compared with love, wisdom, reasoning and law are taken as secondary and inferior phenomena and assumes that: wisdom adds temptation and obsessions and engages an imperfect human being in materialistic affairs, while love frees him from temptation (Yadollahi, 2002: 144).

# 3. Necessity behind Qur'an, mysticism and demonstration integration

To express the spontaneous revelations, mystics require demonstration (proof) and to complete and correct their perception, philosophers need mysticism. Consequently, to express the mystical basics through the language of demonstration makes the mystic and philosopher

closer to each other. Of course, this wait integrates Qur'an, mysticism and demonstration, mysticism and philosophy serving Qur'an and its better recognition.

Though Mohi al-Din al-Arabi and Bu-Ali Sina and Sheike Eshragh (Suhrewardi) and Khaji Nasir Tosi had presented some detailed discussions in this area ahead of Allame Seyyed Heydar; however, Seyyed Heydar's taste is of special grace and freshness in this case.

Seyyed Heydar's remarkable ability in explaining the Divine teaching and mystical truths in the form of demonstration and confirming the mystical and demonstrative analysis findings takes place in the presence of Qur'an and its support. So that he considers intellect, tradition and discovery in the Divine truth analysis and consolidation as assistant and overseer to each other. He considers discovery about the epistemology and mysticism stronger than wisdom and tradition and its support since in his mind, philosophical laws are wrapped in philosophical concepts and the accuracy of the transferred concepts depends on recognizing the series of narrators and the science of tradition and...both of which occur through an intermediary; however, discovery is better than others providing the Sufi disciple's findings being confirmed by the Infallibles (AS), due to the direct and intermediary free observation by Sufi disciple, it is better than other methods. As in the methodology, "consensus" is preferred if the discovery is transferred by the Infallibles (AS). As a result, the ultimate goal of the mystic's knowledge after going through the intellect and narration steps is to imitate the Infallibles without proof (quoted by Mansour Larijani, 2002: 35-38, 65-66).

#### 4. Authenticity of Shiite mysticism, originated from authority

Although Shiite Mysticism originated from Qur'an and the Infallibles' traditions, Allame is of the founders of Shia classical school of mysticism and tries hard to prove the extent of authority as the root and basis of all pure and convincing knowledge's. Because of the spiritual journey and purity of the soul, he got engaged in the science and knowledge of the Prophet's Household and has represented the ever-flowing spring of knowledge to the universe. Thus his Shia mystical school has its root in the authority origin (ibid: 36, 68-69).

# 5. The Book of Creation (macrocosm and microcosm) and development (Qur'an) is the truth form and the Divine manifestation and attributes and traits

Accompanied with all prophets and saints, Allame considers three knowledge as the apex of all knowledge and principles: right, the universe and human. Human and the universe are the manifestation of the attributes and names of God and knowledge about these two is the ladder to reach the Knowledge of God as the goals of all knowledge's. On the other hand, learning

these three knowledge (God, human and the universe) relies on recognizing Qur'an and the secrets behind its realities (Amoli, 2001: 242).

Seyyed Heydar mentions three books: the macrocosm (the great universe or the detailed word of God) and the microcosm (the small universe or the brief word of God) and Qur'an (the collective word of God) and brief and detailed facet of these two as the right form and demonstration of God manifestation and traits and names. So that by insisting on the unity in all three Divine words (human, universe and Qur'an), he views the association between these three as the absolute accordance, total resemblance and consistency that ultimately, leads to their final integrity. Similar to Qur'an, he views two books of microcosm and macrocosm as two Divine books that in their form include its letters, words and verses and in this area (ibid: 242; Amoli, 1989: 270; Amoli, 1989: 675).

Allame views "the words of microcosm book" as "the comprehensive facts" as the fixed entities and realized essences in the pre-eternal and eternal science being superior to the .... and specifications and the words and verses and of inherent priority in terms of dignity (Amoli, 2001: 89-90). "The macrocosm universe" includes a book of words, letters and verses. This book is the comprehensive form of all books and the great version and the small version requiring no other book for observing the right (ibid: 13). As in the 171 verse of al-Nisa, God calls Jesus (PBUH) "word" and Ali (AS) as His Self "The Word of God, Al-Ali" (Sheikh Saduq: 1398AH, 522/1; Khanjar Ali Hamie, 2013: 635 quoting Nase Al-Nasoos, nd: 310 and Amoli, 1989; Amoli, 1989: 314; Amoli, 2001: 695).

# 6. Seyyed Heydar's belief in mysterious science of "Letters"

Amoli assumes that of the Mysteries of God is that the Prophets set the "letters" in the order of additional possible external entities (the possibilities of the world) and put each letter versus a creature of the creatures, whether obligatory or possible, absolute or conditional (Amoli, 2001: 181).

On the one hand, in his mind, the visual and spiritual worlds are confined in 19 general worlds and 18000 small worlds (ibid: 209; Khanjar Ali Hamie, 2013: 669). By these worlds, it means: the sky, the earth, the intellectual worlds, bodies and the creatures, each of which involves the general three fold orders, i.e., the intellectual world, souls and bodies ad overall, 18000 worlds (Amoli, 2001: 309; Amoli, 1988: 258-280); then, using exposition, he organized the words of Qur'an on 19 letters (the letters of in the name of God, بسمله) and concluded that Qur'an is also organized based on 19 orders, then he draws and depicts two circles based on the mystics' and philosophers' view about the macrocosm universe orders, in

It is worth noting that: Allame Amoli considers the subjective interpretation of Qur'an arising from the unity of being and the manifestations of the right strongly associated with the science of letters and views many of the facts of Qur'an based on this adaptation. In this regard, he quotes some verses like: the words of the Prophet (PBUH) saying: ظهرت الموجودات , means the beings appeared from بناء بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم , means the beings appeared from بناء بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم I am the point under بناء بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم (ibid; Khanjar Ali Hamie,2013: 666-667).

### 7. The necessity behind the integration

The necessity behind the integrating "the status of essence, attributes and names", "the status of unity and plurality", "the Manifest and the Innermost", "interpretation, esoteric commentary and study"; in the interpretation, esoteric commentary of Qur'an, the goal is to connect with the mysteries of Qur'an and observing the Divine attributes and names (Amoli, 2001: 8-12, 25; Khanjar Ali Hamie, 2013: 617-625).

# Integration of Real Shiite and True Sufi Mystical Interpretation from Allame Seyyed Heydar Amoli's Perspective and its Adaptation with Greatest Famous Shia Scholars' Attitude

Regarding his basics of mystical interpretation, in his mind the systematic esoteric commentary is based on the following principles and rules:

1. He is of Shiite mystics using allusive and symbolic interpretation based on passing the outward of Qur'an and discovering the hidden allusions in the verses through the implications

and parts of speech being visible to the masters of conduct (Rezaee Esfahani, 2011: 243/2). As in the traditions by Imam Sajjad (AS) and Imam Sadiq (AS): الأشارة للخواص... To perceive such hidden allusions has been assigned to the elites (Majlesi, 1979: 20/92&103). This interpretive style was attributed to Sufis and Shiite mystics and got to the sophisticated stage by Ibn Arabi (Khanjar Ali Hamie, 2013: 589).

- 2. In his mind, the authentic esoteric commentary (and mystical interpretation) has to be systematic and based on some conditions and rules and esoteric commentary without rules is rejected and void (ibid: 627; Amoli, 2001: 229).
- 3. Thus, according to Verse 7 of Al-Imran Surah, takes Qur'an esoteric commentary (and mystical interpretation) in two types as the right and the wrong and "the wrong esoteric commentary" the same as the esoteric commentary of ambiguous verses without referring to the unambiguous and based on personal reflections and the work of the misguided and sedition seekers and "the right esoteric commentary" special for the firm ones in science (the infallibles and the non- infallibles) and divides into two groups: "the esoteric commentary of the master of outwards and the people of Sharia" and "the esoteric commentary of the innermost and the masters of the path" (Amoli, 2001: 238).
- 4. Seyyed Heydar accepts "esoteric commentary" (and mystical the interpretation) considered by the Shiite and Sharia followers based on the verses' apparent meaning and the Arabic literature rules and the conversational rational principles and using the single elements of words, figurative expression and allusion, rejecting ambiguous and unambiguous verses and avoiding the intellectual and legal disadvantages –so that simile, agnosticism, incarnation, contradiction are not its requirement- and considers such esoteric commentary as a decent goal and a well-known and valuable art, a great and virtuous affair that in case of being accompanied with pleasure of God intention, it will be highly rewarded by God (ibid: 2,12,17,32-54; Khanjar Ali Hamie ,2013: 620,623,631).
- 5. His goal behind "esoteric commentary" (and the mystical interpretation) of Qur'an has been to observe God through the Divine manifestations, attributes and names realized by Qur'an adaptation on two the books of macrocosm (the universe) and the microcosm (human) (Amoli, 2001: 189; Khanjar Ali Hamie, 2013: 625).
- 6. Based on the three orders of Sharia, the path and the truth in Islam, faith, Quranic legal and true rules, He believes esoteric commentary should not be confined in "the esoteric commentary of the people of Sharia, rather it has to take a step beyond and through intuition confirmed by Qur'an and the infallibles (AS), penetrate into the innermost of the verses and

due to the credit of Qur'an, it goes its way to the knowledge of God (Amoli, 2001: 2,12,17,189,190; Khanjar Ali Hamie, 2013: 620, 623,631).

7. Allame Seyyed Heydar Amoli believes the systematic "esoteric commentary" (and the mystical interpretation) of the people of the hidden meaning based on the integration of mysticism, proof and Qur'an, which in his mind refers to the accommodation between Qur'an and the two books of macrocosm and microcosm, all of the three consist of the Divine letter, words and verses. In other words, the esoteric commentary of Qur'an refers to extracting the macrocosm and microcosm universes due to reflecting on the verses and Surahs of Qur'an aiming to connect with the knowledge of God, get to know Qur'an, step by step towards the knowledge of God, all these actions are realized in the manifestations of the macrocosm and microcosm (Amoli, 2001: 3,8,9,89; Amoli, 1998: 130-136; Khanjar Ali Hamie, 2013: 638).

In this area, he assumes Qur'an including 7 orders of the hidden meaning, according to the 7 skies of the universe where the observer of Qur'an has to reach the knowledge of the Divine facts when discovering adaptation and consistency between these two (Amoli, 2001: 22-24).

He considers Qur'an the comprehensive form of two books of macrocosm and microcosm and covering all facts, meaning and forms of the entities and adds: Qur'an is the brief and detailed form of macrocosm and microcosm universes and the one who has achieved the knowledge of Qur'an is transferred from concentration to detailed specification, the status of unity to plurality, the status of essence to the attributes, names and reuniting between both, so that the presence of one doesn't hide the other (Khanjar Ali Hamie, 2013: 625).

The special initiative taken by Seyyed Heydar is where he tries to attribute such attitude based on mystical intuition to the verses and traditions of the Infallibles (AS). He considers the creditability of Sufi commentator's intuition subject to two conditions: first: piety, purification of the carnal soul, mortification, Sufi disciple's asceticism (Interpretation of Moheit Aazam, p.16), second: that Shiite mysticism and real discovery have to originate from the Infallibles' authority (Mansouri Larijani, 2002: 36,68,69).

As Quranic science researchers know, such method in the mystical interpretation of Qur'an was not exclusively confined to Seyyed Heydar and before him, to Ibn Arabi, rather similarly, it has been stated by Allameh Tabatabaee in Al-Mizan (vol.3, p.24-27 and vol.13, p.27 & 349 and vol.1, p.7) and Ayatollah Marefat in Al-Tafsir and Al-Mofaseroon (vol.2, p.526-538), Imam Khomeini in Parvaz Dar Malakoot (vol.2, p.112-114), and Ayatollah Javadi Amoli, (vol.1).

#### **Discussion**

- 1. According to the noted Shia scholars' perspective, mystical interpretation has to be documented based on the following valid criteria:
- a) It has to be in the area of words indication and based on the requirement of Arabic literature rules and rational colloquial principles and arising from the hidden subjunctive indication significance words non-between subjunctive indications.
- b) Proportionate and consistent with the Divine words apparent meaning, so that the hidden meaning can be abstracted from the words apparent meaning (Marefat, Mohammad Hadi, interpretation of Mofaseroon, vol.1, p.15).
- c) It is imperative to integrate the apparent and hidden meaning of Qur'an, so that ignoring the words' apparent meaning interpretation and merely esotericism isn't allowed in Qur'an (Tabatabaee, Seyyed Mohammad Hossein, Al-Mizan, vol.1, p.7, Marefat, Mohammad Hadi, the interpretation of Mofaseroon, vol.2, p.527).
- d) The requirement of systematic hidden meaning extraction in inducing property from the Divine words and adopting Manat (the verse conceptual spirit extraction, that is the general pervasive concept) and adaptation with the new referents.
- e) It is necessary for the mystical interpretation significance not being opposed to the form verses of Qur'an, authentic traditions and firm rational proof, so that the mystical interpretation should not be in legal or rational conflict (with Qur'an and traditions).
- 2- To stop the apparent meaning interpretation and giving up the systematic hidden meaning interpretation causes Qur'an to get veiled and abandoned (Imam Khomeini, Seyyed Rouallah, Parvaz Dar Malakoot, vol.2, p.113).
- \*That a united mystic such as Seyyed Heydar is highly knowledgeable about the science of the coded letters in the esoteric commentary of the hidden meaning, so that for example, it is perceived from his interpretation of the opening of the Book Surah, it is necessary to at most be respected by the researchers such as those of the present paper about the silence and stop accompanied with respect and tribute; however, it is definitely verified by the true scholars and scientists such as Ayatollah Marashi Najafi, Allameh Hassanzade Amoli, Ayatollah Javadi Amoli and ....since as revealed to the people of research, being veiled against the truth should never result in denying .

#### **Conclusion**

- 1. From Seyyed Heydar Amoli's view, the esoteric commentary (and the mystical interpretation) of Qur'an has to be based on the provisions and rules and the esoteric commentary with no criteria and based on personal thinking is rejected and nullified and is the task of the misguided and sedition seekers since the goal behind the esoteric commentary is to see God through the Divine signs, names and traits.
- 2. Besides accepting and valuing the esoteric commentary (and the mystical interpretation) desired by Shia interpreters and the people of Sharia based on the apparent meaning of the verses, Arabic literature rules, using figurative expression and allusion, rejecting ambiguous to the unambiguous verses and avoiding the rational and legal troubles, he considers stopping and limitation in appropriate for the people of the truth, rather he believes "the systematic esoteric commentary of the people of the hidden meaning" based on the integration of mysticism, proof and Qur'an and as he states: adapting Qur'an with two books of macrocosm and microcosm (the universe and human) all three consisting of letters, words and verses, so that this manner, they could get into the heart of the verses and get to the right path of the truth knowledge through the validity of Qur'an.
- 3. He views Qur'an (the reuniting word of Allah) the comprehensive form of two books of macrocosm (the great universe or the detailed word of God) and the microcosm (the small universe or the brief word of God) and including all the realities, meaning and forms of the objects. So that if a person manages to get on top of the knowledge of Qur'an, they are transferred from concentration to detailed specification, from unity to plurality, from the essence status to the names, attributes and the integration between these two and it doesn't get veiled by another.
- 5. He is one of the Shia schools of mysticism entrepreneurs considering the ultimate goal of the real mystic's knowledge after going through the steps of reason and tradition, imitation of the Infallibles (AS) without proof and benefitting from the authority as the root and foundation of all pure and convincing knowledge.
- 5. His systematic integration about "the standardized mystical interpretation" desired by the true Shia and Sufis is compatible with the most well-known scholars' view such as Imam Khomeini, Allameh Tabatabaee, Ayatollah Javadi Amoli, and Ayatollah Hassanzade Amoli.

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