

## Schools of Islamic Philosophy in Melāyē Jizīrī's *Dīwān*

### *Melāyē Cizîrî'nin Dîvân'ında İslam Felsefe Okulları*

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**Abstract:** Melāyē Jizīrī (Mullah Ahmad al-Jazarī) is a Muslim thinker who lived between the end of 16th century and the middle of 17th century. His work, *Dīwān*, is written in Kurdish (Kurmanjī dialect) language. Many Kurdish scholars, poets and wise were under the influence of al-Jizīrī. In that respect, his work was examined in Kurdish madrasahs and lodges, almost as a holy text, throughout centuries. The aim of this work is to explore the ways in which his *Dīwān* intersects with school of Islamic philosophy. In other words this work is restricted to dealing with Melā's approach to Peripatetic, illuminationism and Sufism, which are well-known schools of Islamic philosophy.

**Keywords:** Melāyē Jizīrī, *Dīwān*, Islamic philosophy, illuminationism, sufism.



## Introduction

Melāyē Jizīrī/Mulla Ahmad al-Jazarī (1570-1640) is a Kurdish thinker who lived between the end of 16<sup>th</sup> century and the middle of 17<sup>th</sup> century<sup>1</sup>. His unique work, *Dīrwān*,<sup>2</sup> can be considered as an “opus magnum” in Kurdish literature, as well as the most important written source of Islamic thought because he dealt with many theoretical issues within the framework of Islamic thought. In this respect, *Dīrwān*, can be read as a reflection of 17<sup>th</sup> century portrait of “Kurdish scholarship/thought”<sup>3</sup> that relates to many aspects of Islamic thought from literature to mythology, philosophy to astronomy, and sufism to history and geography.

The understanding of Melā's<sup>4</sup> intellectual world is basically possible through the description of the period in which he lived. Throughout history, Jazīra where he was born and spent most of his life giving Islamic lessons had been an important cultural centre. In particular, Marwanids and in particular Emirates' periods can be considered as "the golden eras of Jazīra".

In Marwanid period, Christian, Ēzidī, Jewish and Muslim people

<sup>1</sup> His real name is Mulla Ahmad Ibn Mulla Mohammad but he is known more as "Melāyē Jizīrī" or "Melā". He was from Jazīra (the town of Shirkak province in Turkey) and belonged the Buhtī/Botī tribe. There is controversy about his age. According to some scholars, he lived in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Despite this controversy according to Mulla Ahmad Zivingī who interpreted his *Dīrwān* and translated it into Arabic, Melā was not born in the 12<sup>th</sup> century as some scholars claim because he mentioned the name of Jangiz Khān (d.1237). Also mentioning names of some scholars like Hafiz Al-Shīrāzī (d.1390?), Sa'dī Al-Shīrāzī (d.1290?) and Mullā Jāmī (d.1492) does not allow dating back his age to earlier periods. And there are also some accounts according to *Abjad* numeral system about *Melā's* age. In any event, there is a common consensus with the witness of his pupil Faqīyē Tayran (d.1590-1660) that *Melā* passed away approximately in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century (in 1640 or 1641).

<sup>2</sup> There are many manuscripts of *Dīrwān* in libraries. The oldest of them is a manuscript written by Tayyār Pasha in 1844. The first edition of *Dīrwān* was published by a great German orientalist Martin Hartman in Berlin in 1904 as a lithography. The second edition was published by Shafiq al-Arwāsī in İstanbul in 1919. Thirdly, *Dīrwān* was published in *Harvar Journal* by Qadrī Jamīl Pasha in Damascus between 1941-1943 in Latin letters. Then many editions have been published until now. For more about Melāyē Jizīrī's life and his *Dīrwān* see: (Doru, 2012a: 13-38).

<sup>3</sup> For a usage of the explanation of “Kurdish scholarship/thought” and a general picture of the Kurdish intellectual life during the 17<sup>th</sup> century see Rouayheb, 2015: 13-59.

<sup>4</sup> "Melā" is a Kurdish word that corresponds to "molla" in Turkish. The word is derived from "*maṣwā*" in Arabic that means "master". (al-Salafī & Doskī, 2008: 61); And despite the common in Melā name, other names like “Sheikh of Jazīra” and “The Poet of Poets (Shā'ir al-Shu'arā)” had been used.



lived together in Jazīra. This helped Jazīra become a multicultural city in a religious sense. In addition, it gained a national identity by improving Kurdish scholarship. According to historical sources, there was one of Nizāmiyya Madrasas in Jazīra, which had formerly been founded by Seljukī vizier Nizām al-Mulk in Baghdad. Later that madrasa was called 'Raḍawiyya' and 'Raḍiyuddīn' (Maqdisī, 2002: 141-2). In Jazīra madrasas of that period, many poets, scholars of qirā'a and tajwīd, judges and muḥadith had grown (Baluken, 2012: 63-5). In the period of "Jazīra Buhtī Emirate" or Azizan Chiefs, many madrasas had been founded and many important scholars studied and taught. According to Evliya Çelebī, who visited Jazīra in the 'Azizan Chiefs' period, there were six madrasas and many dervish lodges (Çelebi, 2000: 316-7). The most important madrasas were 'Sayfiyya', 'Majdiyya', 'Abdaliyya' and "Red Madrasa ("Medresa Sor" in Kurdish)" (Baluken, 2010: 127). The Red Madrasa that was established by Jazīra's chief Sheref Khān II, and where Melāyē Jizīrī taught for thirty years, was the most important centre of education in Jazīra. At the same time, the Red Madrasa was an archetype for other Kurdish Madrasas that combined the reality of exoteric (zāhirī) and esoteric (baṭinī) sciences i.e., tarīqa and sharī'a. Through its madrasas, Jazīra flourished like other important centres in the Islamic world such as Baghdad and Damascus. After the agreement that was established with the Ottoman central government, 'Azizan Chiefs became independent and then they financially supported Kurdish madrasas in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. This paved the way for an independent Kurdish literature and thought to thrive. In the period of Jazīra Buhtī Emirate, the most important classical works in Kurmanjī dialect of Kurdish were written; many important literary, religious and wisdom scholars like 'Alī Ḥarīrī (d.1490?), Melā Aḥmedē Bateyī (d. 1495), Melāyē Jizīrī (d.1640), Feqīyē Teyrān (d.1660) and Aḥmedē Khānī (d.1707) became representatives of Jazīra's intellectual thought. In particular, Melā, Feqī and Khānī could be considered as products of this independent political willpower (Ergün, 2014: 124).

On the other hand, the age in which Melāyē Jizīrī lived was significant because Islamic thought schools turned into distinctive traditions in that era. Illuminationism (Ishrāqī Philosophy) and Philosophical Islamic Mysticism (Sufism) emerged under the influence of Islamic philosophy.



Illuminationism, which was established as an independent philosophical school by Suhrawardī (d.1191) turned into an intellectual circle in Iran particularly in Isfahan and was represented by Islamic philosophers like Mīr Dāmād (d.1632) and Mullā Sadrā (d.1640) in the age of Melā. On the other hand, the philosophical mysticism which was systematized by Ibn Arabī (d.1240) had been turned into a thought school by sūfī scholars like Shams al-Tabrīzī (d.1248), Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī (d.1273) and Sadr al-Dīn Al-Qūnawī (d.1274) in Konya. It is possible to say that Melā was under the influence of these traditions because of Jazīra's middle position between them. Except for these two schools, it is possible also to say that Melā was influenced by such important scholars of Islamic philosophical tradition as Hallāj Al-Mansūr (d.922), Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna) (d.1037) and Ibn Sab'īn (d.1270).

Melāyē Jizīrī's *Dīwān* is a masterpiece in Kurdish thought and literature. Since the aim of this work is to explore the ways in which his *Dīwān* intersects with school of Islamic philosophy. In other words this work is restricted to dealing with Melā's approach to Peripatetic, illuminationism and Sufism, which are well-known schools of Islamic philosophy.

### 1. Melāyē Jizīrī's Interest in Ibn Sīnā and His Approach to Peripatetic Philosophy

Classic Islamic philosophy corresponds to a rational thought that was inherited from Aristotelian and Neo-Platonic ideas. Ibn Sīnā's works in this tradition was immense. He examined the principles and problems of this tradition in his main work *al-Shifā'* and in other works like *al-Najāt* and *al-Isbārāt wa al-Tanbīhāt* after Fārābī (d.950) who can be regarded as the real founder of Islamic Philosophy (Fakhry, 2002: 4). Islamic philosophy peaked with Ibn Sīnā's works, which influenced later Islamic philosophers (Wisnovsky, 2003: 1-18). The main characteristic of this philosophy is to examine existence through thinking and to determine that being is evidence for God. This philosophical approach is based on syllogisms whose definitions cannot be argued and named as '*al-burbān*'. *Al-Burbān* is the superior form of the syllogism and its definition is not arguable. But Ibn Sīnā claimed that the rational syllogisms are valid for contingent beings in the world but not in God. According to him, "*He has*



*no definition and [there is] no demonstration for Him. Rather, He is the demonstration of all things.*" (Avicenna, 2005: 282-283).

Melāyē Jizīrī has also used statements like this. According to him, God is not a subject of rational syllogism but he is evidence and syllogistic for everything. His line below is remarkably similar to Ibn Sīnā's statement mentioned above:

(Jazarī, 1919: 89). *چه حد عقله قیاس ته کرت / ا فہ برهان کو تو بی برہانی.*

[How dare the mind ask for evidence, being without evidence is your evidence]

We can see that Melāyē Jizīrī talked about the "Necessary Existence (Wājib al-Wujūd)" and "contingency (al-Imkān)" which were central concepts in Ibn Sīnā's philosophy. He used these concepts as follows:

*ژسرا لا مکان واجب تنزل کر د امکان*

(Jazarī, 1919: 46). *فأین العلم أین العین این الاین اذ لا این.*

[The Necessary Existence descended into contingency world from nowhere  
Whereabouts is knowledge, being and the where since there is nowhere]

Considering subjects like *mindings, syllogism, al-burbān, the necessary and the contingency* were used in the above lines; we can see interest of Melā in Ibn Sīnā's philosophy. Furthermore, he not only used Ibn Sīnā's philosophical concepts in his *Dīrwan* but he also referred to major works of Ibn Sīnā as in:

*دعشقی شیخ ثانیمه به دل بحر معانی مه*

(Jazarī, 1919: 71). *لذی حجر و ذی قلب شفاء فی اشاراتی.*

[I am second sheikh in love, and in heart a sea of meanings]

Those with minds and hearts find in my **remarks, healings**]

In this couplet Melāyē Jizīrī sees himself as the second master (al-sheikh al-thānī) in love and immediately afterwards refers to Ibn Sīnā's *Kitāb al-Shifā'* (*The Book of Healing*) and *al-Ishārāt wa al-Tanbīhāt* (*The Remarks and Admonitions*). Thus, some researchers who studied on Melā's *Dīrwan* claim that Melā accepted himself as the second master in love after Ibn Sīnā who is called as "Sheikh al-Ra'īs (The chief of scholars)"



(Doski, 2008:1204).<sup>5</sup> Another couplet that Melā referred to Ibn Sīnā's works is as follow:

نه به قانون کو اشارت به شفائی بکرت

(Jazarī, 1919: 44). از هلاکا خواه دعشقی به نجاتی نادم.

[If she does not **remark** to **healing** with the **canon**

In the way of love I would not change my perishing for **salvation**]

The works that Melā referred to in this couplet are *al-Qānūn fī al-Ṭibb* (*The Canon of Medicine*) that Ibn Sīnā wrote on medicine, *al-Shifā'* and its summary *Kitāb al-Najāt* (*The Book of Salvation*) and *al-Ishārāt wa al-Tanbīhāt* which were written on philosophy.

There are also some couplets where Melā mentioned Ibn Sīnā's name. In these couplets, Ibn Sīnā's name was mentioned along Jesus ('Īsā). These couplets below illustrates this association:

از دبیم عیسا یه او یا بو علی سینا یه او

(Ziwingī, 1958: 500). لو برمز و عشوه یان پر معجزات شیوه یه.

[I say that it is 'Īsā or Abū 'Alī Sīnā

Hence she shows many miracles with hints and coquetries]

یار قسته جان یغما کرت دا معجزی پیدا کرت

(Jazarī, 1919: 75). رمزک ژرنک عیسا کرت یا سحر بو سینا کرت.

[To show the miracles, the beloved plunders the heart

She revives the dead like Isa or does magic like Abū Sīnā]

The names of Jesus and Ibn Sīnā, which were used by Melā in these couplets, are the symbols, which explain the effects of love. As Jesus who brings the dead back to life and Ibn Sīnā who heals patients as a doctor, love also revives the dead and cleans the soul of sicknesses. In other words, love is another name of immortality and vitality. In this respect, love is the 'elixir' and 'miracle' of life.

Despite of mentioning Ibn Sīnā's name, referring to his works and

<sup>5</sup> But the most interpreters of *Dīwān* said that the first master in love was Sheikh San'an.: See: (Al- Ziwingī, 1958: 706; Najī, 2004: 436; Hejar, 1981: 488; Yöyler, 2006: 836; Turan, 2010: 308). But, according to my research, he implies Ibn Arabī who was known as "*sheikh al-akbar*" by his statement because he was a follow of Ibn 'Arabī's Taṣawwuf philosophy (Doru, 2012a: 212).



citing some of his philosophy's 'cliché' statements, it is certain that Melā does not belong to Peripatetic philosophy. Therefore, it is not possible to find a philosophical approach to the extent ontology and cosmology was 'emanation (al-sudūr)' in Melāyē Jizīrī's *Dīrwān*. Besides, it is impossible to find a categorical and fundamental distinction of existence as necessary and contingent in his *Dīrwān*. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that he has an interest in Ibn Sīnā and his Peripatetic philosophy. This interest can be understood as the transformation of the fame of the initiator of Islamic Peripatetic philosophy to an imagery of a poem than he accepted the principles of this philosophy. In other words, Melāyē Jizīrī shows his knowledge of this philosophy and benefited from it by mentioning Ibn Sīnā's name and works. In fact, it is not convenient to exclude any philosophical tradition entirely from Melāyē Jizīrī's thought.

## 2. Melāyē Jizīrī's Interest in the Philosophy of Ishrāq

As known the philosophy of Ishrāq is a school that was founded as an alternative to Peripatetic philosophy by an Islamic philosopher Shahāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī, who criticized Ibn Sīnā's philosophy as being extremely analytic and dogmatic. Suhrawardī's philosophy was to some extent eastern wisdom that included mainly ancient Iranian thought and Indian, Greek, Egyptian and Islamic mysticism. It was a school of thought that attempted to complete deficiencies of the system produced by the Peripatetic's before. To Suhrawardī, though Ibn Sīnā wanted to establish an "eastern (mashriqī) philosophy", he could not achieve. He claimed he was the founder of that philosophy (Ziai, 1996: 434). In his opinion, ideal philosophy is the perfection in both intuitive and discursive philosophy. Although Suhrawardī has never excluded Peripatetic philosophy, he underlined its inadequacy on its own. According to him, a perfect philosopher is someone who is perfect in both discursive and intuitive philosophy. This way, the philosophy of Ishrāq approaches Sufism by giving a place to intuition; on the other hand it approaches Peripatetic philosophy by its perspective of rational intuition as based on rational principles (Suhrawardī, 1999: 3).

The philosophy of Ishrāq structurally and substantially accepts the notions of Peripatetic philosophy on existence and cosmology and adapts



them to Ishrāqī ontology. It claims that it is more Islamic and mystical ontology in origin, as accepting 'al-Nūr (the light)' instead of the 'existence', 'al-Ghanī (independent)' instead of the 'necessary' and 'al-Faqīr (dependent)' instead of the 'contingent' (Suhrawardī, 1999: 76).

In this respect, we remind Melāyē Jizīrī's "nūr metaphysics" that he examined in his view of existence. The concepts related to 'nūr' and its derivatives<sup>6</sup> are key concepts in his view of existence. In other words, Melā thought that existence is in a way 'nūr' and its diffusion. According to Melā, existence is the reflection of "Eternal/Ancient Nūr". The "Eternal Nūr" is God and the beings in the external world are the lights that are the reflection of the "Eternal Nūr". In other words, the beings of this world are the phenomena of the "Eternal Nūr" (Jizīrī, 2009: 28). It seems that Melā's interpretation of 'nūr' and his enhancing of "nūr metaphysics" give the impression that Suhrawardī influenced him. Moreover Melā's reiteration of the name of Suhrawardī's philosophy (Ishrāq) twice in his *Dīwān* supports this impression. He uses the word Ishrāq as in:

برق سبوحی کو اشراق له صد جانان ددت

(Ziwingī, 1958: 654). او کو کشف دل دکت رمزک ژاسرار ته بی.

[The divine lightning that illuminates a hundred souls

As a symbol of your mysteries to the revelation of hearts]

It seems that the Ishrāq word used in this couplet has literal meaning in comparison to a philosophical terminology. In his couplet, Melā is describing the shining of God's light and says that it is brightening a hundred souls. But the Ishrāq word used below seems to be used in its terminological meaning than its literal one.

مه به اشراقی سؤالک ژلب غنچه کشاکر

(Jazarī, 1919: 54). گوبه الهام دزانی دسؤالا مه جوابه.

[We asked the rosebud-lipped beloved a question by illumination

You know the answer is in your question, she said by inspiration]

Melā is underlining the Ishrāqī way in his couplet. Because the Ishrāqī way manifests itself in the heart; Melā wants to say that he knows

<sup>6</sup> In *Dīwān*, the *nūr* is used 116 times; *nūrīn* 17 times; *partaw* 11 times and *ishrāq* 2 times. See: (Çali, 2008: 219-220).





about his beloved's situation by the mystical knowledge. However, the most considerable point in this couplet is using both the *isbrāq* (illumination) and the *ilbām* (inspiration) together. *Isbrāq* and *ilbām* epistemologically represent two different schools in Islamic philosophy: the first one corresponds to Ishrāqī philosophy whereas the other refers to philosophical Sufism. Since Melā knew the similarity and nuances between these two schools that are close to each other, he used them in the same context but separately. *Isbrāq* for Ishrāqī philosophy is a rational intuition whereas *ilbām* for philosophical Sufism is a practical intuition that actualizes after seclusion, retreatment and suffering. One way or another, Melā has shown in this couplet his interest to Suhrawardī's Ishrāqī philosophy.

Although Melā gives a place for some matters and terms of Ishrāqī philosophy in his poetry, this does not make him an Ishrāqī philosopher. This is because Ishrāqī philosophy is a distinctive philosophy that has some peculiar principles and matters. When we read Melā's *Dīwān* by these principles and matters we can see the differences between Melā's thought and Ishrāqī philosophy. First of all, when the view of existence of this special philosophy and Melā's view on existence are compared, these differences would become clearer.

In Ishrāqī philosophy, the existence is a hierarchy of lights and the source of these lights is "The Light of Lights (*Nūr al-Anwār*)". Then existence is explained by the proximate light (*al-Nūr al-Aqrab*) that emanates from The Light of Lights firstly and then the incorporeal and accidental lights. The rank of the incorporeal light is explained by vertical and horizontal relationships. The incorporeal lights in the vertical dimension connected to each other. The higher lights are in relation to the lower lights by dominance, and the lower lights are in relation to the higher lights by love (Suhrawardī, 1999: 91, 97).

However, in Melāyē Jizīrī's *Dīwān*, love is the divine essence itself, namely the light itself. The love is the source of being as well as the being itself (Doru, 2012b: 345). Thus, existence is the sum that consists of revealing the essence of God, who is love itself.

On the other hand, the lights which are outside of the rank of the incorporeal lights are in a horizontal relation and do not create each other. They exist only side-by-side. But they carry 'talismans' of the species



in the external world. Suhrawardī calls these as ‘*arbāb al-anwā*’ namely lords of species or ‘*arbāb al-aṣnām*’ namely lords of idols (Suhrawardī, 1999: 101). The lords of species in the Ishrāqī philosophy were considered as Platonic forms, but they are more functional angelic entities. This is because they have the ability to remove the species in this world from power to action and they are administrators, protectors and possessors of them. Every entity in this external world is considered as a talisman and idol for the lords of species. Besides, the dualism of light and darkness is one of the main principles in Ishrāqī philosophy. Moreover, the lights explain existence, which loses their shining when they are down to the barrier world (‘*alam al-barzakh*’) with its dark forms (Suhrawardī, 1999: 77).

However, in Melāyē Jizīrī’s *Dīwān*, the view of existence is explained by revealing lights, this yet not according to principles of Ishrāqī philosophy. According to him, existence is the sum that does not allow categorical distinctions. Everything is explained by revealing and every revelation is considered as a different aspect of existence. Besides, in his thought existence is explained not only by descending lights that go down from higher to lower and thus lose their power and involved absence, but also by light circularity that also include ascending. In other words, according to him, absolute existence is in the beginning of the existence as well as in the end of existence (Doru, 2013: 300).

Moreover, there were philosophical and mystical interpretations of light before Suhrawardī and Ishrāqī philosophy. For example, such interpretations of light had been discussed in the works of the first period mystical scholars who were also sources for Suhrawardī like Sahl al-Tusterī (d.896), Mansur al-Hallāj and al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī (d.932) and in Ghazālī’s (d.1111) *al-Mishkāt al-Anwār* too (Çift, 2004: 139-157). Thus, reading of Melā’s approach and description of light by Ishrāqī philosophy merely would be misleading.

On the other hand, it is not possible to see in Melāyē Jizīrī’s *Dīwān* the basic thought and terminology of Ishrāqī philosophy like the first incorporeal light and the nearest light to the Light of Lights that it called ‘*al-Nūr al-Aqrab*’, the thought of the lord of species of the external world that seems to be inspired from Zoroastrian Angelism, the barrier (*al-barzakh*) that is the dark forms of the material world and fire that is de-



scribed as the accidental light and is not considered as one of the four elements (Suhrawardī, 1999: 125). Thus, Melāyē Jizīrī was not a classical Ishrāqī thinker but was knowledgeable about this philosophy and he had borrowed some terms from it like light and Ishrāq.

### 3. Melāyē Jizīrī's Interest in Philosophical Mysticism

The philosophy of mysticism or mystical philosophy turned into a systematic school in the works of Ghazālī and in particular Ibn 'Arabī. This school of thought, which was established especially by Ibn 'Arabī as an alternative school against philosophers and theologians on existence and knowledge was developed by Sufi thinkers like Qūnawī, Fakhr al-Dīn 'Iraqī (d. 1289) and Rūmī (Chittick, 1996: 514). The most important matters discussed in this school of thought are related to "unity of being (*Wahdat al-Wujūd*)", knowledge (*al-Ma'rifa*) and love (*al-'Isbq*). When we analyze Melāyē Jizīrī's views about these matters, we come across a mystical philosopher.

Melāyē Jizīrī's *Dīwān* contains entirely subjects of Sufi thought. The main aim of this work is not to investigate the above subjects separately and to classify them. But in general, we can say that there are many lines and couplets from the Sufi thought's main subjects and themes like: unity of being (Jizīrī, 2009: 278), absolute unity/*wahdat al-muṭlaq* (Jizīrī, 2009: 218), knowledge of unity/*ilm al-wahdat* (Jizīrī, 2009: 46, 226, 298), pure unity/*al-wahdat al-ṣīrf* (Jizīrī, 2009: 230), the secret treasure/*al-kanz al-makhfī* (Jizīrī, 2009: 34, 266, 414), Muḥammadan reality/*al-haqīqa al-muḥammadiya* or *al-nūr al-aḥmadī* (Jizīrī, 2009: 34), the revelation/*tajallī* (Jizīrī, 2009: 32, 34, 38, 40, 390, 488), truth/*haqīqa* and metaphor/*majāz* (Jizīrī, 2009: 376, 370, 388, 456), the ranks of the annihilation/*al-fanā* and the subsistence/*al-baqā*, (Jizīrī, 2009: 50, 416, 484), rejection of reason and syllogism (Jizīrī, 2009: 40, 42, 46, 86, 252, 280, 312), the esoteric knowledge/*ilm al-ladun* (Jizīrī, 2009: 298), knowledge of life and knowledge of word/*ilm al-hāl* and *ilm al-qāl* (Jizīrī, 2009: 334, 404), *al-ma'rifa* (Jizīrī, 2009: 280), the intuition (Jizīrī, 2009: 402), the grace of God/*al-'ināya* (Jizīrī, 2009: 112, 246), the knowledge of love, the religion of love, metaphorical love, the true love (Jizīrī, 2009: 252, 264, 282, 284, 304, 326, 396, 432, 448), heart/*qalb* or *dil* (Jizīrī, 2009: 364, 424), the asceti-



cism/*al-zubd* (Jizīrī, 2009: 312, 394), blame or suffering/*al-malamāb* (Jizīrī, 2009: 248), the lodges of Sūfīs (Jizīrī, 2009: 394), the reciting circle (Jizīrī, 2009: 40), ecstasy/*al-jazba*, the wayfaring/*al-sayr al-sulūk*, the sheikh and moored (Jizīrī, 2009: 414), wine/*al-bāda* or *al-sharāb* (Jizīrī, 2009: 132, 246, 318, 436), the fountain of youth/*āb al-ḥayāt* (Jizīrī, 2009: 112, 246), the wine taverns/*al-maikhāna* (Jizīrī, 2009: 314), the great drunkard/*pīr al-kharabāt* or *pīr al-mughbāns* (Jizīrī, 2009: 206, 246, 288, 298), dance/*al-raqs* or *al-samah* and the reed/ney or nāy (Jizīrī, 2009: 44, 252, 300, 312, 324, 346, 366, 428, 478). Melā's *Dīrwān* uses a symbolic language in these subjects and themes. And this is what makes *Dīrwān* an opus magnum.

Besides, Sūfī thinkers whom referred by Melāyē Jizīrī in his *Dīrwān* help us to understand his philosophy. From these thinkers, such Sūfīs as Jāmī (d.1492), Ma'rūf al-Karkhī (d.852), Ḥallāj and mythological characters like Sheikh San'ān stand out. In particular, Ḥallāj has a special place in *Dīrwān*. As known, Mansur al-Ḥallāj initiated many discussions like 'the union (al-ittihād)' and 'incarnation (al-ḥulūl)' in Islamic thought by his ideas like "al-ḥaqīqa al-muḥammadiyya", the unity of religions and his famous "*I am the Truth (Ana al-Ḥaqq)*" statement. Melāyē Jizīrī used this statement in his poem and considered Ḥallāj as the master of love. According to Melā, deep love is necessary to understand the secret of this statement. The couplets that he referred to Ḥallāj are as follow:

استاد عشقی دل د هوت سر تا قدم هنگی دصوت

(Jazarī, 1919: 43). رمز انا الحق هر دگوت باور بکن منصوره دل.

[The master of love invaded the heart, from head to toe burnt

Was repeating "Ana al-Ḥaqq", believe that it is Mansūr]

ژانا الحق به لبین لعل خیردار بوین

(Jazarī, 1919: 43). به گلابا سری زلفا خو ته منصور کرن.

[We were informed from Ana al-Ḥaqq by pearled-lips

You made us Mansūr with your earlock's hook]

It is understood from these couplets of Melā that he did not criticize statement of Ḥallāj as a union and incarnation, but he believed that it must be considered for the unity of existence. That is because the unity of existence is not the union and incarnation as there are two beings in



both *al-ittihād* and *al-ḥulūl*. However, there are not two beings in *waḥdat-al-wujūd*. The interest of Melā in philosophical mysticism can be understood not only by his reference to great Sufi scholars, but also by dealing with subjects of Sufi thought in his *Dīwān*. Melā's opinion about the unity of existence, esoteric knowledge and love is as follows:

### 3.1. The Unity of Existence

Melā dealt with the basic principles of metaphysics of Taṣawwuf, and in parallel mystical cosmology in his *Dīwān* as a faithful follower of Taṣawwuf philosophy and in particular the view of the unity of existence. According to him, existence reveals itself in a diverse process to the being world from its absolute case which cannot be defined and determined. In other words, it resulted from unity to plurality. It is impossible to qualify, delimit and determine existence when it is in an absolute unity state. As it is well known, Ibn 'Arabī called this existence case 'blindness (*al-a'mā*)' (Ibn 'Arabī, 1985: 350). Melā named this dimension of existence as '*sarmadiyya*', '*qidemiyya*' and '*šamediyya*'. In Melā's opinion, this dimension of existence is the truth (*al-ḥaqīqa*). Even "the first determination (*al-ta'ayyun al-awwal*)" in Sūfī terminology, which is the mind, and the second determination which is the dimension Muḥammadan Reality (*al-Haqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*) and "the immutable essences (*al-a'yān al-thābita*)" have not any ontological reality and independence as compared to *sarmadiyya*. According to him the first determined dimension is the mind that Melā called '*al-'Ilmiyya*' (Jizīrī, 2009: 32) or "*al-Nūr al-Aḥmadī*" (Jizīrī, 2009: 36). This dimension consists of the names and attributes of the Absolute Essence. There are immutable essences of all existents in this dimension. The beings in this world take their existence from these archetypes that are the names and attributes of God. Then, the existence disclosed in "the World of Spirits (*ālam al-arwāḥ*)" and the "World of Similitude (*ālam al-mithāl*)" after the revealing of the first determination (Jizīrī, 2009: 38). This process is manifested eventually in external existence by physical and plural shapes. According to Melā, all existents must be considered as an image and manifestation of the Absolute Existence. The physical beings in the world in their states are aspects of the Absolute Existence that is the beauty and light. Hence, all existents are the beams of this beauty and light. The world of physical beings that is called



as the metaphorical world is considered by Melā as a sign, idol and symbol of the Absolute Existence. Melā stated his opinion as follows:

او لات حسن عین نور صورت بصورت تین ظهور

انس و پری ولدان حور بزنین نازک زینه دا. (Jazarī, 1904: 13)

[In various forms is the manifestation of that beloved is light and beauty  
Human, fairies, young boys and houris with various coquetry]

هر هیأت هر جسمکی هر نوع و فرد و قسمکی

روح وی بدستی اسمکی مائی دقبض وینجه دا. (Jazarī, 1904: 18)

[Each body, matter, unit, species and part of the existents  
Passes under the ruling and steering of the names of God]

Thereby, according to Melāyē Jizīrī, existence is entirely the sum. But, we face the multiple construction of existence in the external world. The construction of different varieties of existence that we see is just apparently multiple but essentially is one.

اعراض و عین و جوهران واحد ژاصلی مصدران

تأثیر بخشی مظهران صد رنگ حرفی صیغه دا. (Jazarī, 1904: 9)

[The source of accidents, essence and substances is really one  
But God has given hundreds of shapes, letters and forms]

علمین ام فی دزائین جسمه او ام روح و جانین

قط زهف باطن خوینا نین گر چه ظاهر او جدایه. (Jazarī, 1919: 56)

[We know this reality: she is a body and we are her soul and spirit  
They are one in reality though they seem separate in appearance]

Melā states that the reality of the unity of existence can be seen after the ranks of annihilation and subsistence or “*al-Fanā*” and “*al-Baqā*” that are epistemological processes of Sūfī thought. Melā called the existence that is after this cognitive progress as “Absolute Unity (*al-wahdat al-muṭlaq*)” and he claims that many scholars could not comprehend this.

وحدت مطلق ملا نوره د قلبان جلا

زوره دفی مسئلی اهل دلان شبه ما. (Jazarī, 1919: 6)

[O Melā, absolute unity is the light that reveals in hearts  
In this matter, stayed in doubt, the people of hearts]



### 3.1. Esoteric Knowledge (al-Ma'rifa)

Melāyē Jizirī defends the Sufi philosophers' *ma'rifa* way, which is against reason of classical Islamic philosophers' approach (*al-burbān*) and the Ishrāqī philosophers' approach (intelligent intuition called *al-ḥudūrī*, i.e., the knowledge by presence). According to him, reaching human truth and primarily understanding one's essence is based on hidden and esoteric knowledge. Melā states this opinion in the following couplet:

انشائی علوم لدنی چنکه من زانی

زانی بحقیقت کو چه انشام از. (Jazarī, 1919: 29)

[When I became aware of the esoteric knowledge

I perfectly understood what construction I am]

In Melā's thought, the mind is desperate and inadequate in supreme truths. This negative position of Melā against the mind is compatible with the general approach of Sūfī thought. It is possible to see the same position in the views of former Sūfīs like Ibn 'Arabī and al-Rūmī (Ibn 'Arabī, 2001: 184-187, al-Rūmī, 2007: 112). Accordingly, the mind and its processes such as like syllogism cannot reach the supreme truths like the essence of God and cannot comprehend the secrets of existence. We can see Melā's negative position against mind and syllogism in following couplets:

حیرت و عجزه سرانجام دباب نظری

کی بخالق نظر قاصر مخلوق رسد. (Jazarī, 1919: 25)

[The last outcome in the realm of thought is bewilderment and inefficiency

How can a creature understand the creator by their limited comprehension?]

رمز و رازی بی و نابی کو سماعینه همی

ژمخالته بعقل خوه بزانی ژقیاس. (Jazarī, 1919: 31)

[All symbols and secrets from the reed and Nay that we hear

Are impossible to understand this by our mind's analogy]

راز دهری ژسپهری تو نزانی بجدل

حکمت داوړه تو ژحکمت داوړ مکه بحث. (Jazarī, 1919: 18)

[By reasoning you can never conquer the secret of planets

It is God's wisdom never question it]



گفتگوی معرفتی چند ملا پیدا کی

گوهر معرفتی ناگهی کس بخرد. (Jazarī, 1919: 25)

[O Melā, whatever you say about ma' rifa

By reason no one can reach the essence of ma' rifa]

To Melāyē Jizīrī, truth can be known by *ma' rifa* solely; and this is possible through life and practice, but not through thought, syllogism or word. That is called in Sūfī terminology as "knowledge by life (*'ilm al-hāl*)". Knowledge by life is the opposite of "knowledge by word (*'ilm al-qāl*)" in this context. Melā's couplet that illustrates this comparison is:

علم عشق بوت و لاتان به روایت نابت

قدرک حال نه بت شبهت هر حال چه حظ. (Jazarī, 1919: 37)

[The knowledge of love of beauties cannot be known by narrative

Without some knowledge by life there is no taste of knowledge by word]

### 3.3. Love

When we evaluate Melāyē Jizīrī's interpretation on love, it can be seen that he represented the theories of Sūfī tradition in his time in Kurdish culture. In this context, He dealt with two kinds of love that are ontological and existential. According to him, love is the source and cause of the world. The revealing started with the divine essence's love for himself creates the world. In other worlds, love in Melā's thought corresponds to existence as an ontological rank and existence also corresponds to the divine essence. Thus, love is the superior, which cannot be defined.

حب حسن آن ظهوری عشقه اصلی عالمی

اصل اشیا دا بزانی وان چه اصل و ماده بو. (Jizīrī, 1844: 41f.; Jazarī, 1904: 158)

[Love is manifested in beauty; the cause of the world is love

Know these are the origin of things, in whatever elements and substances]

One of Melāyē Jizīrī's thoughts which could be accepted as an original thought which is he accepted love as a fifth element in addition to the four elements of the world. Melā thought that water, earth, air and fire are not enough to explain existents in the physical world, particularly, the human being. In other words, he also thought that explaining the world in that way is a materialist approach. Thus, Melā's addition of love to the





four elements is important because it shows his consistent philosophy, which corresponds to his opinion that all existents are revealing of the divine essence:

مه جوهر عنصرك خامس نما ابرو د طالع دا

دفی تقویم انسان له طالع بونه فال ابرو. (Jazari, 1919: 37)

[We found a fifth element in our fortune today

The arched eyebrows are good fortune in our best creation]

Melā divided existential love into two parts as spiritual and temporal or real and metaphorical love as a result of being a follower of Sūfī thought. The spiritual or real love is the love of the cause, creator and ruler of all existents, and the aim of this love is the reunion with God. The other one is love of a being that is the revelation of God's essence and the aim of this love is seeing divine disclosure and recognizing metaphor, and exceeding it and finally ascending to real love. Thus, in Melā's poem, although real love is required, metaphorical love is also important, as it is a step for real love. According to Melā, for Sufi to exceed metaphor and go to reality is necessary to know the science of *ma'rifa* and to reach the annihilation rank. Otherwise, sole focus on metaphorical love is a barrier to see the divine beauty and art. Melā's opinions on this matter are in these couplets:

اف حور و بری چهره بت و لات جمالی

در صورت تحقیق ملا عین مجازن. (Jazari, 1919: 46)

[These houries and fairy-facedes that are the idols of beauty

O Melā, they are entirely metaphor, not truth in reality]

والله زهردو عالمان من حسن جانانه غرض

لو من زحسنا دلبران هر صنع رحمان غرض. (Ziwingi, 1958: 891)

[I swear to Allah, the beauty of the beloved in both worlds, is my aim

Watching the divine art in the charm of beauties is my aim]

لامعا حسن و جمالی دی زعلمی بیته عین

عشق دا زهلبین کی دی حقیقت بی مجاز. (Jazari, 1919: 29)

[The glitter of beauty can be determined solely by knowledge

For love to inflame, who can find truth without metaphor?]



سالک کیه هاتی زنجاری به حقیقت

صورت نه شناسی و به معنا نه فنا گرت. (Jazarī, 1919: 14)

[Which wayfarer claims he can pass from metaphor to truth

Without understanding human essence and reaching the annihilation rank]

Finally, it must be said that Melā sees Sūfī thinkers as authorities that know both the ontological meaning of love and true love in an existential sense. According to him, someone who is an authority in religious and exoteric sciences only, but lacking in esoteric sciences cannot know love and live it. For that, it is necessary to know and live the mystical sciences. Melā stated his opinion as follows:

تو ژملائی هر بهرس اسرار عشق حل دکت

فی معمای چه زانن صد ملا و مستعید. (Jizīrī, 1844: 16f.)

[Ask Melā about the secrets of love, he will solve them for you

A hundred mullas and disciples cannot solve this mystery]

As a summary of this chapter, Taṣawwuf is over all knowledge in Melā's opinion. In his thought world, philosophy and other disciplines come to life only within the frame of mysticism. In one of his couplets, he stated that he knew philosophical knowledge by Taṣawwuf:

فیضا علمی فلسفه پر کشفه لوسرو خفه

من دی دجامک قرققه فنجان بجان من جرعه دا. (Jazarī, 1904: 19)

[The wealth of philosophical knowledge is not only obvious it is hidden and masked

I saw it in a wineglass and I took a sip from the cup with delight]

The aim of Melā in this couplet is that philosophical truth can be known by an esoteric science. Hence, we must consider the interest of Melā in Ibn Sīnā and Ishrāqī philosophy in this context. This approach is showed in another couplet as follows:

فیضا علوم و حکمت جاما صدف کو گیرا

مه ژدست مغبجان دیت به مصحف و بآیت. (Jazarī, 1904: 19)

[When the pearly glass turned around, I swear by Qur'an and its verse

We saw the wealth of knowledge of wisdom, in the hand of cupbearers]



## Conclusion

To some up, the following important points could be stated about Melâyê Jizîrî's thought:

First of all, it can be consider that Melâyê Jizîrî was one of the prominent scholar/poet of Kurdish scholarship at that time. In particular, in the period of Marwanids and 'Azîzan Emirate, cultural activities in Kurdish madrasas enabled Kurdish intellectual and religious scholars like Melâyê Jizîrî to grow. The concepts and themes of his thought had great effects over Kurdish intellectual circles. In other words, his poems and opinions brought about important transformations in Kurdish thought history from such classical scholars as Khânî and Faqî to modern Kurdish intellectual scholars like Jigarkhwîn and Hâcî Qadirê Koyî.

Secondly, Melâ examined many subjects of traditional Islamic thought in his poems. Besides, it is important to note that he dealt with these subjects in verse not in prose. As a matter of fact, after Melâ, many works, from grammar to dictionaries and from Taşawwuf to law were written in Kurdish madrasas in verse.

Thirdly, when Melâ's opinions in his poems are evaluated in terms of Islamic thought, it is understood that he was a Kurdish mulla and Sûfî thinker. Besides Ibn Sînâ also some Ishrâqî concepts have a special place in his poems. Although he was interested in Peripatetic and Ishrâqî philosophy, that interest was not a level that would make a Peripatetic or Ishrâqî philosopher. Moreover, he approached other schools that were supported by Sufi philosophy. Melâ's approach can be seen in fields that are common in Taşawwuf philosophy and other schools. In other words, we would not be exaggerating to see Melâ's interest in Taşawwuf philosophy as a "task" yet his interest in peripatetic and Ishrâqî philosophies was merely a "hobby".

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**Öz:** Molla Ahmed el-Cezerî 16. yüzyılın sonları ile 17. yüzyılın ortaları arasında yaşamış bir İslam düşünürüdür. *Dîvân* adlı eseri Kürtçe (Kurmanci) dilinde yazılmıştır. Bir çok Kürt alim, şair ve bilgin Cezerî'nin etkisinde kalmıştır. Bu çerçevede, onun eseri yüzyıllar boyunca Kürt medreseleri ve tekkelerinde neredeyse kutsal bir metin olarak ele alınmıştır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, *Dîvân*'ın İslam felsefesi ekolleri ile ilişkisini analiz etmektir. Başka bir ifadeyle bu çalışma Cezerî'nin İslam felsefesinin Meşşâî, İşrâkî ve sûfî ekollerine yaklaşımını ele almaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Melâyê Cizîrî, *Dîvân*, İslam felsefesi, İşrâk felsefesi, Tasavvuf felsefesi.

