

**“Grief Is an Unlawful Resident in Love’s Sanctuary”:
*Gendering the Borders of ‘Home’ in Safavid Sufi Poetry and Shiite Treatises***

Distinct gendered demarcations between the world of private (*Andaruni*) and public (*Biruni*) appear to be the standard subject matter of practical religious treatises composed in the Safavid period (1501-1736), an era renowned for the official establishment of Shiism in Iran. The inner sections of the house, where women generally resided, were further governed by a composite of rules based on the Shari’ah and cultural traditions. On the other hand, from a Sufi perspective, these “interior and exterior” worlds transcend strict spatial borders and represent the contrasting ebb and flow between seemingly dissimilar spiritual states. In Sufi poetry, conventionally legal terms such as “mahram”, an unmarried kin before whom a woman has no obligation to wear the veil, transcend their jurisprudential meaning and gain spiritual significance, in this case signifying a state of intimacy with God or an intimate knowledge of God.

This paper will focus on exploring the inner topography of gender within and outside the borders of home as defined in three Safavid Shiite treatises *Helyat al-Mottaqin* (Ornament of the Pious, 1671), *Lobab dar Tadbir-i Manzel* (The Essence of Household Management, 1701) and *Aghd al-Kisa’ fi Fiqh al-Nisa’* (The Code of the Cover in Women’s Jurisprudence, composed before 1723). Centering my paper on representations of spatial and spiritual borders of ‘home’, whether as lived geography or a metaphorical realm, in Safavid Sufi poetry, in the context of the three aforementioned Shiite treatises, I aim to question how gender proscriptions alter the implications of movement, encounters and border crossing in gendered territories and how exploring poetic renditions of gender coded jurisprudential terms contributes to a more complex understanding of Sufi and Safavid Iran across the borders of religious codes (*Sharia’ah*) and their spiritual significance (*Tariqah*) in praxis.