

The Term *Ġulāt* and Its Derivatives

From Heresiography to Self-Description¹

Robert Langer

Abstract Since medieval times, Muslim heresiographers have characterized several groups as ‘exaggerators,’ in Arabic ‘*ġulāt*.’ While the term re-surfaced in anti-Safawid texts in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, it has regained actuality with the rise of Oriental studies since the nineteenth century. Building on editions of medieval texts, writers researching non-mainstream Islamic, Islamicate or historically Islam-related communities have used the term in the sense of ‘heresies’, when describing a spectrum of groups and traditions on the margins of Sunni and Shii mainstream Islam. In this function, it became one standard descriptive denominator in discourses of contemporary groups such as the Syrian ‘Alawī-Nuṣairī, Iranian Kurdish Ahl-i Ḥaqq, or Anatolian Alevis. Besides other features, such as ‘syncretistic’ and ‘heterodox,’ even researchers with a background in the groups mentioned already sometimes include the term in attempts to describe their traditions. More recently, Kathryn Babayan adopted it as a denominator for an alleged sub-stream of Islam, broadly identified with late-antique pre-Islamic and implicitly ancient Iranian religion, curiously a relationship already noted by the mentioned early heresiographers. This contribution aims to trace back the history of the reception of the term ‘*ġulāt*’, and its implication for the recent history of alleged ‘*ġulāt*’ groups.

Keywords *Ġulāt*, Heresiography, ‘Heterodox’ Islam, Exaggerator

- 1 Originally held on 11 September 2017 as “Heresy or Popular Islam?—Discussing the Roots of Modern ‘Heterodox’ Muslim Groups” at the *9th German-Israeli Frontiers of Humanities Symposium 2017: “Negotiating the Other, Confronting the Self”* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities (IASH), Alexander von Humboldt Foundation).

‘Ġulāt’ is the plural of ‘al-ġālī/ġālin.’ ‘Ġālī’ is the participle of *ġalā* (*yaġlū*), meaning ‘to exaggerate,’ ‘to exceed one’s bounds.’ The respective noun derived from this is ‘ġulūw,’ which is another important term in heresiographic literature, meaning ‘exaggeration.’ The verb is present in the *Qur’ān* in two instances: 4.171 referring to the ‘ahl al-kitāb’, especially the Christians, as belief in the trinity and in Jesus being the son of god are mentioned;² *Qur’ān* 5.77 has the same formulation:³ “yā ahl al-kitābi, lā taġlū [from *ġalā*] fi dīnikum”, “Oh people of the book, exceed not in your religion”.⁴ Besides these two instances of the use of the verb in the *Qur’ān* (note that no other derivations from the same root ġ-l-w occur), according to the Arabic dictionaries, derivations of the same root are used in the Arabic language, classic and modern, several times in different forms.⁵

Classical and Early Modern Usage

The *Qur’ānic* usage is also present in later theological writings, referring e.g. to the apostles that had ‘exaggerated’ the role Jesus up to his deification (especially Paul), just like the *ġulāt* had done so later with ‘Alī (identified sometimes with Persian or even Jewish converts). However, Muslim writers also use it when referring to the *ahl as-sunna*, when they ‘exaggerate’ the observance of religious prescriptions.⁶

The term *ġulāt/ġulāh* (sing. *ġālin*, ‘exaggerators’) and *ġulūw* (‘exaggeration’), as far as we know, first appears in the writings of Twelver Shiite heresiographers to refer to a group of early Shiites (i.e. supporters of several descendants of the prophet Muḥammad) ‘exaggerating’ (from the perspective of the heresiographers) the reverence of the Imams.⁷ In contrast, the term in *ġulāt* literature for the ‘moderate’ Shiites was ‘muqaṣṣirūn’, i.e. ‘those who shorten’ the role of the Imams.

2 Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, n.d.

3 Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, n.d.

4 Lane 2003 (repr.), 2287; Mir 1989, 251.

5 For the lexicography (including *Qur’ān*) cf. Mawrid Reader.

6 See Friedlaender 1908 (pt. 2), 101.

7 In the Shiī tradition, ‘Imām’ designates the descendants of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 661), the prophet’s cousin and son in law as per his marriage to the prophet’s daughter Fāṭima, leading the community. Imāmī Shiites see them as the sole rightful heirs of the prophet in his capacity as leader of the Islamic community.

The most prominent example of this early Shii heresiography, which has come down on us, is the fourth/tenth century theologian and philosopher al-Ḥasan bin Mūsā Abū Muḥammad Naubaḥṭī's (Baghdad, d. between 300/912–913 and 310/922–923) *Kitāb Firaq aš-šī'a*.⁸ Writing on the so called Ḥaṭṭābiyya, he lists several groups stemming from the teachings of Abū l-Ḥaṭṭāb al-Asadī (killed ca. 755), who was for some time authorised representative of the sixth Imam Ġa'far aš-Šādiq (d. ca. 765) in Kūfa, and lists the accusations, which tend to recur regularly in later accounts:

These are the sects of extremism (*ghulūw*), who styled themselves as part of the Shī'a. They all belong to the Khurramdīniyya [sic], the Zindīqiyya [sic], the Dahrīyya [sic]—may Allāh curse them all. All of them agree on denying Allāh, the Exalted Creator, as God. Instead, they worship certain created bodies. They claim that the body is Allāh's home and that Allāh, the Exalted, is light and spirit that moves in these bodies;

The sects of the *ghulāt* were divided after him [Abū l-Ḥaṭṭāb al-Asadī] with many doctrines.⁹

The earliest group that counts as *ġulāt* with the heresiographers, however, is the so called Kaisāniyya, which emerged from the Kūfan revolt of Muḥṭār ibn Abī 'Ubaid at-Ṭaqafī in 685–687, revering the third son of 'Alī, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyya, son of Ḥawla (and not of Fāṭima bint Muḥammad).¹⁰

It is possible that the lists given by the heresiographers of the early tenth century, such as Naubaḥṭī (Shii) and Aš'arī (Sunni), go back to police files recording politically subversive groups (identified with dissident attitudes or behaviours), as Hodgson assumes.¹¹

In modern Western literature, these 'exaggerators' were usually characterised as 'extreme Shia,' as the heresiographies functioned to formulate an (Imāmī or Twelver) Shiite orthodoxy—by identifying all currents later perceived as deviant. 'Exaggeration', in that sense, referred to their alleged beliefs, such as the veneration of humans as gods or as having divine characteristics ('ḥulūl', especially 'Alī or other pretenders to the Imamate), the transmigration of souls ('tanāsuh'), or of libertinage, freethinking and especially antinomianism ('ibāḥa') *vis-à-vis* the Sharia.

8 Naubaḥṭī 2007.

9 Naubaḥṭī 2007, 97.

10 Anthony 2012.

11 Hodgson 1955, 5.

Ḥulūl, ‘incarnation,’ refers to either god incarnating into humans, or humans having divine qualities. Just like *tanāsuh*, metempsychosis or transmigration of the soul, *ḥulūl* is connected to the concept of *rağ‘a*, ‘return.’ As the concept was present in Shiite literature later canonised by the ‘orthodox,’ and is still present in ‘orthodox’ Shiism, at least for the awaited twelfth Imam (Imām al-Mahdī), Amir-Moezzi argues that there is no justification for distinguishing retrospectively between ‘orthodox’ and ‘exaggerators’ for the early history of the Shia. One characteristic of later so-called ‘Ḡulāt sects’ is, however, the expansion of the concept of transmigration of souls towards either repeating cycles of holy personage (such as in the case of the Ahl-i Ḥaqq), or even on the whole (male) population of the group (such as the Nuṣairī-‘Alawīs).¹²

Nevertheless, the term *ḡulāt* repeats itself in later heresiographic literature indirectly with the generic abstract noun ‘ḡāliyya,’ for example in the widely used *Kitāb al-Milal wa-n-niḥal* (‘The Book of Sects and Creeds’), written by Šahrastānī (1076–1153), who tried to list all known Muslim groups until the early twelfth century.¹³

It was probably the Persian Sunni historian Faḍlullāh b. Rūzbihān Ḥunḡī (860–927/1455–1521)¹⁴ who reactivated the term ‘ḡulāt’ in his refutation of the religious doctrines of the Kızılbaş Safawids, whom he describes as

12 Amir-Moezzi 2005: “Let us first consider a quasi ‘spiritual’ interpretation of the term the return of the soul, after the perishing of the body into another body, or the transmigration of the spirit of a saintly person or wali (more specifically, of an Imam) into another body. This kind of ‘return,’ designated by the terms *ḥolul* or *tanāsok*, was denounced by heresiographers as a highly deviant belief and attributed by them to ‘extremist’ (ḡālī; pl. ḡolāt) Shi‘ite sects (ps-Nāši’, pp. 27 ff.; Nowbakhti, pp. 33, 80, 89–90; Sa‘d b. ‘Abd-Allāh Qomi, pp. 45 and 107; Rāzi, p. 311). Two clarifications must however be made to this information. First, the distinction between ‘moderate’ and ‘extremist’ Shi‘ites is a later development. At any rate, it seems artificial regarding early Imamism as it appears based on the most ancient sources that have come down to us. All the theories and doctrines attributed by the heresiographers to the ḡolāt are encountered in one form or another in the corpus said to be ‘moderate,’ in this case the oldest compilations of Twelver Shi‘ite Hadith. Moreover, almost all of the major figures of Shi‘ite ‘extremism’ were, directly or indirectly, the disciples of Imams. Many among them, ‘cursed’ by an Imam, find themselves in the entourage of the following Imam; which seems to indicate that the ‘public condemnation’ (la‘n, barā‘a) was no more than a ‘tactical means’—quite regularly practised in esoteric circles—to divert external threats (Amir-Moezzi, 1992a, pp. 310–17; 1992b, pp. 229–42).”

13 For the heresiographical literature of medieval Islam until the twelfth century (and partly beyond that into late medieval centuries, including accounts of the genre in modern times) cf. the monumental work by van Ess 2011, s.v. “ḡulūw” and “ḡulāt/ḡāliya”.

14 Cf. Haarmann 2012.

the ‘exaggerating tyrants’ (“*ġulāt-i ẓalama*”).¹⁵ It has to be noted, however, that in other and later polemics against the Safawids (mainly by Ottoman Sunnis), other terms are usually used, such as ‘*rāfiḏī*’, ‘*mülhīd*’, or ‘*ẓındīk*’.¹⁶

Modern Usage

The nineteenth century saw the publication of classical Western Orientalist editions of some of the works of the medieval heresiographers, such as Šahrastānī. It might be that this fact and the interest of famous Western Orientalists, such as Ignaz Goldziher, who was also researching early Shii history (with a strong Sunni-influenced bias), influenced intellectuals in Iran and the Ottoman Empire. For example, in the popular Shii works of Mīrzā ‘Alī Aşğar b. ‘Alī Akbar Nayyir Burūġirdī (who lived second half of the nineteenth century)¹⁷ or in Sāmī Beġ Frāşeri’s standard Ottoman dictionary *Ķāmūs-i Türkī* from the year 1890 under the entry “*Ķızıl-baş*”, the term ‘*ġulāt*’ reappears, referring to Ismā‘ilism or to the (Safawid) *Ķızılbaş* respectively.

A major point of reference for the twentieth century dissemination of the terms *ġulāt/ġālī/ġulūw/ġāliyya* is the edition of a heresiographic work of the ultra-Sunni (*Zāhirī*) Ibn Ḥazm (994–1064) by Israel Friedlaender in 1907/1908 and 1909 (repr.). The quasi-translation ‘heterodoxies’ for *ġulūw*, appears already in Friedlaender’s English title of his editions: “The Heterodoxies of the Shiites in the Presentation of Ibn Ḥazm.”¹⁸ Friedlaender analyses works of the medieval authors (eleventh to fifteenth centuries), contemporary to or following Ibn Ḥazm. He clearly shows that the term ‘*ġulāt*’ fluctuates from being not part of Islam at all to referring to all the Shia.¹⁹

15 Hünġi 2003, 266. I am thankful to Georg Leube (Bayreuth) for this reference. This work has seen a partial translation by Minorsky 1957.

16 See Ocak 1981–1982; cf. also Ocak 1998.

17 Elwell-Sutton 1985, 859: “ALĪ AŞĖAR B. ‘ALĪ AKBAR NAYYER BORŪJERDĪ, MĪRZĀ, author of several works including the ‘*Aqā‘ed al-šī‘a*, written in 1263/1874 and dedicated to Moḥammad Shah Qājār; though not of outstanding merit, this work has been printed several times (first lithographed, Tehran, 1285/1868–69) and was summarized by E. G. Browne (*Lit. Hist. Persia* IV, pp. 381–402) as a typical example of popular Shi‘ite ideas in the 13th/19th century. From this it is possible to observe that the author was hostile not only to Sunnism, but also to certain doctrines of Sufism (e.g., *waḥdat al-wojūd*) and to extremist (*ġolāt*) Shi‘ite and Ismā‘ili views on the subject of ‘Alī b. ‘Abī [sic] Ṭāleb and other topics. [. . .].”

18 Friedlaender 1907 (pt. 1), 1908 (pt. 2).

19 Friedlaender 1907 (pt. 1), 20–21: “‘Abd-al-Ķāhir al-Baġdādī (d. 429/1038), a contemporary of Ibn Ḥazm, who bestows great pains on a precise classification of the 72 heterodox

Besides elaborating on the different versions of the Arabic root, which makes this work an important input in the re-actualisation of the related terms, we also find the important assessment that “[. . .] the Ġāliya never became an independent organism as did the Imāmiyya.²⁰ The constituency of the Ġāliya is as fluctuating as is the name, which only later and even then not uncontestedly became the technical term for Ultra Shiite.”²¹

1929 and 1931 saw the publication of the edition of two Arabic texts relevant to heresiography: *Kitāb Maqālat al-islāmiyyīn wa-iḥtilāf al-muṣallīn* by Aṣ‘arī, and Naubaḥtī’s *Kitāb Firaq aš-šī‘a*. Hellmut Ritter (1892–1971) edited both from Istanbul manuscripts, while staying there as the head of the Oriental Institute of the German Oriental Society (DMG).²² It is likely that he was in contact with the Turkish historian Mehmet Fuat Köprülü, whose work was ground-breaking on the religious history of medieval Anatolia. Köprülü’s *oeuvre* on the topic, however, had already appeared around 1918 and in the early 1920s. It is interesting to note that he did not yet use the terms *ḡulāt/ḡulūw* (Turkish *ḡulāt/ḡuluvv*) in these writings and, as far as I could check, also not in his later works up to 1949. What he uses instead (and what Drefler understands as a translation of *ḡulāt*) is “ifratçı,” ‘extremists.’²³ Either the term had not yet re-surfaced as a generic term for Köprülü, or, Köprülü found it necessary to provide a more comprehensible term for Turks educated in the late Ottoman empire. This would also be supported by the fact that late Ottoman heresiographic literature, which, at that time, focussed on the Alevi-related Bektashis, did not employ the term either.²⁴

sects, counts twenty of these to the Shi‘a. He distributes these twenty over three main sects: the Zeidiyya (4), the Keisāniyya (1), and the Imāmiyya (15). The Ġulāt (‘Extremists’) are not reckoned to Islam at all. Shahrastānī (d. 548/1153), on the contrary, counts the Ġulāt (or Ġāliya) to the Muhammedan sects, and enumerates five Shiitic sects: the Keisāniyya, Zeidiyya, Imāmiyya, Ġāliya, and Ismā‘iliyya. Maḡrīzī, again, (d. 845/1442) who knows Ibn Ḥazm’s work and frequently plagiarizes it, follows in the division of sects a system of his own which is highly artificial. All the sects of Islam deviating from the Sunna are considered and called by him Ġulāt, ‘Extremists,’ i.e. driving to an extreme the moderate principles of orthodox Islam. These Ġulāt, and with them all heterodox [sic] sects, are divided into ten principal categories. The ninth is occupied by the Shiites or, as Maḡrīzī prefers to call them, the Rawāfiḍ.”

20 *Imāmiyya* is used for the branches of Shii Islam (including Twelver, Sevener/Ismailis) that have established a line of leading Imams. Adherents of this branch believe that Muḡammad designated his cousin and son-in-law ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib as his heir and that the leadership of the Muslim community had to remain in the hands of his descendants.

21 Friedlaender 1908 (pt. 2), 154.

22 Aṣ‘arī 1929; Naubaḥtī 1931.

23 Drefler 2013, 198.

24 Weineck 2013.

Developments after World War II

To summarise, the term was present in the heresiographic literature, but not widely used in modern writings after the sixteenth century. It was re-activated by the Western Orientalist endeavour of editing classical Arabic works. How did it happen that in modern literature, this *topos* has become one basic feature of ‘heterodox’ Islamicate groups, such as Arabic-speaking Syrian Alawites (‘Alawī-Nuṣairīs) and Druzes; Turkish- or Kurdish-speaking Anatolian Alevis (‘Alevī-*Kızılbaş*); and Kurdish Ahl-i Ḥaqq (Yārisān)? As the term ‘*ġulāt*’ is not found in administrative sources from the Ottoman or Iranian states in post early-modern times when referring to the above mentioned groups, it seems that for this purpose the term was taken by Western researchers from medieval heresiographies, while trying to establish a continuing genealogy of the modern sects back to earlier groups.²⁵

As a *Google Books NGram* analysis²⁶ shows (see Fig. 1), after the editions by Friedlaender and Ritter around 1920 and 1930, a third peak of the occurrence of “*ghulat* / *ghuluww*” occurs in 1955.

As Saïd Amir Arjomand relates, Marshall Hodgson’s

path-breaking article on the sectarian formation of Imami Shi‘ism, titled ‘How did the Early Shi‘a Become Sectarian?’ was [. . .] published in 1955. [. . .] Hodgson’s early works in the 1950s were major contributions to the history of Imami and Isma‘ili Shi‘ism. He showed how the doctrine of the Imamate was elaborated under the sixth Imam, Ja‘far al-Ṣādeq (d. 148/765) to counter the millennial

25 This might be related to the general suppression of (tribal) religious ‘extremism’ in early modern times related to state building activities both in the Ottoman as well as in the Safawid empires. Cf. Arjomand 1984, 210: “The suppression of extremism was determined almost entirely by reasons of state, which were twofold. The first motive for the suppression was the need to rationalize the form of political domination into an enduring and stable structure [. . .]. The second related political motive [. . .] was the need for the institutionalized domestication of the sedentary as well as the nomadic tribal masses”. Religious functionaries writing on ‘heresies’ later were rather occupied by dealing with new phenomena of ‘exaggeration’, such as millenarian movements like the Nuṣṭavīs, the posthumous veneration of Majlisī Sr. (cf. Babayan 2002, 425–427), or later the Bābī movement, for whom the term ‘*ġulāt*’ seems to be used from time to time. For the Bāb see Lawson 2014, 69–70 and Babayan 2002, 488: “Only after Bahai‘sm [sic] was established as a new religion, however defining itself as the fulfilment of Shi‘i messianic expectations, breaking with the *shari‘a* and unveiling a new universal revelation did Babism become tagged as *ghuluww*.”

26 Software developed by Michel et al. 2010.

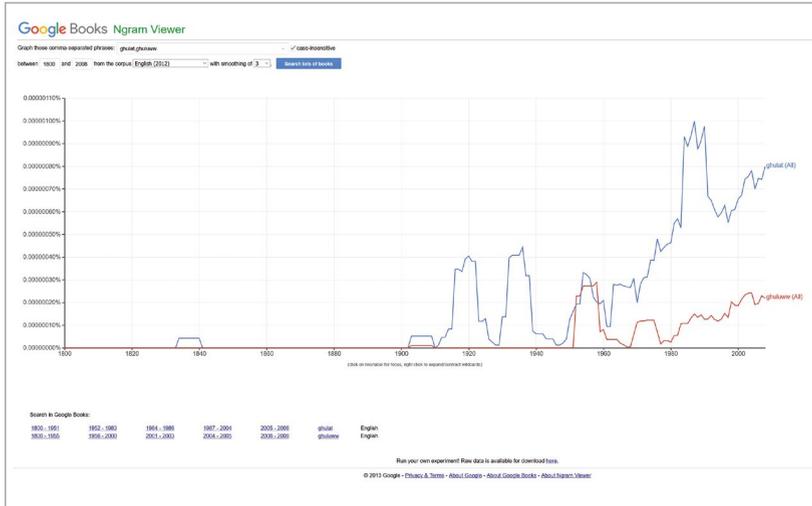


Figure 1 Google Books Ngram “ghulat ghuluww”, 19 June 2020.

extremism (ḡolow; see ḠOLĀT) endemic among the early Shi‘ite religio-political factions, and in order to discipline their religiosity and organize them into a unified sect.²⁷

In this article,²⁸ he comes to the conclusion that “[t]he term *Ghulāt*, ‘exaggerators,’ was used retrospectively by the later Twelver Shi‘ites, who liked to think of themselves as moderates, and to designate as an extremist any other Shi‘ite whose ideas particularly shocked them.”²⁹ Besides making extensive use of Friedlaender’s and Ritter’s editions, he also uses Gaudefroye-Demombynes, “who defines the Ghulāt in terms of *ḥulūl*.”³⁰ Besides this ascription, he already mentions in this article contemporary, well defined groups as being historically identified with “Ghulūw,” such as the Nuṣairīs and the Ahl-i Ḥaqq (‘Alī-Ilāhīs), although he is careful to present them as a continuation of the early “Ghulat.” He would prefer to restrict the term to the early Islamic groups—an unrealised wish, as we shall see.³¹

27 Arjomand 2015.

28 Hodgson 1955.

29 Hodgson 1955, 4.

30 Hodgson 1955, 4, Fn 24: “M. Gaudefroye-Demombynes, *Les Institutions musulmanes* (Paris, 1946, 3rd. ed.): 40.”

31 Hodgson 1955, 5: “In the early heresiographers Nawbakhtī (fl. ca. 910) and Ash‘arī (d. 935), accordingly, the name *Ghulūw* is used for a whole range of groups prior to the

It seems to be the case that his article on *ġulāt* in the influential second edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (the respective volume published between 1960 and 1965), was one of the starting points in the use of the term “Ġulāt” when identifying with later groups and movements from early modern times to the present. This is because they were using “various of the ideas of the Ġhulāt” and “interpreted Shī‘ism in a manner which orthodox Imāmism must term *ghulū*”³²—whether done explicitly or not.

In other words, being from ‘*ġulāt* ancestry’ was now perceived as a constitutive genealogical element within the religious history of ‘heterodox’ Islamicate groups on the margins of mainstream Islam. Intellectuals from the formerly esoteric groups during the twentieth century adopted this pattern. It became part of their own—now publicised—theologies, especially of Alevism.³³

We can observe the increase of the application of the term(s) using again an *N*Gram analysis since the 1960s (see Fig. 2). Although not applying the

consolidation of the imāmate after Ja‘far, but sparingly for the century immediately preceding themselves. The subsequent heresiographical tradition merely added a few later instances. That earlier *Ghulū* with its shifting lines is in fact distinctly different in role from the relatively small number of well-defined sects (where one is not dealing with Šūfī extremism) which are also called *Ghulū* in later times—such as the Nuṣayrīs, the ‘Ali-Ilāhīs, and sometimes the various Ismā‘īlis. If the tendentious term is to be retained at all, it might well be restricted to those earlier groups; leaving the later non-Twelve sects their individual identities rather than confounding them, as now, with the miscellaneous ferment of the early Shī‘a—which after all is as much the heritage of the Twelvers as of any other one Shī‘ite sect.”

- 32 Hodgson et al. (1965) 1983, 1093b–1094a: “Much of the Ġhulāt heritage was absorbed into the Imāmī and Ismā‘īli movements and disciplined by the exclusion especially of notions implying any compromise of the unity of God; thus the term *hulūl* seems to be rejected by surviving authors, along with the idea that the imām could be a god or a prophet. But even such ideas continued present within Imāmī and Ismā‘īli circles and in sects like the Nuṣayriyya [q.v.]; in later centuries, numerous apocalyptic movements developed in which various of the ideas of the Ġhulāt were used, and which often resulted in more or less long-lasting sects, those of the Nizārīs and Druzes from the Ismā‘īli fold, and the ‘Ali-Ilāhīs or Ahl al-Ḥakḫ, who saw ‘Ali as God. The first Šafawīs likewise interpreted Shī‘ism in a manner which orthodox Imāmism must term *ghulū*. Transformed into complex symbolic lore, as at the hands of the Ḥurūfīs, much entered the broad stream of Šūfism.”
- 33 See for example Korkmaz (1993) 2003, 239: “GALİYE AR. (ġaliyye < *gulūv*, *ileri gitme*, *sınırı aşma*) a. Abdullah bin Sebā tarafından kurulan, Ali’nin varlığında Tanrı’nın nesnelleştiğini, insan biçiminde görünür duruma geldiğini ileri süren mezhep. (ANSIKL.) – ANSİKL. Galiye mezhebine göre, gerçek Kuran’ın bildirdiği gibi değildir: İnsanla Tanrı birdir; olgunluk bakımından en Yüksek aşamaya ulaşmış kimse Tanrı’dır; bu aşamaya varan Ali olduğuna göre Tanrı da odur. Hz. Ali’yi aşırı ölçüde yücelten Galiye mezhebi, yorum farklılıklarına dayalı olarak birçok kola ayrıldı: Ali’nin tanrılığına inananlar [...]; Tanrı’nın Ali’de görüldüğü inancında olanlar [...].”

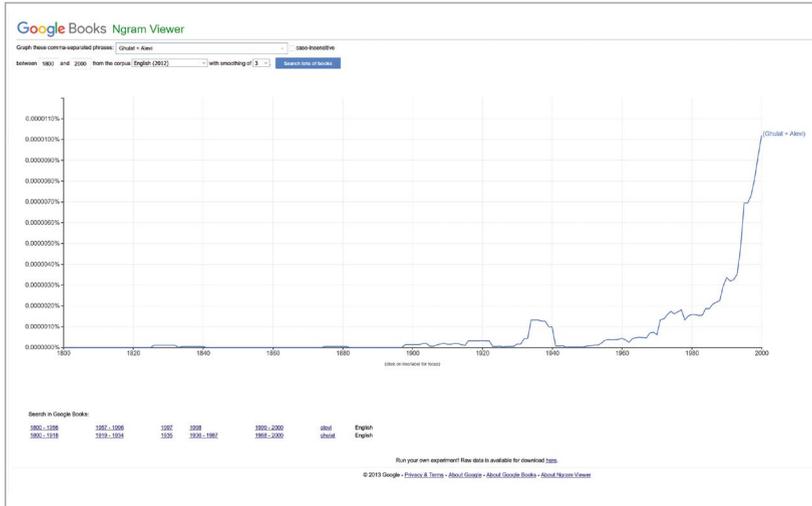


Figure 2 Google Books Ngram “Ghulat + Alevi”, 19 June 2020.

term, decisive for the identification of an entire range of groups, related in terms of doctrine, practice, and history, are authors such as Müller³⁴ and especially Irène Mélikoff, whose work functions as a kind of proto-theology for contemporary Alevis. Starting from the 1970s (and relying on the 1960s writings of Jean Aubin), she does not use the original term *gūlāt*, but its ‘translation’ “Chiisme extrémiste”.³⁵ Adding further elements,

34 Müller defines the spectrum from Bektashis, Alevis, Nusayri, Druze, Ahl-i Ḥaqq etc. as a substratum of an ancient pre-Islamic and superficially Islamised religion, which he is trying to prove by means of diffusionist ethnological theory. He is obviously not aware of Hodgson’s work though. See Müller 1967.

35 Cf. Mélikoff 1975, 50: “*kızılbaş* [. . .], ce terme désigna, par suite de la propagande religieuse des premiers Safavides, une certaine forme turkmène de Chiisme qui, bien que se ralliant au culte des Douze Imams, présentait toutes les caractéristiques du Chiisme extrémiste, avec sa croyance au *tecellî*, i.e. la manifestation de Dieu sous la forme humaine, au *tenaşşuh* [sic], i.e. la métempsychose, ou plus exactement la croyance à la transformation et à la multiplicité des formes, et par une hyper-dévotion pour le souverain safavide qui n’est autre que la réincarnation de ‘Alî, lui-même le *mazhar* [mazhar] de Dieu, c.-à-d. la manifestation de la Divinité sous forme humaine.” (With a footnote referring to Jean Aubin. 1970. “La Politique religieuse des Safavides”. In *Le Shi’isme Imâmite [Colloque de Strasbourg 6–9 mai 1968]*, 235–244. Paris.) See also more recently Mélikoff 2005, 65: “La présente étude se propose de faire une récapitulation de mes trente années de recherche dans le domaine Bektachi / Alévi [. . .].

J’ai été frappé de prime abord par les idées du chiisme dit extrémiste, qui apparaissaient ostensiblement sous la qualification de chiisme des douze imams ou chiisme djaféride.

such as crypto-Christian features, she repeats the defining features of the *ġulāt*, now well established by Hodgson's Encyclopaedia definition. The identification of *ġulāt* heritage and early modern groups, such as the Şafawī Kızılbaş, was then standardised by the influential and much cited work of Michel Mazzaoui on *The Origins of the Şafawids: Šī'ism, Şūfism, and the Ġulāt* in 1972, who refers somewhat anachronistically, to the fifteenth century as the "'hey day' of the Ghulat".³⁶ Parallel to that, scholars of Shiism started to reinvestigate the 'original' early Islamic *ġulāt* from the second half of the 1970s onwards.³⁷ With the self-publication of 'Alawī-Nuṣairīs after the coming to power of the 'Alawī Ḥāfiẓ al-Asad in 1970 (with books by 'Alawī authors mainly published in Lebanon and not in Syria), scholars of Shiism got also access to original *ġulāt* texts, preserved in the possession of Nuṣairī sheikhly families. Featuring prominently here is the German scholar Heinz Halm, who published and analysed such texts in the late 1970s and early 1980s.³⁸ The link between medieval 'exaggerators' and (early) modern 'heterodox movements' was by then (1982) well established, as the *Encyclopaedia Iranica* article on 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib by Ethan Kohlberg, a leading scholar of Shiism, demonstrates.³⁹

J'y trouvais la croyance à la réincarnation qui prenait par endroit l'apparence de la métémpsycose. Je m'intéressais surtout à ce qui se cachait derrière le culte d'Ali qui représentait la divinité sous forme humaine.

Dans certaines régions de l'Empire ottoman, surtout dans les anciennes provinces balkaniques où le Bektachisme était florissant, Ali pouvait avoir pris la place de Jésus. Transcrits en caractères arabes, une seule lettre différencie les noms de (Isa) et (Ali)." The terms *ġulat/ġuluv* are also not used by her pupil Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, who nevertheless presents an even wider spectrum of 'heterodoxies' in Ottoman religious history. See Ocak 1998.

- 36 Mazzaoui 1972, 3: "iṭnā'aşarī twelvers, ismā'īlī seveners, and ġulāt extremist [. . .] As for the extremist ġulāt, the fifteenth century was their hey-day: from Anatolia to Māwarā'annahr their folk Islamic views permeated every Şūfī order and every popular šī'ī movement. The revolt of Şaiḥ Badr ad Dīn in Anatolia, the Sarbadār state in Ḥūrāsān, and the Muşā'şā' dynasty in lower Iraq are only a few examples."
- 37 Al-Qāḍī 1976, cited also by Dreßler 2002.
- 38 Halm 1978, 1981; Halm 1982. Most recently see the works of Mushegh Asatryan, who again works on such early texts, esp. Asatryan 2016. Cf. also an unpublished paper by Pabani, n.d.
- 39 Kohlberg 1982: "Among extremist Shi'ites. One of the basic differences between Emāmī Shi'ism and the various Shi'ite branches known collectively as ġolāt concerns the question of the respective roles of 'Alī (and the other Imams) on the one hand, and Moḥammad on the other. Emāmī Shi'ism shares with Sunni Islam the belief that Moḥammad, as seal of the prophets, was the last to have received revelation (wahy). Classical Emāmī Shi'ite doctrine holds that 'Alī and the other Imams were the recipients of inspiration (elḥām) and were thus moḥaddaṭūn ('those addressed by angels'), but that they were subordinate to Moḥammad. In contrast, some of the ġolāt believed that 'Alī was equal or

Maybe also triggered by the ‘Nuṣairī rule’ in Syria since the 1970s, in the 1980s two books appeared in the Arabic world (Iraq and Egypt) dealing with *Ġulūw*, *Ġāliyya*, and *Ġulāt*.⁴⁰ A final peak in the usage of “Ghulat” occurred with the publication of the popular book *Extremist Shiites: The Ghulat Sects* in 1987/1988 by Matti Moosa (1924–2014), a Syrian Orthodox Iraqi and US-based historian of religion, which in turn found its way into several encyclopaedia articles as a reference work.⁴¹ Moosa approaches the “Shabak, Bektashis, Safawis, Kizilbash” and then focusses on the ‘classical ghulat’, Ahl-i Ḥaqq and Nuṣairīs. However, for him most of Shiism seems to figure as “ghulat” as he, although not being a Muslim, takes the standpoint of Sunni Islam *vis-à-vis* the history of inner-Islamic diversity. One finds a recent culmination of the identification of “Ghulat” with modern Kızılbaş (Alevi) Islam (in its Şafawī-Iranian form), in the work of Kathryn Babayan. Starting with her dissertation of 1993,⁴² which uses the work of Mazzaoui

even superior to Moḥammad, while others went so far as to claim that ‘Alī was the locus of the divine. [. . .] The influence of *ḡolāt* attitudes can be traced to modern times. The leader of the 7th/13th-century Bābā’ī movement, Bābā Eṣḥāq, allied himself to extremist forms of Shi’ism prevalent in Irano-Turkish popular circles. The above-mentioned ‘Alī b. Moḥammad b. Falāḥ believed in ‘Alī’s divinity and claimed that the spirit of ‘Alī had been infused into his own body. Similar views are found in the unexpurgated version of the *Dīwān* of Shah Esmā’īl I. Shaikh Aḥmad Aḥsā’ī (d. 1241/1826), founder of the Šaykīya movement, is said to have seen in ‘Alī an incarnation of the divine and to have maintained that God had delegated the power of creation to ‘Alī and the other Imams. And members of the Persian Ahl-e Ḥaqq sect, though they do not accord ‘Alī a central position in their doctrine, nevertheless believe that it was in his person that the second of seven successive manifestations of the divinity was made.”

40 Sāmarrā’ī 1988 [first publ., possibly as a thesis, already in 1982?], and Zuḡbī 1409.

41 Moosa (1987) 1988.

42 Babayan 1993. See especially the following parts from Babayan 1994 dealing with *ḡulūw/ḡālin/ḡulāt*:

Babayan 1994, 136, Fn 3: “*Ghuluww* (n.) is derived from the Arabic root ‘gh-l-w’, literally, ‘to exceed the proper boundary.’ Hence, it would be more appropriate to render *ghālī* (pl. *ghulāt*) as ‘exaggerator’ than ‘extremist.’ The use of the term is problematic. *Ghuluww* has been attributed pejoratively to individuals with extreme or unorthodox views on the nature of intercessors between man and God. For the Shi’a it is the apotheosis of the Imams, the immaculate descendants of Muhammad through his daughter Fatima. For the Sunnis it is the elevation of a saintly man (*walī*), a dervish, or a shaykh to a God-head. The term has also been applied rather loosely in different historical contexts to a variety of dissenters. My use of the term is an effort to make it more specific for the historian of Islamdom. Martin Dickson emphasized both the continuity of *ghulāt* movements throughout Islamic history and their distinct nature, which was nurtured by religious systems—Christian heresies such as gnosticism, Zoroastrian heresies such as Mazdakism, Manichaeism, and Zurvanism, in addition to mainstream Zoroastrianism—that were alive in Sasanian Iran before the advent of Islam.” Cf. also the work of Babayan’s teacher, which she refers to: Dickson (1958) 2003.

and Mélikoff (though not of Moosa), and a subsequent article (1994),⁴³ her interpretation of Islamicate ‘heterodoxies’ culminates in a nationalistic Iranian interpretation of a hidden, but continuous *Ġulāt*-Islamic strand that is allegedly fed by everlasting Iranian religious concepts,⁴⁴ as presented in her 2002 monograph *Mystics, Monarchs, and Messiahs: Cultural Landscapes of Early Modern Iran*.⁴⁵

43 Babayan 1994, 136, fn 5, on the topic of Cüneyd (Şafawî) as *ġālî* (Cüneyd as God, his son Ḥayder as son of God): “See, for example, Fazlullah b. Ruzbihan Khunji’s [-1521] description of Sultan Junayd and Haydar in his *Tārīkh-i ‘ālam-ārā-yi Amīnī*, ed. John Woods (London: Royal Asiatic Society, forthcoming), 259–309 (ff. 132a–158a).” Babayan 1994, 144: “Karaki issued a *fatwā* (injunction) allowing the cursing of Abu Muslim, the God-like hero of the Qizilbash, and wrote one of the earliest polemics against the Sufiesque *ghulāt*.” (See also Yüsofi 1983: “Abū Moslem ‘Abd-al-Raḥmān b. Moslem Ḳorāsānī, prominent leader in the ‘Abbasid cause. He was born either at Marv or in the vicinity of Isfahan ca. 100–01/718–19 or 105–09/723–27. [. . .] [died] (24 Ša‘bān 137/13 February 755).” His Shii or Sunni identity is not clear.) with Fn 27: “Shaykh ‘Ali Karaki, *Matā’in al-mujrimiyya fī radd al-şūfiyya*, probably written in 1526; Karaki’s *fatwā* is preserved by his student, Muhammad b. Ishaq b. Muhammad Hamavi, in his work written in 938/1531 and entitled *Anīs al-mu‘minīn* (ed. Mir Hashim Muhaddith [Tehran, 1363 Sh./1984]).”

Babayan 1994, 146: “The *Abū Muslimnāma*, a product of the cultures of Anatolia and Iran, was a medium through which ‘Alid *ghuluww* was preserved in oral tradition by way of storytelling. In the imperial phase these stories were strong reminders of the spirit of Qizilbash Islam and of the Safavids’ former identification with Abu Muslim. Once the Imamite Shi‘i identity of the Safavid domains had been adopted, Shah Isma‘il’s genealogy was altered (1508)—hence the new rendition of the *Şafvat al-şafā*, officially revised under Isma‘il’s successor, Shah Tahmasb (1524–76). Shah Isma‘il’s choice of an ‘orthodox’ Husayni/Musavi lineage allowed him to maintain the ‘Alid loyalties associated with Abu Muslim’s cause. It permitted him as well to separate himself, at least genealogically, from the *ghulāt*. The newly concocted Safavid ancestral tree revealed no trace of Abu Muslim or of Muhammad b. Hanafiyya; instead, the Musavi link was emphasized.”

44 Babayan 2002, XXV: “*Ghuluww* symbolizes one worldview against which Islam came to define itself, as well as one among many interpretations and adaptations of Islam. [. . .] it played a pivotal role from its genesis all the way to the early modern period, particularly within the Alid idiom in the lands of Anatolia, Iraq, and Iran. *Ghuluww* should be understood in relation to Abrahamic monotheisms, particularly the monotheism of Muhammad as interpreted from the Qur’an.”

45 Babayan 2002. See also Amanat 2007: “The Safavid revolution successfully fused the extremist (ḡolow) tendency of the Qezelbaş military confederacy—itsself charged with anthropomorphic aspirations of the Ahl-e Ḥaqq (q.v.) pastoral religion of northwestern Iran—with the Shari‘a-oriented Twelver Shi‘ism of Iran proper and the adjacent Arab lands.”

Conclusion

This reconstruction of the genealogy of the terms ‘*ḡulāt*’ / ‘*ḡulūw*’ etc. sheds light on the construction of identities of ‘heterodox’ groups, against the backdrop of modern nation-states, by means of medieval terminology and typology. Modern groups now re-classified as ‘*ḡulāt*’ are not genealogically related to medieval ‘heretics.’ They might include the descendants of these, but it was applied constantly to groups or individuals dissenting from hegemonical forms of ‘mainstream’ Islam (which formed parallel to that process). In fact, they can be conceptualised as the remains of a widespread late-medieval ‘latitudinarian’ strand of an ‘ahlal baitism’ (reverence of the ‘house / family of the prophet Muḥammad’)⁴⁶ or ‘Alī- veneration, not necessarily in a specifically Shiite context. During the at times forceful introduction of hegemonic forms of ‘orthodox’ Islam by the Ottoman (Sunni) and Safawid (Twelver Shiite) empires and their successor states, these groups either adapted to a standardised form of Shiism or became first persecuted, and then marginalised ‘sectarian’ groups in Anatolia, the Levant, Mesopotamia, and Iran. Until the twentieth century, most of them have remained in rural areas and were detached from the mainstream Muslim literate traditions, and therefore from mainstream *ṣarī‘a* and *fiqh*, both Sunni and Shii. As we can see in very recent studies on the Ahl-i Ḥaqq, people from these traditions are only now beginning to reflect on the notions of *ḡulūw* as an Orientalist concept and beginning to criticise this categorisation.⁴⁷

46 *Ahl al-bait*; ‘people of the house’, i.e. the family of the prophet Muḥammad and his offspring; usually his daughter Fāṭima, her husband and his cousin ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, and their sons al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusain, but also including the Imāms (recognised by the respective Shia groups), usually the progeny of al-Ḥusain. In the widest sense, all offspring of these are sometimes considered as *ahl al-bait*, too. Aהלal baitism is a neologism denoting the general reverence for the *ahl al-bait*, not necessarily in a Shiite, but also in a ‘Sunni’ (or meta-confessional) context.

47 Asheghali 2015, [without page number]: “Abstract: This thesis explores the impact of certain terms, categories and approaches, such as orthodox, heterodox, *ḡulāt* (Shi‘i extremists), and syncretism, on the field of Islamic Studies and maintains that these classifications result in normative and exclusive understandings of Islam that greatly limit the scope of academic inquiry. Specifically, this study examines the work of the Kurdish mystic and philosopher, Nūr ‘Alī Elahī (Ostad Elahi) [1895–1974] and aims to demonstrate that Ostad Elahī’s text *Ma’refat ol-Ruh* (Knowing the Spirit), an elucidation of the Ahl-e Haqq belief in *sayr-e takāmol*, has been largely ignored in the field of Islamic Studies as a result of the existing parameters. The study makes the case that *Ma’refat ol-Ruh* is a text that is simultaneously Muslim and Ahl-e Haqq and should be examined by scholars of Islamic Studies as a work on Islamic eschatology.”

Asheghali 2015, 16: “In the Shi’i milieu, accusations of pantheism, belief in incarnation and metempsychosis, and antinomianism are reserved for a category of people called the *ghulāt*. In his survey text titled, *Shi’ism* [2nd ed, trans. Janet Watson and Marian Hill (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 154], Heinz Halm writes, ‘Since its inception the Shi’a has included a trend which, although basing itself on the Imams, has been judged as heretical and attacked as ‘exaggeration’ or ‘extremism’ (*ghulūw*) by the orthodox Imamiyya [Shi’a]. In particular, the “extremists” are said to have committed three acts of heresy: the claim that God takes up his abode in the bodies of the Imams (*hulul*), the belief in metempsychosis (*tanasukh*), and the spiritual interpretation of Islamic law which thereby loses its obligatoriness and no longer needs to be followed literally—that is to say, open antinomianism (*ibaha*).’”

Asheghali 2015, 17: “Halm’s use of the language of orthodoxy is interesting here. It is rarely used, here or elsewhere, intentional or unintentional, unless it is to the detriment of the group that falls outside the proposed orthodox bounds. Rather than resort to the term heterodox, Halm uses the far more derogatory and openly dismissive category of *ghulāt*. On this subject, in his *Doctrines of Shi’i Islam*, Ayatollah Ja’far Sobhani writes the following: The word *ghulūw* in the Arabic language means going beyond the limit. . . After the death of the Prophet, certain groups likewise went beyond the bounds of truth in respect of the Prophet and some of the members of the *ahl al-bayt*, ascribing to them degrees of eminence that are the preserve of God alone. Thus they were given the name *ghālī* or *ghāliyān* [in Persian], as they had exceeded the bounds of the truth . . . Their outward profession of Islam is thus valueless, and the religious authorities regard them as disbelievers. The last portion of Ayatollah Sobhani’s words is the most critical to this study and the most demonstrative of why the category of *ghulāt* is not appropriate for academic use. According to this, the word *kāfir* (disbeliever) could easily be used in lieu of *ghālī*. Is it even imaginable for an academic to have a section in a study on Islam dedicated to the *kāfirūn*? The problem is that the category of *ghulāt* is very comfortably utilized in academic scholarship relating to Islam and particularly Shi’ism. No group that falls within that category, whether they fully identify as Muslim or not, would refer to themselves as *ghulāt*. It is not a term that any group identifies itself with and yet its academic use continues. Furthermore, when a category is used that immediately identifies a group as far beyond the ‘orthodox’ pale, it gives license to scholars to be very careless and unfortunately rather sloppy in the little attention that they give said group and their beliefs.” (With a footnote referring to: Ayatollah Ja’far Sobhani. 2003. *Doctrines of Shi’i Islam: A Compendium of Imami Beliefs and Practices*. Translated and edited by Reza Shah-Kazemi. Qom: Imam Sadeq Institute, 175–176).

Bibliography

- Amanat, Abbas.** 2007. "Islam in Iran v. Messianic Islam in Iran." *Encyclopædia Iranica* 14 (2), 130–134. Last updated April 5, 2012. Last accessed April 9, 2020. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/islam-in-iran-v-messianic-islam-in-iran>.
- Amir-Moezzi, Mohammad Ali.** 2005. "Raj'a." *Encyclopædia Iranica. Online Edition*. Last updated July 20, 2005. Last accessed April 9, 2020. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/raja>.
- Anthony, Sean W.** 2012. "Kaysāniya." *Encyclopædia Iranica* 16 (2), 183–188. Last updated September 25, 2012. Last accessed April 9, 2020. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/kaysaniya>.
- Arjomand, Said Amir.** 1984. *The Shadow of God and the Hidden Imam: Religion, Political Order, and Societal Change in Shiite Iran from the Beginning to 1890*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Arjomand, Said Amir.** 2015. "Hodgson, Marshall Goodwin Simms." *Encyclopædia Iranica. Online Edition*. Last updated December 9, 2015. Last accessed April 9, 2020. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/hodgson-marshall>.
- al-Aṣ'arī, 'Alī ibn Ismā'īl Abū I-Ḥasan.** 1929. *Kitāb Maqālat al-islāmiyyīn wa-iḥtilāf al-muṣallīn = Die dogmatischen Lehren der Anhänger des Islam*. Edited by Hellmut Ritter. Istanbul: Maṭba'at ad-Daula; Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus.
- Asatryan, Mushegh.** 2016. *Controversies in Formative Shi'i Islam: The Ghulat Muslims and Their Beliefs*. The Institute of Ismaili Studies Shi'i Heritage Series 4. London: I.B. Tauris Publishers.
- Asheghali, Golnesa.** 2015. "Ostad Elahi, the Ahl-e Haqq, & Islam. A Study on Sayr-e Takāmol" (master's thesis, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA). Last accessed March 20, 2018. http://mars.gmu.edu/bitstream/handle/1920/9929/Asheghali_thesis_2015.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y <URI: <http://hdl.handle.net/1920/9929>>.
- Babayān, Kathryn.** 1993. "The Waning of the Qizilbash. The Spiritual and the Temporal in Seventeenth Century in Iran" (PhD diss., Princeton University).
- Babayān, Kathryn.** 1994. "The Safavid Synthesis: From Qizilbash Islam to Imamate Shi'ism." *Iranian Studies* 27 (1–4): 135–161.
- Babayān, Kathryn.** 2002. *Mystics, Monarchs, and Messiahs. Cultural Landscapes of Early Modern Iran*. Harvard Middle Eastern Monographs 35. Cambridge, MA: Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Harvard University; Harvard University Press.
- Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften.** n.d. "Corpus Coranicum. Textdokumentation und historisch-kritischer Kommentar zum Koran." Last accessed March 20, 2018. <http://www.corpuscoranicum.de>.
- Dickson, Martin B.** (1958) 2003. "Shāh Ṭahmāsb and the Ūzbeks. The Duel for Khurāsān with 'Ubayd Khān: 930–946 / 1524–1540" (PhD diss., Princeton University). ProQuest (Dissertations Publishing 5807838). Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services.
- Dreßler, Markus.** 2002. *Die alevitische Religion: Traditionslinien und Neubestimmungen*. Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, vol. 53, no. 4. Würzburg: Ergon.
- Dreßler, Markus.** 2013. *Writing Religion: The Making of Alevi Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Elwell-Sutton, L. P.** 1985. "'Alī Aṣḡar Borūjerdī." *Encyclopædia Iranica* 1 (8), 859. Last updated August 22, 2017. Last accessed April 9, 2020. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/ali-asgar-borujerdi>.
- [Frashēri, Şemseddīn Sāmī =] Ş.[emseddīn] Sāmī/Samī: Kāmūs-i Türkī. Kāfe-i**

- Lügāt-i Türkiyye ile lisān-i Türki'de müsta'mel kelimāt ve işlāhāt-i 'arabiyye ve fārsiyye ve ecnebiyyeyi cāmi' olarak lisānimizeñ mükemmel lüet kitābidir.* Ed.: Aḥmed Cevdet. (Eren Köy) 1317 hq = 1315 r = 1890 m. Reprint: Bayrūt = Beirut: Maktabat Lubnān = Librairie du Liban, 1989.
- Friedlaender, Israel.** 1907, 1908. "The Heterodoxies of the Shiites in the Presentation of Ibn Ḥazm." Pts. 1 and 2. *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 28: 1–80; 29: 1–183. Reprinted 1909, New Haven, CT.
- Haarmann, U.** [1979–1985] 2012. "Kḥundjī." In *The Encyclopaedia of Islam. Second Edition*, edited by Peri Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C. E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel and W. P. Heinrichs. Last accessed August 22, 2017. http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_4333.
- Halm, Heinz.** 1978, 1981. "Das Buch der Schatten". Die Mufaḍḍal-Tradition der Ġulāt und die Ursprünge des Nuṣairiertums." Pts. 1 and 2. *Der Islam: Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur des islamischen Orients* 55: 219–266; 58: 15–86.
- Halm, Heinz.** 1982. *Die islamische Gnosis: Die extreme Schia und die 'Alawiten.* Die Bibliothek des Morgenlandes. Zürich: Artemis.
- Hodgson, Marshall Goodwin Simms.** 1955. "How Did the Early Shi'a become Sectarian?" *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 75 (1): 1–13.
- Hodgson, Marshall Goodwin Simms, M. C. Şehabeddin Tekindağ and M. Tayyib Gökbilgin.** (1965) 1983. "Ġulāt." In *The Encyclopaedia of Islam. New Edition*, vol. 2: C–G, 1093b–1094a. Leiden: E. J. Brill.
- Ḥunġī, Faḍlallāh ibn Rūzbihān.** 1957. *Persia in A.D. 1478–1490: An Abridged Translation of Faḍlullāh b. Rūzbihān Khunġī's Tārīkh-i 'Ālamārā-yi Aminī.* Translated by V. Minorsky. London: Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, Luzac and Co.
- Ḥunġī, Faḍlallāh ibn Rūzbihān.** 2003. *Ta'rīh-i 'Ālam-ārā-yi Aminī: Şarḥ-i ḥukm-rānī-yi salāṭīn-i Āq Qūyūnlū va zuhūr-i Şafaviyyān.* Edited by Muḥammad Akbar 'Āşiq Kābulī. Tehran: Markaz-i Naşr-i Mirāt-i Maktūb.
- Kohlberg, E[than].** 1982. "'Alī b. Abī Ṭaleb. ii. 'Alī as Seen by the Community." *Encyclopaedia Iranica* 1 (8), 838–848. Last updated August 1, 2011. Last accessed April 9, 2020. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/ali-b-abi-taleb#pt2>.
- Korkmaz, Esat.** (1993) 2003. *Ansiklopedik Alevilik Bektaşilik Terimleri Sözlüğü.* Üçüncü Baskı. Kaynak Yayınları 374. İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları.
- Lane, Edward William.** 2003. *An Arabic English Lexicon.* Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society. Reprint.
- Lawson, Todd.** (2014). "Religious Authority & Apocalypse: *Tafsīr* as Experience in an Early Work by the Bāb." In *Unity in Diversity: Mysticism, Messianism and the Construction of Religious Authority in Islam*, edited by Orkhan Mir-Kasimov, 39–76. Leiden: Brill.
- Mawrid Reader.** n.d. "Arabic Almanac." Last accessed June 28, 2019. <http://ejtaal.net/aa>.
- Mazzaoui, Michel M.** 1972. *The Origins of the Şafawids: Şī'ism, Şūfism, and the Ġulāt.* Freiburger Islamstudien 3. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH.
- Mélikoff, Irène.** 1975. "Le Problème Kızılbaş." *Turcica: Revue d'Etudes turques* 6: 49–67, pl. I–V.
- Mélikoff, Irène.** 2005. "Le Gnosticisme chez les Bektachis / Alévis et les interférences avec d'autres mouvements gnostiques." In *Syncretismes et hérésies dans l'Orient seldjoukide et ottoman (XIVe–XVIIIe siècle).* Actes du Colloque du Collège de France, Octobre 2001, edited by Gilles Veinstein, 65–74. Collection Turcica 9. Paris: Peeters.
- Michel, Jean-Baptiste, Yuan Kui Shen, Aviva Presser Aiden, Adrian Veres, Matthew K. Gray, William Brockman, The Google Books Team, Joseph P. Pickett, Dale Hoiberg, Dan Clancy, Peter Norvig, Jon Orwant, Steven Pinker, Martin A. Nowak**

- and Erez Lieberman Aiden. 2010. "Quantitative Analysis of Culture Using Millions of Digitized Books." In *Science*. Preprint, published online December 16, 2010.
- Mir, Mustansir.** 1989. *Verbal Idioms of the Qurʾān*. Michigan Series on the Middle East 1. Ann Arbor: Center for Near Eastern and North African Studies, the University of Michigan.
- Moosa, Matti.** (1987) 1988. *Extremist Shiites. The Ghulat Sects*. Contemporary Issues in the Middle East. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- Müller, Klaus E[rich].** 1967. *Kulturhistorische Studien zur Genese pseudo-islamischer Sektengebilde in Vorderasien. Mit vier Karten u. sieben Tafeln*. Studien zur Kulturkunde 22. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH.
- an-Naubahṭī, al-Ḥasan ibn Mūsā [Abū Muḥammad].** 1931. *Kitāb Firaq aš-šīʿa = Die Sekten der Schīʿa*. Edited by Hellmut Ritter. Bibliotheca Islamica 4. Istanbul: Maṭbaʿat ad-Daula. Last accessed April 9, 2020. <http://menadoc.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/urn:urn:nbn:de:gbv:3:5-13833>.
- an-Naubahṭī, al-Ḥasan ibn Mūsā [Abū Muḥammad].** 2007. *Shīʿa Sects (Kitāb Firaq al-Shīʿa)*. Translated by Abbas K. Kadhim. London: ICAS Press.
- Ocak, Ahmet Yaşar.** 1981–1982. "Türk Heterodoksi Tarihinde 'Zindik'—'Hâricî'—'Râzifî' ve 'Ehl-i Bid'at' Terimlerine Dair Bazı Düşüncüler." In *Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi* 12: 507–520.
- Ocak, Ahmet Yaşar.** 1998. *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler. Yahut Dairenin Dışına Çıkanlar (15.–17. Yüzyıllar)*. Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları 60. Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları.
- Pabani, Nadim.** n.d. "Ghulāt in Early Imāmī Shīʿism. A Brief Survey of Beliefs and Doctrines." Last accessed March 18, 2018. https://www.academia.edu/1537014/Ghul%C5%ABww_and_the_Ghul%C4%81t_in_Early_Im%C4%81mi_Sh%C4%ABism_A_Brief_Survey_of_Beliefs_and_Doctrines.
- al-Qāḍī, Wadād.** 1976. "The Development of the Term Ghulāt in Muslim Literature with Special Reference to the Kay-sāniyya." In *Akten des VII. Kongresses für Arabistik und Islamwissenschaft*, edited by A. Dietrich, 86–99; 295–319. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht.
- as-Sāmarrāī, ʿAbdallāh Sallūm.** [1982?] 1988. *al-Ġulūw wa-l-firaq al-ġāliyya fī l-ḥaḍāra al-islāmiyya*. Bagdad: Dār Wāsiṭ.
- Van Ess, Josef.** 2011. *Der Eine und das Andere: Beobachtungen an islamischen häresiographischen Texten*. Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des islamischen Orients: Beihefte zur Zeitschrift "Der Islam" 23. Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Weineck, Benjamin.** 2013. "Spätosmanische Polemik gegen den Bektaşi-Orden: Facetten des Feindbildes in İshak Efendis Streitschrift 'Enthüller der Geheimnisse und Abwender des Übels' [Kāşifü'l-esrâr ve dâfi'u'l-esrâr]" (master's thesis, University of Heidelberg).
- az-Zuġbī, Fatḥī Muḥammad.** 1409 [1988]. "Ġulāt aš-Šīʿa wa-taʾatturuḥum bi-l-adyān al-muġāyira li-l-Islām: al-Yahūdiyya, al-Masīhiyya, al-Maġūsiyya. (Taḳdīm [. . .])" (master's thesis, Ġāmīʿat al-Azhar University, Ṭanṭā, 1985). Tanta: Maṭbaʿ Ġubāšī.
- Yūsufi, Ġ. Ħ.** 1983. "Abū Moslem Korāsāni." *Encyclopædia Iranica* 1 (4), 341–344. Last updated July 19, 2011. Last accessed April 9, 2020. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/abu-moslem-abd-al-rahman-b>.