

**SUFISM, SPIRITUALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY /
RETHINKING ISLAMIC MYSTICISM THROUGH CONTEMPORARY
SOCIOLOGY**

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1. Introduction

Sufism (Tasawwuf) has been an important part of the Islamic geography and in every country where there are Muslims, also Sufi movements, orders (Tariqa) and groups have flourished during the centuries. Sufism is the spiritual path and mystical way in Islam that leads the seekers toward the divine knowledge (*haqiqa*); while *sharia*, is the Islamic law organizing the actual social life in Muslim societies, as a religious authority producing the structure of these societies. However, after a particular threshold of modern history, Sufism spread outside of the Muslim world and first captured attention of Western Orientalists, scholars and intellectuals and later, the attention of a wider population that did not necessarily have a professional interest in this subject at all in the West. The same process of a widening influence of Sufism did not happen in regard to Sharia, the legislative part of Islam. The people who have been interested in Sufi thought and life practices have not tried to organize Sharia activities in Western countries and remained within the legal and social context of their own countries. What has driven Western people to Sufism, who were usually Christians at the beginning and after either converted to Islam through their Sufi practices or remained Christians, though they defined themselves in Sufi movements or groups, some of them ready to open their gates to everybody from any religion, although a majority of them do have a strong connection with the general totality of

Islam? A comprehensive look into Sufism would be helpful to examine our subject further. What is Sufism and who are Sufis?

2. “Religion of Love”

The substance of Sufism has been defined as “selflessness” which required “self-discipline” to raise oneself above his/her self and identify oneself with the “Divine Self” (Ahmed, 2003).

“Love” has been a crucial point of this self-discipline toward the divine unity and Sufism has been considered as “the religion of Love” (Davis, 1912: 29). Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi, who is referred to as *al-Shaykh al-Akbar* (Great Master) in the Islamic world, said: “I follow the religion of Love: whatever way Love's camels take, that is my religion and my faith” (Ibn Al-Arabi, 1911). Yunus Emre, the Turkish Sufi poet from the 13th Century says: “Love's like the shining sun, / A heart without love / Is nothing more than a stone” (Dilaver); and the words of Moinuddin Chishti are like the summary of essential Sufi believes: “Love to all and malice to none”. We can find thousands of examples like this which is expressing the same love words. Many Sufis believe that love, the essential message of Islam, is also message of Judaism and Christianity. According to Sufism, “If God, Himself, decides to care and love and feed even those who deny His existence, then who are we to deprive someone else of our love just because he is of different color or speaks a different language or is born in a different country or prays to the same God but in a different direction or using different words? We must try to transcend the barriers between humans so that we break the barrier between humans and God. . .” (Athar).

What are the origins of Sufism, the tolerant and peaceful tradition in Islam? There are several explanations and theories about where the word Sufi comes from. There are several theses about the root of *Sufi*; however, each seems to represent a different aspect. So, maybe it would be better to consider all of them as a part of the whole, rather than to choose a particular one which would exclude the others. Mir Vali-ud-din examines the etymological origins of Sufism and analyzes four suggested origins for the term: 1. The word “Sufi” comes from the purity (*Safa*). However, if the term 'Sufi' was derived from “*Safa*” the correct form would be ‘*Safawi*’ according to Arabic, not 'Sufi.' 2. Some believe that the Sufis were called Sufis “because they are in the first rank (*Saff*) before God, through the elevation of their desire toward Him, the turning of their hearts unto Him and the staying of their secret parts before Him.” But if the term 'Sufi' comes from *Saff* (rank) it would be *Saffi* and not 'Sufi.' 3. Others said that they were called Sufis because they resembled *Ashab al-Suffa* (Companions of Veranda) who lived in the time of Prophet Muhammad. Ashab al-Suffa had left this world and departed from their homes; they neither possessed nor were possessed. They used to live in the veranda of Prophet’s mosque and had no property at all and were entirely poor. But if the term Sufi were derived from ‘*suffah*’ the correct form would be “*suffi*”. 4. It has been also claimed that they were called Sufis because of their habit of wearing *suf*, i.e. wool. In this case the etymological derivation sounds correct, as “*Tasawwafa*” means, “he donned woollen dress,” according to the Arabic lexicon which supports this connection (Vali-ud-din, 1990). The etymological archeology of the word could prove various origins for the term. However, it is clear that each possible root sounds proper to the general meaning of Sufism and seems to complete the others.

The notion of “Purity” has been a crucial point for the Sufis. If one wants to be a Sufi, he should focus on and look at himself, see how he is behaving, and purify his heart. It is believed that in the Sufi way “when his heart was purified of the love of the world, his hand was automatically cleaned of the filth of the world” (Qadri, 2003). Shaykh Imran ibn Adam also emphasizes that Tasawwuf is coming from purification (Safa) (Ibn Adam), as it is stated in Quran: “He indeed shall be successful who purifies himself” (Quran, 87: 14). According to Shaykh Imran ibn Adam, the person who needs purification in heart needs a “spiritual doctor,” just as one would seek a medical doctor to find a cure for illness or disease. Shayks are like spiritual doctors who guide the *mureed* (seeker) in his/her Sufi journey of enlightenment. This is a challenging path that would require a guide in order to finish it properly (Ibn Adam). Citing the words of a seeker: “When I began this journey (reformation of the hearts) I felt as if I was in the darkest of tunnels, but with the guidance of my beloved Shaykh (spiritual teacher) the tunnel of darkness eventually came to an end and I was brought into the light” (Ibn Adam). All of the Sufi Orders agree on the need for a spiritual teacher for the seeker.

Manzoor-uddin Ahmed professes that certain behavior would conduct a person toward the purification of body and soul; however, this is only possible if the soul leads his/her body. Otherwise, if one is conducted by physical and sensual instincts, then it would be much more difficult for one to be purified (Ahmed, 2003).

The first way to seek purification is by following a “Spiritual Guide”. According to Ahmed, “the purpose of Tasawwuf, and the secret of Tasawwuf is the guide without whom one cannot achieve anything”. When an individual tries to progress in this

spiritual way without guidance, he/she can experience trauma and may be lost in a chaotic situation. However, in the modern societies people suppose that they can realize anything without a spiritual guidance and intellect has been independent of divine tendencies. The ruling classes and elites of the modern age have reduced people to an extremely individualistic level, which is the reason for several fundamental social and psychological problems in the contemporary world.

The second way to seek purification is to develop an ability to control oneself through the guide. The body is impulsive and has certain needs about which one should be careful. When one becomes a prisoner of these impulses, then the boundary between human and animal begin to disappear. However if he/she fights against the darkness of ignorance with both the spiritual guidance and the personal Divine Light together, he/she could be successful. Ahmed believes that for “self realization”, control of body should company to the spiritual progress and the regulations to control and discipline body is defined in *Sharia*, Islamic religious law (Ahmed, 2003).

Usually Sufis mention the profound connection between Tasawwuf and Sharia. For example, Imam Hamza Yusuf argues that the other religions are split between inward and outward ways or esoteric and exoteric expressions of religion. However, in Islam there is a unity between the spiritual/mystical path and the general religious system. As a result of this reason both sharia and tasawwuf had been taught in the traditional Islamic schools (Yusuf, 1997).

Sufis experience a big transformation in *Sayri Suluuk* (Spiritual Journey). Sufi is one, “who has no non-existence and his non-existence has no existence anymore”, that

means what he attains in this journey he never loses again and what he loses never comes back after this transformation. In his/her mystical journey Sufi attains God and never loses Him and during the same journey, he loses himself, negating his ego and super-ego and after this destruction he never regains his “self” again. He is becoming a part of the divine personality, finds his place in this holistic picture; while his own personality is disappearing entirely, in *Dhikr*, i.e. remembrance of God (Qadri, 2003). In a particular step of this journey the Sufi comes to the station of *fana* (extinction). Everything in the world, everything surrounding the one who is in the meditation of devotion and extinction, begin to vanish and perish entirely. As the universe disappears in the mind of a Sufi he/she starts to feel that there is nothing except God surrounding him/her. God is everywhere and there is only God after everything vanishes in the station of *fana*. After *fana* one does not desire the “sinful” ways of worldly life. In the station of *baqa* (eternity) one experiences the same state and inner peace. Now, as different from before, he/she is not empty, but is filled with Divine Light. “Before he used to reach out for blessings, now he becomes a source of benefits and blessings for others” (Razzaq: 62-63).

This message of Sufism that we have summarized here became a strong central belief for many Western people in the Modern Age and this tendency is still going on. To understand better the possible reasons of this situation we should have a general look first to the unfolding of Sufism in Europe and after America, from the early-Orientalist period up-to-now.

3. Spring of Sufism in the West

The interest in Sufism in the West goes back, to the 18th and 19th Centuries. The “discovery” of Sufism by Western scholars and re-description of Tasawwuf by Orientalists, is probably based on the shifting major interests from Egypt to the East; to Persian and Indian civilizations (Uždavinys, 2005). Algis Uždavinys claims that the European scholars who introduced the term of “Sufism” in the 18th century were more or less connected to the late 18th century policies of the East India Company (Uždavinys, 2005). Although, before the Western discovery of Tasawwuf, it was strongly connected to Islam and by Muslims it had not been considered as a separated branch. After the 19th Century, “in the context of certain ideological and cultural predispositions” Sufism was presented as a different and esoteric practice mostly based on Neoplatonic and Neozoroastrian beliefs, rather than Islam. The Orientalists with their new approach re-interpreted Sufism as the anti-dogmatic monistic or pantheistic movement and therefore a discourse negating sacred laws and customs in order to reach the inner freedom and divine unity. It was an interpretation that transcends the borders of Islam (Uždavinys, 2005). Edward G. Browne mentioned four theories regarding the origins of Sufism, although he thought none of them were able to explain the birth of Sufism substantially: 1. Esoteric Doctrine of the Prophet. 2. Reaction of the Aryan mind against a Semitic religion. 3. Neo-Platonist influence. 4. Independent origin (Davis, 1912: 11). This approach shows us the same symptomatic Orientalist mystifications of Islamic Mysticism. Algis Uždavinys states that the European attitude, both Christian and secular, towards Islam was “mostly negative, based on the pre-judicious stereotypes and current Islamophobia which required to exclude Muslims from Western civilization altogether” (Uždavinys, 2005). Hence, Orientalists have found a kind of “pantheistic spirituality” in their conception of Sufism, which was more acceptable and exciting than the “legalistic

religion” of Islam, for them (Uždavinys, 2005). However, many Sufi masters from the history and also the new ones have insisted that Tasawwuf is essentially connected to the Qur’anic expression of Islam and Hadith of Prophet Muhammad, which is also dependent to Qur’an and *Sharia*.

How did Sufism arrive in the West? According to Mark Sedgwick, Sufism originally reached the West in two ways: through translated texts into Western languages and through actual Sufis who traveled to Europe and America. The first influences over Western intellectual life had been through the translated texts and these translations did not lead to any Sufi movement in the West. They led to some limited inspiration and started an awareness of its existence. At the beginning of the 20th Century actual Sufis began to appear in Western countries. However, as reformers and unusual Sufis, they created some misunderstandings regarding Tasawwuf which even continues in the 21st Century. Sedgwick indicates that for 19th Century reformers and their followers Sufism was an extremely liberal alternative to institutional religion, even almost like an illegitimate addition to Islam. However, “for Sufis in the Islamic world, in contrast, Sufism is a part of Islam that can have no meaning in any other context” (Sedgwick, 2006).

Andrew Rawlinson has analyzed the “idiosyncratic” character of Western Sufism that emerged in its historical course. He shows how in a century the West began to have its own gurus, Westerners who are Hindu swamis, Zen roshis or Sufi sheikhs (Rawlinson, 1993). Rawlinson indicates that there are two major factors of initiation in the realization of Western Sufism: Either the Westerners went to the East and learned the *haqiqa* (inner knowledge) from Eastern Sheikhs, or the Easterners from

Sufi orders came to the West had students from Europe or America creating new spiritual leaders. These new masters have changed the Western culture by introducing a view of life which is new in the West. This view is based on four principles: 1. Human beings can be understood best in the terms of consciousness and its modifications. 2. Spiritual practices can transform consciousness. 3. There are masters and teachers who have done this. 4. They can help to the other people to do the same through some form of transmission (Rawlinson, 1993). This new view of life and spirituality has found a positive reception in the Western world.

Inayat Khan, an Indian musician, is called the first Sufi who established a significant following in the West. Inayat Khan, the founder of the Sufi Order had a background from the Indian Chishti Order and came to the West as a musician. In 1910 he arrived to San Francisco and soon met Rabia Martin who was his first Western disciple. Inayat Khan appointed her as a Sufi teacher in her own right, in 1912. (Rawlinson, 1993 and Sedgwick, 2006). He arrived in Europe at the start of the First World War. Inayat Khan taught Westerners a view of Sufism as "the pure essence of all religions and philosophies," in which Islam has almost an incidental position. Many organizations have been spread in America and Europe that continue his teachings until today and these groups can be analyzed as branches of a New Religious Movement (Sedgwick, 2006).

As George Chryssides recommended three points can be considered in the definition of New Religious Movements: 1. An NRM is a 'recent' phenomenon. 2. An NRM is outside the mainstream religious life. 3. The NRM is able to attract converts from the indigenous cultures (Chryssides, 1994). The last one is quite proper for the Christian NRMs, which are spreading around the world. In the case of Sufism with the form of

an NRM most of the attracted converts are Westerners, while the more traditional Sufi orders take the attention of people who are Muslim already. Inayat Khan's movement, with the well-known name today the Sufi Order International seems a typical sample for the NRMs, as a contemporary phenomenon staying outside of both mainstream and traditional Islam. Being that broad and open allows non-Muslims to participate easily. Sufi Order International promotes a "universal worship" that emphasizes the common mystical values of all religions.

The process of globalization has provided a suitable basis for the NRMs, and in this way to Sufi groups as well. Web-sites, blogs, mail-groups, etc. help the modern Sufis create their online dervish lodges. Carl W. Ernst is rather critical about this new level. He asserts that the contemporary Sufis are affected by "the commodification of religion in global capitalism, with its inevitable technological mediation of culture, communication, and personal relations" (Ernst). Carl W. Ernst calls attention to the popularization of Sufism in the global age through various formats, but especially in poetry with the works of Mawlana Jelaladdin Rumi and in the music industry with traditional or modern interpretations of Sufi music, for example *qawwalis* (a sort of Sufi songs) by Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan (Ernst). When we look at the contemporary cultural industry, we see that there is an over-production of Rumi poetry and related cultural products and also Sufi music albums, produced by Eastern or Western artists. However, there are positive points too; on the one hand, this global atmosphere makes available local works of art, poetry, thoughts and other components internationally. For example, reaching the music of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan everywhere is quite acceptable, although there is a side effect involving in commercialization. On the other hand, this atmosphere allows for new experimental fusions in the global context.

I can give as another typical example the Turkish DJ and musician Mercan Dede, who is combining the traditional forms of Tasawwuf music with the technical opportunities and sound of contemporary electronic music. Mercan Dede has created a bridge stretching from the dervish lodges to the clubs of the West.

Globalization could just be a medium of a process which has started already. It is neither the reason nor the social and cultural basis of the growing interest to Sufism by the Westerners. We should discuss the “answers” of Sufi thought, together with the “questions” and “problems” that emerged in the West and required this answer.

4. “Cages” of Modern Civilizations and “Mystical Gates” to Escape

People are suffering in the modern societies of “the emptiness and meaninglessness of modern life, the terrible loneliness of the individual, his isolation and drifting”, they say: "I have many acquaintances but not a single friend." The awareness of being lonely and isolated continues unabated, in spite of the tendency toward a social "togetherness," with the popularity of words like friendship, fellowship and neighborhood (Pappenheim, 2000). The alienation of the modern individuals is still explainable by the classical alienation theory of Marx: “There are three types of alienation. First, there is man's alienation from himself. Modern man often finds it hard to be himself; he has become a stranger to himself. At the same time, he has become estranged, or alienated, from his fellow man. And finally, he experiences alienation from the world in which he lives” (Pappenheim, 2000). In this process of alienation people of consumer societies are losing their actual connection with reality and movies like *Matrix* are becoming the imaginary reflection and representation of

what they have in their daily lives. People are alienated from each other, from the social world that they are reproducing and as based on this practical ground, there is a serious moral and psychological crisis.

Capitalist lifestyle encourages one to consume more and more as the solution. However, the growing rate of consumption and progress of our physical, material and cultural needs are far away from preventing depression, anxiety and in the highest levels of crisis suicides. The modern individual is not sure that gaining and spending more money is the answer to his/her inner problems. After the Reformation (16th Century), Age of Enlightenment (18th Century) and period of Modernization the connection of Western societies with Christianity was transformed and in daily life, the secular social relations decreased the control of religion over the individual. Capitalist consumer culture has occupied all aspects of the society. In the late-capitalist societies huge shopping-malls became as typical and representative architectural samples for modern civilization, rather than temples.

The expansion of capitalism has not only affected the psychology of people and the cultural transformation, it has also caused serious ecological problems with unregulated industrialization. In the second half of 20th Century a serious critique was emerged against the social, economic and ecological currents of the world. The term "sustainability" burst into the global lexicon in the 1980s as people became increasingly aware of growing global problems such as overpopulation, famine, and environmental degradation that had been the subject of Limits to Growth in the early 1970s. The awareness increased substantially with the publication of the Brundtland Report of the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development, which is available under the title of *Our Common Future* (Barlett, 1994). In this text,

sustainable development is defined as the “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987).

In the discussions of sustainability, Islam with its economic, social, ecological and moral practices provided an alternative toward sustainability. The practices of Islam suggested as solutions to the growing consumerism and ecological disasters that occur every now and then. In this point of view, “Islam is meant to discourage people from playing a double role of both destruction first, and then concern about healing the natural and social world, as they have been throughout the history” (Marinova, 2008).

To find a substantial research on the suggested correspondence of Islamic literature and practices (Sharia, Tasawwuf, Etc.) with the purpose of sustainability you can consult the forthcoming publication by Dora Marinova and her colleagues, titled “Islam on Sustainability”. Essentially they emphasize that, “a sustainable lifestyle requires a moral unity of humankind. Islam can be a powerful unifier as its teachings blend religious, moral and social practice into an indivisible whole for the believer-practitioner” (Marinova, 2008).

In fact, for Sufi practices liberating one self from material desires takes an important role. As Abul Hasan Noori says: “*Sufism is the name of freedom, abstaining from artificiality, having generosity and the spending of wealth*”. A Sufi should not be selfish in worldly actions and be free from desire and greed. Generosity in the world means that “worldly goods should be given to the worldly people” (Qadri, 2003). Their abandoning of both world and afterworld, for the sake of Divine Love, are among the distinctive features of Sufis.

According to Junayd Baghdadi, one of the Grand Masters in the history of Tasawwuf, Sufism is founded on eight qualities:

1. Generosity: The generosity of Prophet Abraham
2. Acceptance: The acceptance of Prophet Ishmael
3. Patience: The patience of Prophet Job
4. Signs: The signs of Prophet Zechariah
5. Poverty: The Poverty of Prophet John
6. Woolen Robe: The woolen robe of Prophet Moses
7. Traveling: The traveling of Prophet Jesus
8. Piety: The piety of Prophet Muhammad

These qualities which are described in Islamic and other religious texts can be seen generally in the Sufi Orders, however, perhaps the qualities of giving up worldly ambitions, greed and avarices could be emphasized more in our context. Mohammed Ahmed Qadri mentions that John was so much in poverty and was like an alien in his own land. Jesus carried just a comb and wooden bowl during his travels. One day he saw a man drinking water cupping his hands, and then he threw away his bowl. Another day, he saw a man combing his hair using his fingers and he threw the comb away too. Moses wore always the same robe. Muhammad, although the keys to the all the treasures of the world were given to him, he only requested of God food one day to keep him hungry the next day, which is a “great principle” in Tariqa (Sufi Path) (Qadri, 2003). These principles seem as a possible critique and alternative to the modern consumer society and culture.

Sufism can be seen as a social alternative toward sustainability. However, its more basic message rests on the psychological contradictions, the crisis of the modern individual, which is also connected to “sustainability” in another context. Now, we can look to the therapeutic function of Sufi practices.

According to Sufism and Islam in general all illnesses come from God. But, the treatments come from God as well. As it is stated in the hadith of Prophet: “Allah did not create any illness without also creating the remedy, except death [old age]. Allah said that he who lives according to the Qur'an will have a long life.” In the Sufi process of healing sheikhs have special powers to mediate between God and patients. It is believed that sheikhs have *baraka* (God’s blessing) and through that mystical light they can be of help to patients as curer (Kiyamaz, 2002).

Sehnaz Kiyamaz explains the six evolution stages (*maqam*) of soul according to Sufism:

1. Maqam-an nafs (The stage of ego): This is the lowest stage of the soul and in this stage people are moving just based on their hedonistic instincts and with the pleasure of body. They fail to control their ego and consequently serious problems appear, such as: anxiety, self-doubt, depression, selfishness, insanity, paranoia, obesity, alcoholism, drug abuse and even suicide.
2. Maqam al-qalp (The stage of heart): In this stage people are in a higher level and perform a basic goodness to themselves and to the people around them. However, there are still some problems in their soul and body. They can control the desires of their ego more now, but it is not yet enough to have full

inner peace. The problems that can happen in this stage: inability to concentrate, hypocrisy, fear of failure, arrogance, forgetfulness, Etc.

3. Maqam ar-ruh (The stage of the soul): To reach this stage people have to develop the capacities of mercy, compassion, consideration and a concentration in self discipline for a higher perfection. One should see that all the illness is coming from God. However, it does not have to cause a reaction or blaming of God. He/she has to see that the solution would come as well, from the same source from which the problem came.
4. Maqam as-sir (The stage of divine secrets): One should arrive to this stage under some particular breathing exercises supervised by the sheikh. If there is not a proper guidance the problem of breathing and even suffocation can happen. Without guidance in this stage one can be disturbed seriously and this problem can cause loosing faith in God.
5. Maqam al-qulb (The stage of nearness): This stage is also named as the “stage of neighborhood” when one comes to the neighborhood of the highest heaven. In this level, his/her one leg should be in the earthly world while the other one in the mystical land of the heaven. When the seeker reaches to this stage, his/her physical problems disappear, however there is the risk of an emotional problem: severe ecstasy which could cause one to lose the connection with this world.
6. Maqam el-wisal (The stage of union): This is the stage of union with God that one cannot reach only through his /her intention; it can happen only with the permission of God. This is the highest stage that a Sufi can reach, which is aimed for by all the Sufis. “People who reach this stage can see death as a continuum of their lives though in a different form. Therefore, it is believed

that these people have the knowledge of the exact date of their deaths and face it with happiness because they will reach their most beloved, Allah, when they die” (Kiyamaz, 2002).

In the Western countries we can find many Sufi centers which offer therapy to their attendants based on this pattern. People, Muslims or non-Muslims, are looking for healing and therapy besides other/more secular solutions. As a matter of fact, the Sufi masters do not recommend that people give up modern medicine or any other contemporary form of a cure. They simply try to open new emotional and spiritual gates in the minds of people toward self-progress, which could be considered as a discourse in the field of ethics.

5. Conclusion

The Sufi Path passes by a wide range of places from the *zawiyas* (Sufi lodge) of the Middle East to the modern Sufi centers of the Western cities. We can hear these messages either in historical manuscripts written on parchment or in digital documents of our computer age. However, it does not matter where “the message” appears; essentially it always focuses on the same universal theme: peace, understanding each other, tolerance and love.

Kabir Helminski warns that in modern societies “on the one side we have the commercialization of life, the privatization of natural resources, the tyranny of transnational corporate economic power. On the other hand we have the authoritarian manifestations of religious belief divorced from any real spiritual perception. Fundamentalism thrives in a spiritual vacuum. Without the spiritual perception of a

spiritual reality, religion degenerates into mere intellectualism, formalism, legalism, and finally authoritarian, puritanical extremism” (Helminski, 2007). Mawlana’s and all Sufis’, “school of love, is a corrective to both the authoritarian concept of religion lacking in Mercy, and a materialist ethic that indulges the human ego” and offers us “the knowledge leading to spiritual perception” (Helminski, 2007). Sufis believe that “Wisdom means not hurting anyone. We should embrace one another with patience. And if our difficulties increase, we must be contented and continue to embrace each other. If things become even more difficult, the sweetness of our embrace must deepen...” (Muhaiyaddeen, 2004: Part Three). According to Sufis, God has created the universe in harmony and we should see the marks of that harmony within us, outside ourselves, in society, in family, in different social groups and where people are socializing with each other. Sufi Orders can represent the peaceful message of Islam and become a bridge to the other civilizations. There is a possibility for Sufism to be widespread all over the world and become a common source for “spiritual emancipation” in modern societies; which are producing the social problems and crisis although we cannot say the same about the solutions (Ahmed, 2003). Sufism is potentially one of the important practices that could prevent the struggle between civilizations and show the common values that exist in every civilization.

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