



The Other Side Of Sufism

Compiled and Edited by Abu Sabhan

This compilation is based mainly on critique of Sufism entitled "Ilal-Tasawwuf Ya Ibbadallah," by ash-Shaikh Abu Bakr al-Djaza'iri, a renowned teacher in the Islamic University in al-Madinah al-Munawwarah, Saudi Arabia, and a preacher in the Prophet's Masjid there. This booklet is also based on a discourse entitled "al-Anwar ar-Rahmaniyyeh," by the late ash-Shaikh Abdur-Rahman al-Afriqi, in which he exposed the deviant tenets of the al-Tijaaniyyah Order, along with many other relevant works of different descents

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INTRODUCTION

Praise be to Allah Who has chosen for us the religion of Islam, the only religion acceptable to Him, and Who has made us a just and equitable nation that we may bear witness to the fact that all the Messengers conveyed the Divine Messages to their peoples, and Who has made the Messenger Muhammad our witness on the Day of Judgement.

Among the statutes that Allah has prescribed for us is enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong, saying:

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

“Let there be among you a group of people to call for good conduct, and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, and those are prosperous ones.” (3:104).

In His infinite wisdom, Allah the Exalted allows one who is incapable of rectifying wrong by His hand to do so by his tongue, or at least to abhor it in his heart. The inability to do so indicates lack of Iman (faith).

The punishment for not enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong is a grave one. The Prophet said: which means,

“You must enjoin the good and forbid the wrong, or else Allah will soon send upon you His punishment; then you will supplicate Him and He will not respond to you.”

In another tradition, the Prophet said: which means, **“Or else, Allah will turn you might against your own selves.”**¹

It is in application of this ordinance and in response to those concerned Muslims on the North American Continent and elsewhere, that I present this critique on Sufism. It would, Insha'Allah, prove useful to put in the hands of those Muslims who are unaware of the hidden dangers of Sufism, and who, due to their shallow knowledge of Islam, or for other reasons, are duped into believing that salvation is attained only by way of ascetic mystical doctrines, and that the relationship between man and Allah is maintained through a few self-appointed priests.

Deviation from the right path led some Muslim rulers at certain stages of history to believe the perfection of thought could be reached by mixing Greek philosophies with Islamic beliefs. They contaminated the purity and simplicity of Islam as a way of life. This opened

¹ At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majeh & Ahmad

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the door to esotericism, elitism and mysticism, which later developed into a religion of its own.

The religion of Islam is based on the Book of Allah, the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah and the exemplary pattern of his life. Shaikul-Islam Ibn Taimiyyah, may Allah grant him His mercy, said:

“Allah has sent His beloved Prophet with guidance and the religion of truth; by so doing, He perfected His favours upon those who followed that guidance, the Muslims, and made manifest their rights and obligations.”²

It follows that no human being has the right to enjoin on people anything other than what Allah or His Messenger has enjoined, nor to prohibit them anything which neither Allah, the Exalted nor His Messenger has prohibited. He who does so would be contending with Allah by introducing a totally different religion, thus following the example of the People of the Book who have taken their priests and rabbis as gods besides Allah.

It is the way of innovators to introduce a bid'ah in the form of words or deed, impose it on those who fall under their influence, and force them by one method or another to uphold it. Thus did the Khawarij³, Rawafidh⁴ and the other deviant sects.

The Sufis exploited the chaotic state of affairs during the fifth and sixth centuries A.H. and invited people to follow their way, alleging that the remedy to this chaos was conformity to the guidance of their order's sheikhs. They invented their own orders and set their own criteria to distinguish loyalty from animosity, though these criteria were not sanctioned either by Qur'an or the Sunnah. Imam Malik bin Anas, may Allah grant him His mercy, emphasized;

“That which was not religion at the time of the Messenger and his companions, May Allah be pleased with them all, is never to be religion today.”

He went on to say;

“He who introduces a bid'ah in the religion of Islam and deems it a good thing, claims by so doing that Muhammad betrayed the Message,”

(i.e. He did not convey it fully and perfectly as commanded by Allah), despite the fact that Allah revealed:

² Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, “Al-Amr Bil Ma'roof Wan-Nahi An al-Munkar

³ Al-Khawarij, or the Kharijites: A party of heretics or schematics, including a sect called al-Harooriyyeh, so called because they split with the Muslims, or with the religion of Islam. Among them are those who rebelled against Ali, the fourth Khaleefah, may Allah be pleased with him.

⁴ Rawafidh or Rafidheh: An army or military force which has deserted its leader. This term was first applied to a certain sect of the Shiites of al-Khoofeh, Iraq, who deserted Zaid, the great grand son of Ali, when he forbade them to speak against the companions of the Prophet. They had wanted Zaid to renounce the first two califs, Abu Bakr as-Siddiq and Umar bin al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with them. When he refused to do so, the Rawafidh, who had pledged him allegiance, deserted him. Later this term became applied to all apostate or schismatics speaking against the companions of the Prophet.

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالْدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أَهْلَ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ
وَالْمُنْخَنِقَةُ وَالْمَوْقُوذَةُ وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَالنَّطِيحَةُ وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبْعُ إِلَّا
مَا ذَكَّيْتُمْ وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى النُّصُبِ وَأَنْ تَسْتَقْسِمُوا بِالْأَزْلَمِ ذَلِكُمْ
فِسْقٌ الْيَوْمَ يَمِيسُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنَ
الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ
الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ فِي مَخْمَصَةٍ غَيْرِ مُتَجَانِفٍ لِإِثْمٍ فَإِنَّ
اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٣﴾

“This day I have perfected your religion for you and completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you al-Islam as religion.” (Quran 5:3)

The Prophet made a point of opening all the speeches with a warning against bid'ah (innovations) in matters of religion. His warning words signify:

“Verily, the best of speech is the Book of Allah, and the best of guidance that of Muhammad and the evil of all religious matters is their own innovations. Every innovation is a bid'ah, and every bid'ah is a misguidance, and very misguidance is in the Fire.”⁵

Al-Sunnah is the second decisive source of Islamic jurisprudence. Discarding all or part of it is an act of KUFR (disbelief). In fact, adhering to the Qur'an and Sunnah is a hedge against deviation as confirmed by the Prophet who said:

“I have left you with two things after which you shall never go astray, as long as you adhere to them: the Book of Allah and my Sunnah. The two shall never part until they attend my hawd al-Kawther.”⁶

(i.e. until the Day of Judgment). Adhering to anything other than the two aforementioned Divine sources is deviation itself. We are commanded by Allah to hold only to that which the

⁵ Abu Dawood, an-Nisaa'i and others

⁶ Imam Malik, al-Muwatta'

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Messenger has commanded and taught, and to refrain from that which he had forbidden.⁷

Qur'anic texts and Prophetic traditions signify:

- ❖ Turning away from the Book and the Sunnah is the practice of disbelievers and hypocrites.⁸
- ❖ It is incumbent on Muslims to refer their disputes and controversial issues to the two Divine sources.⁹
- ❖ Refraining from them leads to failure and the loss of authority and power.¹⁰
- ❖ The Messenger is our model of the best way of life.¹¹

Considering the above terms of reference, we are able to scrutinize Sufism and Sufi orders and evaluate them from the perspective of the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger.

⁷ cf. Qur'an, 59.7

⁸ Ibid. 3.32, 4.61

⁹ Ibid. 4.59

¹⁰ Ibid. 8.46

¹¹ Ibid. 33.21

AUTHOR'S WORD

This book is presented to Muslims in pursuance of the aims and objectives to help Muslims understand the Qurʾān and the Sunnah as they were understood by as-Salaf as-Salih (the companions of the Prophet) and those who adhere to their methodology, and to expose, on the other hand, all forms of bidʿah (innovations) in matters of religion, so that the Muslims may follow the straight path of Allah and disregard the deviant ways, sects and orders that have no share in Islam.

Having exerted relentless efforts in the way of Daʿwah through its publications and periodicals, the Society is still striving to provide the Islamic library in the West with authentic works (works of the scholars of the pious predecessors and those who uphold their tenets and beliefs) to fulfil a long felt need.

This book is based mainly on critique of Sufism entitled ʿIlal-Tasawwuf Ya Ibbadallah, ʿ by ash-Shaikh Abu Bakr al-Djazaʿiri, a renowned teacher in the Islamic University in al-Madinah al-Munawwarah, Saudi Arabia, and a preacher in the Prophet's Masjid there. This book is also based on a discourse entitled ʿal-Anwar ar-Rahmaniyyah, ʿ by the late ash-Shaikh Abdur-Rahman al-Afriqi, in which he exposed the deviant tenets of the al-Tijaaniyyah Order, along with many other relevant works of different descents.

Finally, I pray to Allah the Exalted to forgive whatever mistakes I might have included in this work, and to accept it as a humble service to Islam on my part, seeking His pleasure alone. And to those concerned brothers who encouraged me to put this work together, I extend my gratitude and appreciation.

A.A.Tabari

Dhul-Qiʿdah 1409

April 1988

COMPILER'S WORD

Who I am to comment on this book, however while trying to find a book on Sufism in English, I managed to get some content however it was unstructured and missing some references especially from Qurʾān and ahadeeth and their classification (Isnaad of Ahadeeth). With the help of Allah Subhana Wa Taʿāla, I have managed to compile it in the form of a small booklet to benefit myself and to all Muslims to whom this information will reach.

May Allah SWT accept it as a humble effort on my behalf for His Sake and for the Sake of pleasing Him alone.

Ameen.

Wa Assalam.

Abu Sabhan

Rajab 1434

May 2013

WHAT IS SUFISM?

Sufism is often, wilfully or otherwise, referred to by Sufis themselves, or by orientalists, as 'Islamic mysticism', in order to give the impression that Islam is either wholly or partly an esoteric religion, with a set of dogmatic rituals to be understood by the elite alone-in this class, the Sufis! Unfortunately, the lack of any sound critical analysis of the subject in the English language allows these orientalists to flood the English and North American book market with literature that stands unchallenged, and dupes naive Muslims into believing that true salvation can only be attained by pursuing a mystical order.

Their vain goal strips Islam of its Universality.

True Muslims should be content with the name 'Muslims' given to them by Almighty Allah as He says:

وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ ۚ هُوَ اجْتَبَاكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ
فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ ۚ مِلَّةَ أَبِيكُمْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ۚ هُوَ سَمَّاكُمُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ
قَبْلُ وَفِي هَذَا لِيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى
النَّاسِ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِاللَّهِ هُوَ مَوْلَاكُمْ
فَنِعْمَ الْمَوْلَى وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ

“He has chosen you (to conform to His religion) and has imposed no difficulty upon you in religion, the religion of your father Ibrahim. He named you ‘Muslims’ both before (in the preceding Divine Scriptures) and in this Book.” (22:78)

Ibn Kathir elaborated on this verse, saying:

“Allah has chosen the Muslims, honoured them, and distinguished them exclusively of other nations by the most honourable Messenger and the most perfect religion, and He has not overburdened them with more than they can bear.”¹²

¹² Imadud-Din Ibn Katheer, “Tafseer al-Qur’an al-Adtheem. Exegets of the Great Qur’an”

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If Sufis insist that they are Muslims, then what is the sense of identifying themselves with Sufism rather than with Islam. The word Sufism was not familiar to those who lived in the first and the best three generations of as-Salaf as-Salih (the pious predecessors) who were commanded by Allah the Exalted and His Messenger (Peace and blessings of Allah SWT be upon him) with clear instructions.

DEVELOPMENT OF SUFI THOUGHT

Sufism is a blend of various thoughts and philosophies. By intermingling a few traces of Islamic teachings with it, the Sufi thinkers attempted to sanctify their doctrines and demonstrate its conformity to Islam. Greek philosophy, and in particular the teachings of Neo-Platonists, have left an indelible mark on many aspects of Sufism. This came about as a result of the translation of Greek philosophical works into Arabic during the third Islamic century. Greek pantheism became an integral part of Sufi doctrine.¹³

Manichaeism is also one of the mainstreams of Sufism. N. Fatemi observed:

“It is interesting how near to Manichean ideas the Sufis are, remembering that both Manichaeism and Sufism were nurtured in Persia.”¹⁴

Vedanta, the chief Hindu philosophy, which is an example of pantheism in its metaphysical strictness, also had a great impact on Sufism following the conquest of Sindh by Muhammad bin Qasim in the second century A.H.

Sufi occultism, with its host of philosophical and theosophical doctrines, is beyond doubt antithetical to Islam. Islam proclaims that the matchless entity and essence of Allah is totally different from that of His slaves, i.e., man. Sufis, on the contrary, subscribe to the belief that matter, man and God form in effect one single entity and essence.

Ibn Arabi's doctrine of pantheism was a combination of Manichean, Gnostic, Neo-Platonic, Vedantic and Christian philosophies and speculations, which he tried vainly to give an Islamic sanction by relating it to Prophetic traditions.

Of his main theme, R.W.J. Austin wrote,

“The one that predominates over the rest and to which they are subordinate in the oneness of being (Wahdat al-Wujood). The concept of the Oneness of Being is all embracing one, in that all Ibn al-Arabi's other concepts are but facets of it, just as he would say that all distinction, difference and conflict are but apparent of a single and unique reality, the 'seamless garment' of Being, whose reality underlies all derivatives being and its experience.”¹⁵

Ahlu al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah, on the other hand, are agreed that Allah is One Alone, qualified with all the attributes wherewith He has qualified Himself and named with all names whereby He has named Himself, without resembling creation in any respect; that His essence does not resemble the essences of His creatures nor His attributes resemble theirs.

Allah the Supreme says:

¹³ W. Montgomery Watt, "Islamic Philosophy and Theology," 1985, pp.37, 38

¹⁴ . N. Fatemi, "Sufism," pp.49

¹⁵ M. Ibn Arabi, "The Bezels of Wisdom," pp.3

فَاطَرُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَمِنْ
الْأَنْعَامِ أَزْوَاجًا يَذُرُكُمْ فِيهِ لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ
السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ ﴿١١﴾

“There is nothing like unto Him; He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.”(42:11)

Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi, one of the leading authorities on Sufi mysticism, who captured the imagination and the adulation of Sufis around the world, was born in the year 560 A.H. (1165 A.D.), and pursued the study of the occult and the metaphysical doctrines of the Sufis.

In his book “Such learning and accompanying practices,” R.J. Austin wrote,

“Often led Ibn Arabi, even while he was still young man in Seville, to spend long hours in the cemeteries communing with the spirits of the dead.”¹⁶

He talked about his “cemetery revelations” as matters of fact, and managed to compile a massive compendium on Sufism entitled Al-Futoohat Al-Mekkiyyah (the Meccan Revelations). Of this, Ibn Arabi wrote,

“Some works I wrote at the command of God sent to me in sleep, or through mystical revelations.”

The other striking impression that Ibn Arabi wanted to leave on the readers of his Meccan Revelation is that he, too, as a spiritual and mystical figure, experienced the heaviness of revelation, resembling that of the Prophet.¹⁷ He noted that sometimes the pressure of mystical revelation was so strong that he felt compelled to finish a work before taking a rest.¹⁸

Allah the Exalted particularly condemns such claimants, saying:

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ قَالَ أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ وَلَمْ يُوحَ إِلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ
وَمَنْ قَالَ سَأُنْزِلُ مِثْلَ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ الظَّالِمُونَ فِي غَمَرَاتِ
الْمَوْتِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ بَاسِطُو أَيْدِيهِمْ أَخْرِجُوا أَنْفُسَكُمُ الْيَوْمَ
تُجَزَّوْنَ عَذَابَ الْهُونِ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَكُنْتُمْ
عَنْ آيَاتِهِ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

“And who is more disbelieving than he who forges a lie against Allah, or says, ‘It has been revealed to me,’ when nothing has been revealed to him, or who says, ‘I will send down the like of which Allah has sent down.’” (6:93)

According to the Qurʾān, revelation is of two kinds. The first is the revelation that came from Allah to His Prophets and Messenger through an angel, such as Jibreel (Gabriel). This came to an end with the death of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). The second is the Satanic communication, of which Allah says:

هَلْ أُنَبِّئُكُمْ عَلَىٰ مَن تَنَزَّلُ الشَّيَاطِينُ
تَنَزَّلُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ أَفَّاكٍ أَثِيمٍ ﴿٢٢٢﴾

“Shall I inform you on whom the Satan descends, on every habitual liar and sinner.” (26: 221,222)

Muslims believe that the Prophet is the last of the Prophets, with whom the line of Prophethood is closed. Therefore, anyone who claims to be a prophet or a recipient of Divine revelation is an imposter and a heretic. And besides, it sounds quite eerie for a young man to spend long hours in cemeteries communicating with the spirits of the dead.ö

The Prophet was told by Allah SWT:

وَمَا يَسْتَوِي الْأَحْيَاءُ وَلَا الْأَمْوَاتُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُسْمِعُ مَن يَشَاءُ وَمَا أَنتَ بِمُسْمِعٍ
مَّن فِي الْقُبُورِ

“And you cannot make those who are in graves to hear.”(35:22)

Indeed, communion of this nature could very well lead to a theory such as pantheism.

In order to substantiate his theosophical and pantheistic doctrine and make it appear Islamic, Ibn Arabi resorted to *ta'weel*, which is giving far-fetched interpretations to selected verses of the Qurʾān or Prophetic traditions from the Sunnah, changing their apparent meaning to one which falls in line with his beliefs, a technique which was used before him by all the -Batini or secretive sects that strayed away from the path of Islam. He referred to Almighty Allah as ōCreator-Creature,ö and took pains to present the Divine Being in a theosophical context, and to convince his readers that Allah’s creation springs from nothing other than His ōfundamental being.ö¹⁹

Thus, the God that Ibn Arabi believed in is, in reality, all the elements that constitute the universe: human, animal and every other existing thing. As an example he depicted his own master, as a divine reality. And to make sure his readers did not misconstrue his heresy, he further emphasized:

“In relation to existence, He (God) is the very essence of existing things. Thus in a certain sense, relative beings are elevated in themselves, since in truth they are none other than He who bears the name Abu Said al-Kharraz.”²⁰

From this heretical concept of Allah, one may deduce without limit, principles which contradict the prescripts and fundamental tenets and creeds evident in the Qurʾān and the Sunnah. For example, man, as alleged by ōSon of Plato,ö²¹ is nothing less than God Himself, and since Firʾawn (Pharaoh) was a man, his declaration of being a god would have been true according to Ibn Arabi’s pantheistic doctrine.

Furthermore, if nothing exists in reality but God, then every animal, regardless of its family, is in reality god also. And since all existing things have one essence, wine is nothing but water, and every forbidden (Haram) thing is lawful (Halal).

There can never be more abhorrent heretical belief than pantheism. Allah the Exalted is far removed from what Ibn Arabi and his followers ascribe to Him. Allah says:

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Because Ibn Arabi’s thinking is fundamentally Platonic, he was given the surname “Son of Plato.” Ibid.

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الْأَنْعَامِ أَزْوَاجًا يَذُرُكُمْ فِيهِ لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ
السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ ﴿١١﴾

“.....There is none like unto Him; He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.”(42:11)

And it does not befit believers to make far-fetched interpretations of the essence of Allah or His attributes. True Muslims accept them as they are given in the Qurʾān or in the authentic traditions of the Prophet.

The above verse is an informative statement which connotes a command from Allah to the believers not to impute to Him an attribute or name other than those given to Him by Himself or by His Messenger Muhammad in authentic traditions. Nor are they allowed to subject Allah to similitude or examples. There is a clear warning in Allah's word:

فَلَا تَضْرِبُوا لِلَّهِ الْأَمْثَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾

“So put not forward similitudes for Allah (as there is nothing similar to Him, nor He resembles anything). Truly! Allah knows and you know not.” (16:74)

The Sufis, like their masters, would have us believe that their doctrines originated in the Qurʾānic verses. They interpret certain verses freely, both linguistically and theologically, to corroborate their beliefs and give them Qurʾānic sanction. Besides giving Qurʾānic verses different interpretations, they also reduce them to symbols and codes and juxtapose them in a metaphysical perspective. To give an example of the seriousness of this perversion of language by the Sufis, the following verse is cited which signifies:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا
وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

“O mankind, reverence your Lord Who created you from a single person, and created therefrom his (female) mate, and from them both (Adam and Eve) scattered countless men and women.”(4:1)

From these straightforward words, one can easily understand that Allah created Adam first, and, according to numerous verses, He fashioned him from earthly matter, and subsequently He created Eve from one of Adam's ribs, as stated in the authentic traditions. In an attempt to substantiate his pantheistic beliefs, Ibn Arabi gave the above verse the following meaning:

“From him (Adam) came forth the mate and child, who all came from the ‘Universal Nature,’ that is, God, Who is manifested in her (Nature's) many forms in the form of Adam, in the form of Eve and in the form of the progeny.”²²

The Divine element, according to him, inhabits every being.

“Glory be to God,” Ibn Arabi exclaimed, “Who created things, being Himself their essence.”²³

²² A.E. Affifi, The Mystical Philosophy of Ibn Arabi

²³ Ibid. pp. 135

THE ORIGINS OF SUFISM

Like many other Sufi doctrines, pantheism is adopted from man-made religions and philosophies, as confirmed by S. R. Sharda in his book, Sufi Thought. Sufi literature of the post-Timur period shows a significant change in thought content. It is pantheistic. After the fall of Muslim orthodoxy from power at the center of India for about a century, due to the invasion of Timur, the Sufi became free from the control of the Muslim orthodoxy and consorted with Hindu saints, who influenced them to an amazing extent. The Sufi adopted Monism²⁴ and wifely devotion from the Vaishnava Vedantic school²⁵ and Bhakti²⁶ and Yogic practices²⁷ from the Vaishnava Vedantic school. By that time, the popularity of the Vedantic pantheism among the Sufis had reached its zenith.²⁸

It is quite obvious that the Sufis did not develop their thoughts independently. Christianity and the worldly religions had their impact on Sufi doctrines.

In the beginning of the ninth century, N. Fatemi elaborates:

“The Sufis developed an ecumenical doctrine based on the idea of Zoroastrianism²⁹ Buddhism³⁰ Judaism, Christianity, Neo-Platonism and Islam”

Sufism regards all religions as more or less perfect shadowing forth of the great central truth which they seek fully to comprehend, and consequently it recognizes them as good, in proportion to the matter of truth they contain.³¹

Ibn Arabi, the most infamous Sufi philosopher, including most of his heretical ideas in his book, the Bezels of Wisdom, which he alleged was given to him by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). He wrote:

²⁴ Monism: the doctrine that only one being exists (Oxford English Dictionary)

²⁵ Vedanta: The chief Hindu philosophy, dealing mainly with the Upanishadic (book of Hinduism) doctrine of the identity of Brahman and Atman, which reached its highest development circa 800 A.D. through the philosopher Shankara. (Random House Dictionary)

²⁶ Bhakti (Hinduism): selfless devotion as a means of reaching Brahman. (Ibid)

²⁷ Yoga: Although by definition it's a mental and physical exercise however mostly used by heretics as a Union of the self with the supreme being. (Ibid)

²⁸ S.R. Sharda, book 'Sufi Thought'

²⁹ Zoroastrianism: Majoosi, An Iranian religion, supposedly founded circa 900 B.C. by Zoraster, believing in supreme diety, Ahura Mazda, and a cosmic struggle between a spirit of good, Spenta Mainayu, and a spirit of evil, Angra Mainayu. Now chiefly represented by the Gabars of Iran and the Parsees of India. (R.H. Dictionary)

³⁰ Buddhism: a religion originated in India by Buddha, and later spreading to China and other Asian countries, holding that life is full of suffering caused by desire, and that the way to end that suffering is through enlightenment that enables one to halt the endless sequence of births and deaths to which one is otherwise subject. (Ibid)

³¹ Sharda, op. cit.

“I saw the Prophet in a visitation granted to me in the latter part of Muharram in the year 627 A.H. in the city of Damascus. He had in his hand a book, and he said to me, ‘This is the book of Bezels of Wisdom; take it and bring it to men that they might benefit from it.’”³²

Suffice it to say that the Prophet has been in his grave since the moment his honourable body was laid in it, a fact agreed upon by all Muslim nation, and that it was never reported that he made any visitation to any of his companions, let alone those who came six centuries after him.

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased him) reported that the Prophet said:

“I am the most eminent of the children of Adam on the Day of Judgment, and the first from over whom the grave will cleave asunder, and the first intercessor, and the first whose intercession will be accepted (by Allah).”³³

In the Bezels of Wisdom, Ibn Arabi presents certain aspects of what he terms “Divine wisdom,” as he conceives it, in the lives and persons of 27 prophets mentioned in the Qurʾān. The contents of this book are best described by its translator, R.W. Austin. He says in his introductory note to chapter III:

“This chapter is the most difficult and controversial of all the chapters in the book, by reason of the unusual and extraordinary interpretation of the Qurʾān that feature in it.

Certainly, from the standpoint of the exoteric theology, Ibn Arabi’s approach to the Qurʾānic material in this chapter is at best reckless, and at worst flagrantly heretical.”³⁴

This chapter deals with the Surah Noah, one of the five Apostles who were endowed with earnestness, constancy and patience. He made sincere efforts for 950 years to persuade his people to abandon worshipping idols and to worship Allah alone, to no avail. Finally, the Messenger of Allah Noah (Peace be upon him) prayed to Allah to punish his stubborn and heedless people.

Allah responded by drowning Noah’s people in the flood in this world, and condemning them to Hell-Fire in the next, a punishment fitting their crime. But Ibn al-Arabi interprets the relevant verses of Surah Noah in the most outrageous fashion, since he suggests meanings diametrically opposed to those accepted by all Muslim scholars. He interprets the “wrongdoers,” “infidels,” and “sinners” in Surat Noah as “saints and Gnostics”³⁵ drowning and burning not in the torment of Hell, but rather in the flames and water of knowledge of God. Ibn Arabi regarded the idols worshipped by Noah’s people as divine deities. Allah condemned their deed saying:

³² R.W.J. Austin, introductory note on Chapter 3 of Ibn Arabi’s, *The Bezels of Wisdom*, p.71

³³ Sahih Muslim

³⁴ Cf. footnote 32.

³⁵ Ibn Arabi, op. cit.

وَقَالُوا لَا تَنْذِرُنَا إِلَهَتَكُمْ وَلَا تَنْذِرُنَا وَدًّا وَلَا سُوَاعًا وَلَا يَغُوثَ وَيَعُوقَ

وَنَسْرًا ۚ

“And they (Noah’s people) said, ‘Do not abandon your gods, neither Wad, Suwa’, Yaghooth, Ya’ooq nor Nasr.’”(71:23)

On which Ibn Arabi commented:

“If they (Noah’s people) had abandoned them, they would have become ignorant of the Reality to the extent that they them, for in every object of worship there is a reflection of Reality, whether it be recognized or not.”³⁶

The Reality to which Ibn Arabi refers is nothing but the divinity of his pantheistic beliefs. Yet his disciples, the Sufis, still argue that their doctrines are based on the teachings of Islam. However, the fact remains that their cardinal doctrines are not far from the Christian doctrine of incarnation, promoted by Mansoor el-Hallaj, one of the infamous Sufi leaders, who was crucified for claiming identity with God.

“I am He Whom I love,” he exclaimed, “He Whom I love is I; we are two souls cohabiting one body. If you see me you see Him and if you see Him you see me.”³⁷

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ash-Shaikh Abu Bakr al-Djaza’iri, Illat-Tasawwuf Ya Ibadallah, pp.10

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF SUFISM

Sufism is a schism developed during the fourth century of Hijrah, exploited by the deviationist sects, the Batini (clandestine) sects and the rest of the enemies of Islam, such as the Jews, the Magians and the Crusaders, to undermine Islamic aqeedah (dogma) and Muslim unity.³⁸

Termed by the Shaikh Abu Bakr al-Djaza'iri:

“Sufism is a shameful deception which begins with Dhikr (chanting the name of Allah) and ends with disbelief. Its outward manifestation appears to be piety, but its inward reality forsakes the commands of Allah.”³⁹

In order to explore Sufism in depth, its fundamentals must first be scrutinized; the better to caution the Muslim ummah against falling into the snares of this innovation, since the number of promoters and advocates of Sufism is increasing. Free Masonary is a likely advocate of Sufism today, in an attempt to counter the feared awakening of interest among Muslim youth in pure Islam, based on the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the His Messenger Muhammad (Peace be upon him). The enemies of Islam dread the wide consequences of such revival, because it affects the entire Muslim world and diminishes their influence.

The following are the most important fundamentals of Sufism judged by the Qurʾān and Sunnah so Muslims can warn themselves and others of how devastating it is for them:

- ❖ Structure of Sufi Orders
- ❖ The Certified Sheikh
- ❖ Al-ʿAhd (The Covenant of Allegiance)
- ❖ The Ritual of Sufi Wird
- ❖ Al-Khalwah (Seclusion)
- ❖ Al-Kashf (Unveiling)
- ❖ Al-Fanaaʾ (Annihilation)
- ❖ Manifest and Hidden Knowledge
- ❖ Al-Aqtaab
- ❖ Al-Awliyaaʾ

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

1) STRUCTURE OF SUFI ORDERS

Sufism presumes a fundamental link between the *sheikh* who is the head of the Sufi Tareeqah (order), and the *Murid* (a layman, novice who becomes a disciple of the Sheikh) extending throughout their lifetime and continuing after their death.

The Murid takes an *-ahd* (oath) of loyalty and swears obedience to the sheikh who in turn promises to solve the murid's problems and deliver him from every dilemma whenever he calls on his sheikh for help.

The sheikh also promises to intercede for him with Allah so that he may be admitted to Jannah.

The murid pledges to be conscientious in practicing the set of *dhikr* (chants) assigned to him by his sheikh, to adhere to the rules of the order and to accept its claim on his loyalty for life over a wide range of behaviour affecting the well-being of the order. The quality and extent of the sheikh's hold over the murid is therefore almost total.

The murid's behaviour even outside the order's group setting is expected to conform to rules laid down by the order. And where conflict with outside obligations arises, the murid must resolve it by acting as a Sufi and following his order's rules.

Insulating the murid as far as possible from the world outside the order as to exploit and manipulate him.⁴⁰

The Tijaaniyyah Order makes every candidate for initiation pledge not to visit the grave of pious personality or visit any living scholar. This is one of the major factors in widening the rift between one order and another, causing an order to enter into conflict against his others in an attempt to convert, conquer or annihilate them.

Finally, the sheikh promises to intercede for him with Allah on the Day of Judgment, and to help cross over *as-Siraat* (the bridge over Hell) on that Day, and accompany him to Jannah.⁴¹

The mechanism of the order structure in Sufism leads to many evil results:

- Division of the Muslim ummah into fractions and orders ruled by deviant and ignorant sheikhs, thus making the ummah an easy prey for conquest by non-Muslims.
- Enmity among the adherents of different orders, to the point that they will not marry into one another's families or cooperate with one another.
- Deception on the part of the sheikh, who falsely claims the ability to deliver the murid from difficulties and deadly problems that befall him. The sheikh even claims he will be present at the murid's death, regardless of time or place, and ridiculously enough, will instruct him in his grave on what to tell the two angels of the grave, and that the sheikh will argue with them on his behalf.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

- This kind of deception, offering security in the grave as well as in the Hereafter, is a flagrant lie, not permissible under any circumstance. Sufi sheikhs lead simple-minded Muslims to believe in such claims, and the result is Shirk (polytheism). Deceiving Muslims is one of the major sins.

2) THE CERTIFIED ‘SHEIKH’

Another fundamental of the Sufi order's structure is the certified sheikh, necessary to give the murid his *wird*. This can also be given by the sheikh's deputy. But the sheikh himself is the supreme authority, the one from whom the khulafa (officials of the order) derive their positions. When a murid takes an oath it is really to the sheikh, although most will do it through the medium of their local deputy.

In the sheikh's hands ultimately lies the invocation of formal sanctions for the murid. The main two laws pertaining to such a right are:

- ❖ The murid must not argue with his sheikh nor ask from him any proof for what he orders the murid to do.
- ❖ Whoever opposes his sheikh has broken the *ahd* (the covenant), and is cut off from the sheikh. Even if he stays bodily close to the sheikh, the door of Meddad (assistance) is closed to him.⁴²

The Sunni Muslims believe that any single act of worship must be substantiated by the Qur'an and Sunnah only. Allah the Exalted says:

وَقَالُوا لَنْ يَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَنْ كَانَ هُودًا أَوْ نَصْرِيًّا تِلْكَ
أَمَانِيُّهُمْ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ
صَادِقِينَ

“Say (to them), ‘Produce your proof if you are truthful.’”(2:111)

⁴² Ibid.

The Other Side Of Sufism

It has been reported that Ali bin Abi Taalib (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

“Were religion to be subject to opinion (or intellect), then wiping the sole of a boot (in ablution) would be better than wiping its upper.”⁴³

The Sufi believes that the sheikh is needed indispensably for he links them with Allah. They feel that the sheikh of the *tareeqah* (order) is **“the inspired man to whose eyes the mysteries of the hidden are unveiled, because, according to Sufis, they see with the light of God and know what thoughts and confusions are in man’s hearts. Nothing can be concealed from them.”⁴⁴**

The knowledge of the unseen and unknown, and whatever man’s breasts conceal, is restricted to Allah alone; anyone else who claims such knowledge is contending with Allah and assuming His attributes.

The sheikhs, the leaders or chiefs of the Sufi orders, are regarded by their members as superhuman or divine, and paid more awe and reverence than was paid to the Prophet by his companions. M. Gilsenan describes how Sufis show their feelings of reverence to their sheikh at a *hadr* (Sufi worship session):

“At the *hadr*, he (the sheikh) leaves the ranks of participants first, while they are still seated on the floor, wrapped in his father’s robe, the symbol of authority, he walks out through the gap in the outer line made for him by the *nugaba*’ with one hand raised to his breast in humble acknowledgment of the cries that echo around him: “*ya sidi Salamah, ya sidi Ibrahim! meddad! meddad!*” (help! help!), while the people sitting in the center brush the carpet where he has trodden with their hands wash their faces and bodies with *barakah* (blessings). Not only does he not let anyone kiss his hand, but no one is even allowed to approach him to touch him as he leaves.

In order to maintain the awe and reverence according to him, the sheikh has to reinforce the concept of *barakah* by increasing institutional space between himself and his *muridin* (plural of disciples). By withholding himself from them, he makes the so-called blessing more difficult to obtain, therefore more sought after. Scarcity brings value. When the disciples try to reach him, his officials keep them away. All blame devolves on them, while the sheikh remains above reproach, and the mystery is preserved, and all loyalty is concentrated and focused on him as **“the living dramatic symbol and embodiment of the order and the way.”⁴⁵**

Doubtlessly, to take a learned sheikh as an exemplary and a teacher is praiseworthy and to be encouraged. It is not possible for anyone to know Allah, nor the things that please Him and the things that displease Him, and know how to worship Him, without receiving relevant

⁴³ When a Muslim has put on boots while maintaining his wudu’, he does not have to take them off to renew his wudu’ for a whole day and night. He does not have to wash his feet for that purpose during that period, it suffices him to wipe over the upper of his boots, not the soles. Thus, if the issue were to be left to personal opinion, one would tend to wipe the soles of the boots rather than the uppers. It is the former that are exposed to dirt more than the latter. Also the word used is *Khuf* (which can take both thick socks or boots, Allah o Aalam)

⁴⁴ Saif an-Nasr, *Seera of Hamidiyyeh*, 1956

⁴⁵ M. Gilsenan, *Saints and Sufis in Modern Egypt*, Oxford Press 1973

The Other Side Of Sufism

instructions from a knowledgeable sheikh. But the dangerous part of this institution is that it often deputizes an illiterate who lacks the proper Islamic knowledge to instruct others in religion. It is a fact that most order's sheikhs, who are usually self-appointed, have little or no religious knowledge. The most important qualification for a Sufi shaikh, besides his social influence or status, is the length of service he has extended, to his superior, the sheikh of the order, who has himself inherited the title in a chain of succession which Sufis falsely claim to trace back to the Prophet's company.

Some sheikhs are bold enough to allege that they have no need of this imaginary chain, because their order derives directly from the Prophet, not merely in vision but in reality.

Shaykh Muhammad at-Tijari asserts in his book, *Jawahir al-Ma'ani* (p.97):

“In respect of the chain of authority to which Muhammadiyyed Tijaaniyyah Order is traced, he informed me, “We have acquired our knowledge from a variety of sheikhs, but Allah did not ordain that we be limited to such. Verily, our authority and teaching mission in this order has been acquired from the Master of the Universe Muhammad; indeed, Allah has ordained that we acquire the knowledge and that we reach Him by His agency. Therefore, no sheikh other than at-Tijani is entitled to act according to His judgment in the disposal of our affairs. As for the merits of the followers of at-Tijani, the Master of the Universe (i.e. Muhammad (Peace be upon him)) has told him (at-Tijani) that anyone who loves him is loved by the Prophet, and shall not die before he is an absolute wali or a favourite of Allah.”

The thoughtful Muslim can see how gross these lies are that they forge against Allah the Exalted and His Messenger, and against the believers, with no shame or fear.

Oddly enough, Abdul-Qadir Eisa, head of the Shadthiliyyeh Order in Syria, has related that Sheikh Muhammad al-Djaza'iri, from whom he inherited the order, named the chair of the order's leaders back to the Prophet, among who are many Sufi imposters and Batini zealots (deviant clandestine sectarians). The chain is claimed jointly by four Sufi orders:

- a) Qadiriyyeh,
- b) Shadthiliyyeh,
- c) Darqawiyyeh, and
- d) Ulaiwiyyeh

All the Muslim ummah is agreed upon the fact that the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) did not conceal any knowledge from his ummah, nor did he distinguish any of his companions with any particular knowledge. He conveyed the Divine Message as Allah commanded him in the best manner, for which he deserves to be the best of all the Prophets and Messengers of Allah. Allah the Glorious says in the Holy Qur'an:

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ قَالَ أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ وَلَمْ يُوحَ إِلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ
وَمَنْ قَالَ سَأُنْزِلُ مِثْلَ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَوْ تَرَى إِذِ الظَّالِمُونَ فِي غَمَرَاتِ
الْمَوْتِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ بَاسِطُو أَيْدِيهِمْ أَخْرِجُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ الْيَوْمَ
تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ الْهُونِ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَكُنْتُمْ
عَنْ آيَاتِهِ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

“And who is more disbelieving than he who forges a lie against Allah, or says, ‘It has been revealed to me,’ when nothing has been revealed to him?”(6:93)

The Prophet has severely warned those who forge lies against him, saying:

“Do not forge lies against me, because he who does so enters the Fire.”⁴⁶

And he also said:

“He who wilfully or intentionally forges a lie against me, let him occupy his seat in the Fire.”⁴⁷

3) AL-‘AHD (The Covenant of Allegiance)

The covenant is one of the cardinal principles of Sufism, upheld by all Sufi orders. It is taken during a ceremony in which the sheikh and murid hold hands, fingers interlaced and eyes closed. Then the sheikh or deputy administers the oath to the murid that he takes the sheikh as his leader and his guide before Allah the Most High, according to the way and the tareeqah (order) of the sheikh, that he shall adhere to this order throughout his life, never converting to another, and that he pledges loyalty and obedience to the sheikh. Then the sheikh recites the verse, “Verily, those who take the allegiance to you take it to Allah.”(48.10) Then he instructs the murid in the *wird*. He then asks, “Have you accepted me as a sheikh and spiritual guide before Allah the Most High?” The murid replies, “I have accepted,” and the sheikh says, “And we have accepted.” Then, sheikh and murid alternately recite the profession of faith, or the testification of faith, and the ceremony ends with the murid kissing the sheikh’s hand.

⁴⁶ Sahih Muslim

⁴⁷ Ibid

The Other Side Of Sufism

The Qur'anic verse quoted above, from Surah al-Fath (#48), has a serious connotation. Allah revealed this verse when 1500 companions of the Prophet swore allegiance to him in al-Hudaybiah, and swore to support him and fight in the way of Allah. But to use such a verse to trap simple-minded Muslims into taking an irrelevant oath is sheer deception. Sufis also base the principle of *ahd* on fabricated hadeeth telling of a similar *ahd* which they allege that Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, made to the Prophet.

The oath of allegiance made to the Prophet by his companions to obey him and to fight in the way of Allah was made later on by the Muslims to the Khalifah, the head of the Muslim ummah.

The practice of taking *ahd* to a sheikh and the ceremony surrounding it, were unknown at the time of the Prophet and also during the time of the best three generations of the Prophet's companions and their followers. The Sufi order system and the rituals associated with it are no more than *bid'ah* (innovation) originated by subsequent generations.

The Prophet repeatedly warned his ummah against every form of innovation. He was very particular about that, to the point of prefacing all his speeches with the warning:

“Verily, the best of speech is the Book of Allah, and the best of guidance is the guidance of Muhammad, and the evil of all religious matters is their innovations. Every innovation is a *bid'ah*, and every *bid'ah* is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the Fire.”⁴⁸

‘Ahd or Bai’ah in Light of Qur’an and Sunnah:

In order to make Muslims aware of the seriousness of the Sufi *Bai'ah*, it must be defined linguistically and judicially. Linguistically it signifies bartering or exchanging commodities. It also signifies making a covenant, a compact, an agreement or the like, as though each of the two parties sold what he had to the other, and gave his own special property and his obedience, and that pertains to the case. And judicially it signifies making pledge to the Khalifah, or the Muslim ruler to promise or swear allegiance to him, making a covenant to him to submit to him the judgment of his own case and the cases of Muslims in general, not to dispute with him, but to obey him in whatever command he might impose upon him, pleasing or displeasing. In doing so, it was usual for the person making this covenant to place his hand in the hand of the Khalifah, or the ruler of the Muslims, in confirmation of the covenant, as is done by the seller and the buyer; hence the act is termed *Bai'ah* (or bargain).⁴⁹

The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

“If two caliphs were given the covenant of allegiance, then kill the second of them.”⁵⁰

The great Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal was asked about the above hadeeth. He said:

⁴⁸ Sahih Muslim

⁴⁹ Lane Arabic English Lexicon

⁵⁰ Sahih Muslim

“Do you know who the Imam is? It is the one upon whom all the Muslims agree; of whom every one of the Muslims says, ‘This is the Imam.’”⁵¹

Imam al-Qurtubi said:

“As for appointing two imams or three at one time, in one country, it is a practice which is unanimously held as impermissible.”⁵²

Based on the above, every Bai'ah which is made to other than the Khalifah of the Muslims or the Muslim ruler who is invested with authority to declare wars or ratify peace treaties and execute religious castigations, or hudood is null and void.

In his book Al-Bai'ah, Ali Hassan Abdul-Hameed refutes the proofs presented by Sufis and certain Islamic parties who hold bai'ah as a central religious right. They claim, “There is no text which prohibits the rite of bai'ah.” The author refutes this saying:

- i) **“All of the statements of the preceding scholars pertaining to bai'ah refer to the bai'ah as an exclusive right which belonged to the Khalifah or the ruler of the Muslims. No one of them made reference to an exceptional bai'ah.**
- ii) **If we approve, for the sake of discussion, of the innovated type of bai'ah (Sufi or otherwise) then we pose to them the questions, is it (the bai'ah) restricted to one particular group of people, or are all the Muslims entitled to it?**
- iii) **If their answer to the first question is ‘yes’ then by approving such bai'ah, they initiated an act of worship which is sanctioned by neither the Book nor the Sunnah, because Allah never distinguished one particular group of Muslims from the other with any act of worship. And if their answer to the second question is positive too, they accordingly approve the disunity of the ummah, and deem lawful dividing it into orders, sects and parties, and give the excuse to every group to follow its desires and devise its own bai'ah.**
- iv) **And if they claim that this exceptional type of bai'ah is legal, then is it possible that the pious predecessors whom Allah praised in His Book were unaware of such an act of worship?”⁵³**

Abu Na'eem al Asbahani reported in his book Hilyatul Awliyaa that Mutarrif al-Shikh-khir said:

“Once I visited Zaid bin. Soohan while he was with a group of people circulating a sheet of paper on which were written statements such as, ‘Allah is our Lord, Muhammad is

⁵¹ Masaa'il al-Imam Ahmad vol.ii p.185

⁵² Al-Jami' li-Ahkaam al-Qur'an, Vol. i p.273

⁵³ Ali H. Abdul Hameed, Al-Bai'ah Between Sunnah and Bid'ah pp.23

our Prophet, al-Qur'an is our imam. He who is with us we are with him, and he who is against us we are against him etc.' the paper was shown to every man present, every one of whom was then asked, 'Do you acknowledge this covenant? When the paper reached me, I was asked, 'Do you acknowledge it, young man?' 'No!' I said. Thereupon, the head of the group interjected saying to his men, 'Do not take a hasty action against the youth. Then he turned to me and enquired, 'What do you say, young man?' I said, 'Allah has already taken a covenant from me in His Book, after which I shall never give a covenant to anyone.' Thereupon, every single man relinquished his previous acknowledgment of the covenant. I asked Mutarrif, 'How many of you were there?' He said, 'We were about 30 men.'"⁵⁴

Now compare those truthful and sincere predecessors, who rejected any act of worship, regardless how good it sounded, once they realized it was not practiced by the Prophet or his companions, may Allah be pleased with them all, with the Sufi sheikhs and party leaders of today, who not only make imperative that their followers give bai'ah to them, but also consider bai'ah as an indispensable religious right.

4) THE RITUAL OF SUFI *Wird*

The *wird* is another central principle of the Sufi orders, which literally means a set portion of the Qur'an, or any other specific act of worship, which the worshipper commits himself to recite or perform, either at a particular time or occasion or on a regular basis. But according to Sufism, the *wird*, or *dhikr*, is a practice of repeating the name of Allah, and a set of invocations assigned to the *murid* by his sheikh or deputy as a liturgy of communion. They involve beseeching the dead, and seeking help from sources other than Allah.

The Sufi *dhikr* is of two forms, the *dhikr al-khafi* or hidden *dhikr* with the repetition being in the mind or muttered in a low voice; and the *dhikr al-jali*, the open recitation, in which the Sufi *murid* recites aloud. Sufis distinguish three types of *dhikr*: the *dhikr* of the common people (*al-awaam*), which involves uttering repeatedly the *Kalimah*, meaning, 'There is no God but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah'; the *dhikr* of the upper class, which involves uttering repeatedly the single name of God, 'Allah', or the word *ôhaiyö* (the living); and the *dhikr* of the elite, which involves uttering repeatedly the divine pronoun *ôhuö* (He).

The last two types of *dhikr* have never been unique to Islam. Sufi *dhikr*, however, is not limited to the above three types: In many cases it includes litanies and hymns, or as the Sufis prefer to call them, *ôawassulaatö* (supplications or petitions), to the Prophet and his family. Supplicating beings other than Allah entails associating partners with Him, a practice which is not only condemned by Allah and His Messenger but it renders a worshipper's good deeds null and void.

Allah says:

⁵⁴ Ibid.

وَلَقَدْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ لَئِنْ أَشْرَكَتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ
وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾

“And it has been revealed to you and to those before you: If you attribute partners to Allah, your deed shall surely be in vain and you shall certainly be among the losers.”(39:65)

The type of dhikr practiced communally by Sufis is not merely recited; it is rather performed in their *hadhrah*⁵⁵. Sufi dhikr ranges from quietism to ecstatic and hysterical behaviour. In many orders, the ritual has a section called *samaa* in which singing, dancing and playing musical instruments, such as the flute and the drum, are highly important.

The dhikr which the Prophet enjoined should be recited individually, and only according to the manner prescribed by him. Making dhikr in a different manner, or communally, is an innovation leading to misguidance. This is particularly true when such a ritual is accompanied by prohibited practices such as music, against which there is a direct reference in the Qurʾan:

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْتَرِي لَهْوَ الْحَدِيثِ لِيُضِلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ
عِلْمٍ وَيَتَّخِذَهَا هُزُوًا أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ ﴿٦﴾

“And of men is he who take idle talk to lead men astray from the path of Allah.”(31:6)

The prominent companions of the Prophet confirmed that the *ōidle talkō* referred to in the above verse means singing and music⁵⁶. The Prophet verified this fact in the hadeeth which says:

“There will be some people who will consider legal fornication, and the wearing of silk, the consumption of intoxicant drinks and the use of musical instruments.”⁵⁷

It is a must for all Muslims to adhere to the two Divine sources of Islam, the Qurʾan and the Sunnah. The Prophet's companions (may Allah be pleased with them all) developed great

⁵⁵ Ibn Katheer

⁵⁶ Bukhari, Abu Dawood & at-Tirmidhi

⁵⁷ Ash-Shatibi, Al-I'tisam, Vol.i 133

understanding of these two fundamental sources as required and necessitated by the profession of the faith: (‘‘There is no God worthy of being worshipped but Allah; Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.’’) They were very critical of the slightest sign of deviation among Muslims. Whenever they noticed one, they vehemently objected to it and tried their best to rectify the situation or eliminate it. When the great companion of Prophet, Abdullah Ibn Mas‘ood (May Allah be pleased with him) was governor of al-Koofah (Iraq) happened to enter the mosque one day, saw some people sitting in circles. In the middle of each circle was a heap of pebbles and in every circle was a man instructing the people: ‘‘Say, Sub-han-Allah (Allah is far removed from every imperfection) a hundred times. Say, Al-hamd-du-lillah (praise be to Allah) a hundred times. Say, Allahu-Akbar (Allah is the Greatest) a hundred times.’’ Whereupon Abdullah Ibn Mas‘ood said to them:

‘‘O people, you are either following a religion which is better than that of the Messenger of Allah, or you are entering through a door of deviation without consideration.’’ They responded, ‘‘Abu Abdur-Rahman! (his nickname), by Allah, we intend to do a good thing.’’ He exclaimed, **‘‘How often one intends to do good but never attains his purpose.’’**⁵⁸

The above quotation clearly shows that sincerity and good intentions alone are not sufficient to render acts of worship acceptable to Allah. The acts must first conform to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger. Originating new methods or concepts of such acts only incurs Allah’s anger.

The religion of Islam has already been completed by Allah. It needs no one to tamper with it for the purpose of mundane gain. Thus it follows by necessity that any religious opinion or practice must be judged by and referred to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger to decide its validity.

5) KHALWAH (Seclusion)

The literal meaning of *khalwah* is seclusion or retreat, but it has a different connotation in Sufi terminology: It is the act of total self-abandonment in desire for the Divine Presence. In complete seclusion, the Sufi continuously repeats the name of God as a highest form of dhikr. In his book, *Journey to the Lord of Power*, Muhiyid-Din ibn Arabi (1165-1240 A.D.) discusses the stages through which the Sufi passes in his khalwah. He suggests:

‘‘The Sufi should shut his door against the world for forty days and occupy himself with remembrance of Allah, that is to keep repeating, ‘‘Allah, Allah...’’ Then, ‘‘Almighty God will spread before him the degrees of the kingdom as a test. First, He will discover the secrets of the mineral world. If he occupies himself with dhikr, He (God) will unveil to the secrets of the vegetable world, then the secrets of the animal world, then the infusion of the world of life-force into lives, then the ‘‘surface sign’’ (the light of the Divine Names, according to Abdul-Karim al-Jeeli, the book’s translator), then the degrees of speculative sciences, then the world of formation and adornment and beauty, then the degrees of the qutb (the soul or pivot of the universe see #16)⁵⁹. Then he will be

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ cf. Khalwah

given the divine wisdom and the power of symbols and authority over the veil and the unveiling. The degree of the Divine Presence is made clear to him, the garden (of Eden) and Hell are revealed to him, then the original forms of the son of Adam, the Throne of Mercy. If it is appropriate, he will know his destination. Then he will reveal to him the Pen, the First Intellect (as it is called by Sufi philosophers), then the Mover of the Pen, the right hand of the Truth. (The “Truth” as defined by al-Jeeli is that by which everything is created, none other than God most High.)⁶⁰

Suffices it to say that the Prophet , whom Allah blessed with ascendance to the seventh heaven, never spoke of such detailed stages as Ibn Arabi promises to those who undertake khalwah. Nevertheless, the practice of khalwah is regularly followed by the Sufis, with the permission and the supervision of a Sufi authority.

The assigning of forty days of *khalwah* period is based by the Sufis on the forty days Allah had appointed for Musa (Moses) as a fasting period before speaking to him, as mentioned in different chapters in the Qurʾān. One of them is from Surat al-Baqarah:

وَإِذْ وَعَدْنَا مُوسَىٰ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ ؕ وَأَنْتُمْ
ظَالِمُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

“And when We appointed (a period of) forty nights with Musa.....”(2:51)

Khalwah is an obligatory practice to be undertaken by ðseeker of God,ð which will give him an infusion of divine knowledge, according to promises of Ibn al-Arabi and his disciples.

There are many conditions of Khalwah; they include, according to al-Tijaaniyyah Order:

- ❖ Entering the place of khalwah the way a masjid (mosque) is entered, performing ablution before entering it, seeking help from the spirits of the sheikhs of the Order, through the medium of the murid's own sheikh.
- ❖ The khalwah place should be dark, and the worshipper should surrender all worldly and exterior religious affairs, as the first step toward surrendering his own existence.⁶¹
- ❖ Assiduity in dhikr, or remembrance of Allah, must be maintained in order that the Remembered One may, at the final stage, make Himself manifest to the worshipper.
- ❖ The heart of the murid must be perpetually attached to his sheikh, who has been appointed by Allah to guide him, so Sufis allege. The shaikh is believed to keep each

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ cf. article V Khalwah

murids company constantly, spiritually as well as physically, regardless of number of his murids or their geographical locations.

Thus, the Sufi chieftains gradually drag naive Muslims into the impious belief that their sheikhs are omnipresent.

Allah SWT says:

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَا يَكُونُ مِنْ
تَجْوَى ثَلَاثَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ رَابِعُهُمْ وَلَا خَمْسَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ سَادِسُهُمْ وَلَا أَدْنَى
مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَلَا أَكْثَرَ إِلَّا هُوَ مَعَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كَانُوا ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا عَمِلُوا يَوْمَ
الْقِيَمَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

“.....There is no private talk of three, but He is their fourth; nor of five, but He is their sixth; nor of less than that nor of more, but He is with them wherever they may be.”(58:7)

Although it should be accepted in its literal meaning, yet the above verse should not be misconstrued to substantiate the sacrilegious and pantheistic belief that Allah the Exalted essentially exists everywhere.

Rather, the verse means that Allah, glory be to Him, encompasses everything with His knowledge. The Prophet did not neglect to mention and make clear to his followers any ways or means that lead to success in the Hereafter, nor did he neglect to warn them against any ways or means that lead to misery in the Hereafter. And since the practice of khalwah is not included in the ways and means of success, it must be included in the ways and means of misery.

Moreover, seeking help from anyone other than Allah is a polytheistic practice condemned by Allah in the Qurʾān:

قُلِ ادْعُوا الَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ فَلَا يَمْلِكُونَ كَشْفَ الضَّرِّ عَنْكُمْ
وَلَا تَحْوِيلًا ﴿٥٦﴾
أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ يَبْتَغُونَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمُ الْوَسِيلَةَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ
وَيَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَهُ وَيَخَافُونَ عَذَابَهُ إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ كَانَ مَحْذُورًا ﴿٥٧﴾

“Say, ‘Call on those whom you think (to be gods) beside Him; (then you will know that they) have no power to remove harm from you, or to avert it.’ Those whom they call on (they themselves) seek the means (of becoming near to Allah). Whichever of them is nearer (to Allah)? And they hope for His mercy, and fear His punishment. Surely, the punishment of your Lord is (a thing to be) feared.”(17: 56 -57)

There is also another condition of *khalwah*: the murid must keep silent throughout the forty days of his *khalwah* even if he goes out for some reason. Suffice it to know that keeping silent for a whole day is forbidden by the words of the Prophet:

“There shall be no keeping silence for a whole day until night.”⁶²

Al-Munawee, in his commentary on this hadeeth, says that keeping silent for a whole day is forbidden because it is an imitation of a Christian custom.

Furthermore, the Prophet never practiced *khalwah* after receiving the Divine appointment of the Prophethood, nor did his companions (may Allah be pleased with them all), nor did their followers. On the contrary, the Messenger of Allah encouraged socializing among Muslims and regarded it as praiseworthy, as reported in the following hadeeth narrated by Ibn Umar:

Rasulullah (saw) has said:

“A believer who mixes with people, and has patience over their offensive behaviour, is rewarded more than another believer who does not mix with people and could not tolerate their offense.”⁶³

⁶² al-Jami' al-Sahih

⁶³ Al-Bukhari, at-Tirmidzi

6) AL-KASHF (Unveiling)

It is the ultimate end which the murid looks forward. He tolerates khalwah and succumbs to the will of his sheikh precisely to become one of the people of *kashf*, who are privileged with Divine manifestation.

The literal meaning of the word *kashf* is ðunveiling,ö but in Sufi terminology it means to expose the heart to metaphysical illumination or ðrevelationö unattainable by reason⁶⁴. There is supposed to be yet a higher stage beyond *kashf* which is called *al-tajalli*, or Divine manifestation: the appearance of God to man.⁶⁵

There are two points against the Sufi interpretation of *kashf* and *tajalli*. First, conceiving metaphysics by *kashf* is impossible, yet Sufis claim otherwise, contending against the truth. The fact is that whatever exists can be conceived of only within the realm of reason. Once man loses reason, he loses the ability to conceive of anything of its reality, and turns to hallucination and utter nonsense.

Secondly, any claim that the Divine essence can appear, whether in existence or beyond it, whether materially or transcendentally, is a flagrant lie. The Prophet and Messenger of Allah, Musa (Peace be upon him) whom Allah had favoured with the privilege of speaking to him directly, was denied his request to see him, as indicated in the verse:

وَلَمَّا جَاءَ مُوسَىٰ لِمِيقَاتِنَا وَكَلَّمَهُ رَبُّهُ، قَالَ رَبِّ أَرِنِي أَنْظُرْ إِلَيْكَ
قَالَ لَنْ تَرَنِي وَلَٰكِنْ أَنْظُرْ إِلَى الْجَبَلِ فَإِنِ اسْتَقَرَّ مَكَانَهُ، فَسَوْفَ
تَرَنِي فَلَمَّا تَجَلَّى رَبُّهُ لِلْجَبَلِ جَعَلَهُ دَكًّا وَخَرَّ مُوسَىٰ صَعِقًا
فَلَمَّا أَفَاقَ قَالَ سُبْحَنَكَ تُبَّتْ إِلَيْكَ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

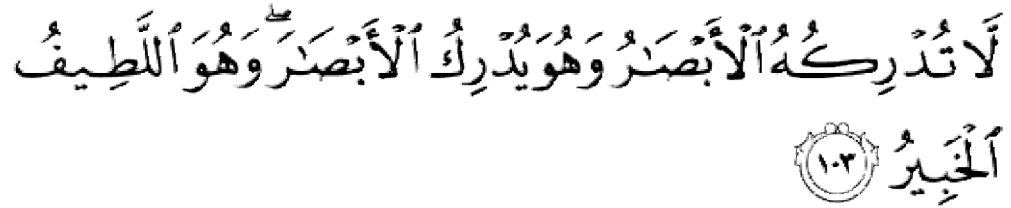
ðAnd when Musa came at Our appointed time, and his Lord spoke to him, he said, ‘My Lord, show (Yourself) to me that I may look to You.’ He (Allah) said, ‘You shall not see Me, but look at the mountain; if it remains in its place, then you shall see Me.’ And when his Lord manifested Himself on the mountain, He made it level, and Musa fell down unconscious. And when he recovered he said, meaning, “Far removed are You from every imperfection, I repent to You, I am the first to believe.”(7:143)

⁶⁴ R.S. Nicholson, The Idea of Personality in Sufism, 1923 p.30

⁶⁵ Fatemi, op. cit

The Other Side Of Sufism

It is an essential fact, held unanimously by Sunni Muslim, that it is impossible for any creature to witness the Divine manifestations in this world as confirmed by the words of Allah: meaning, according to Ibn Kathir:



“Eyes cannot reach Him, but He can reach everything the eyes of His creatures can reach and perceive of.”(6:103)

The Prophet (Peace be upon him) indicated the impossibility of seeing Allah when he was asked by his companions whether he had seen Allah. He responded objecting, **“There was just light; How could I see Him?”**

There is further emphasis on such impossibility in the following hadeeth as reported by Abu Musa Al-Ashari:

“The Messenger of Allah spoke to us of five things. He said, “Verily, Allah the Exalted and Mighty does not sleep, and does not befit Him to sleep. He lowers down the scale and lifts it up (i.e., He makes ample the means of subsistence to whom He wills and makes scanty to whom He wills). The deeds (of His slaves committed by) night are taken up to Him before the deeds committed in the day (following), and the deeds of the day are taken up to Him before the deeds of the subsequent night. His veil is the light.” In the hadeeth narrated by Abu Bakr, the veil of Allah “is fire. If He lifted it, His splendor and majesty would burn out all of his creation.”⁶⁶

A Sufi leader by the name Abu Mansoor al-Hallaj went so far in disbelief as to claim he was god himself. He was crucified for his blasphemous claim, and for his defiance of Shari'ah, or Islamic jurisprudence, in Baghdad, Iraq, in 309 A.H. (922 A.D.) He said:

“I am He Whom I love; He Whom I love is I; we are two souls co-inhabiting one body. If you see me you see Him and if you see Him you see me.”⁶⁷

Abdul-Karim el-Jili, Ibn Arabi's closest disciple, went a step ahead of his master, claiming that he was commanded by Allah to bring to the people his own book, The Perfect Man, the theme of which is pantheism. He claimed that the perfect man could represent all the attributes of God, even though Allah the Exalted is far above the qualities of men.

⁶⁶ Sahih Muslim, Ibn Majeh & Musnad Ahmad

⁶⁷ R.A. Nicholson cit. fn.#64

El-Jili went on to purport to prove that nothing in essence exists in the universe other than Allah, and that all other things, human, animals and non-living are only manifestations of God Almighty Allah.

He further asserted in his book that the Prophet Muhammad is the perfect man and the perfect god. From these blasphemous theories, el-Jili went on to declare he to be a god also, and exclaimed,

“To me belongs sovereignty in both worlds.”⁶⁸

This assertion is blatant enough to condemn anyone who utters it of clear kufr, or disbelief. Whenever such zindiqs, or heretics are mentioned, Sufis live up to their beliefs by invoking Allah's mercy on them, unaware of the fact that tolerance of kufr is itself an act of kufr, and that whoever invokes Allah's mercy on an unbeliever commits a grave sin.

7) AL-FANAA' (The Annihilation)

Al-Fanaa' is a key element in the Sufi thought. Once the Sufi becomes assiduous in dhikr, or remembrance of Allah, they claim that he acquires sufficient tranquillity of heart to experience a delusion which helps him pass through the various stages described below. First he is bewildered, then intoxicated with love of the Remembered One, and finally he passes through the stage of fanaa' or annihilation, in which he becomes fully absorbed to the point of becoming unaware of himself or the objects around him. Every existing thing seems to vanish, and he feels free of every barrier that could stand in the way of his viewing the Remembered One and nothing else.

To give a better idea of the Sufi concept of Allah, Qunawi, one of Ibn Arabi's disciples, writes:

“It is inconceivable that one thing should love another thing in the respect that thing differs from it. It can only love that thing as a result of the property of some meaning shared between the two of them, in respect of which an affinity is established between them which will lead to the domination of the property of that which brings about unification over the properties which brings about differentiation...But the end of love is unity. In the last analysis, God and the perfect man are one, for being is one.”⁶⁹

But when the tenet of *fanaa'* is weighed in the scale of Islamic law, and judged by the Qur'an and Sunnah, only the part of the remembrance of Allah holds true, while all the rest of bewilderment, intoxication, annihilation and the claim of viewing Allah is revealed to be a blasphemous path to the tenets of incarnation and pantheism. Allah the Exalted says:

⁶⁸ Fatemi op.cit.

⁶⁹ Fakhruddin Iraqi, Divine Flashes, p.24

فَاطِرُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَمِنْ
الْأَنْعَامِ أَزْوَاجًا يَذُرُكُمْ فِيهِ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ شَيْءٌ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ
السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ ﴿١١﴾

“There is none like unto Him; He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.”

Like most Sufi tenets, fanaa is mentioned neither in the Qurʾān nor in the Sunnah. It is rather a Sufi gimmick and a satanic deception, originally schemed by mystics among the Jews, Zoroastrians and Christians to adulterate the great religion of Islam.⁷⁰

8) SUFISM KNOWLEDGE – MANIFEST AND HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

Three fundamentals of Sufism which are innovations not sanctioned by the Qurʾān or the Sunnah:

- a) The division of knowledge into exoteric, or manifest, esoteric, or hidden;
- b) The division of Islam into shariʿah (religious sciences) and the sciences of truth;
- c) The addition to Islam of the Sufi order as the path leading to the truth.

Manifest knowledge and the sciences of jurisprudence, they assert, belong to the theologians and scholars of the general run of ordinary Muslims, whereas the hidden knowledge and the knowledge of truth are reserved for the Sufi priests, who preferred to call themselves the elite. They, who claim the right to interpret the Qurʾānic verses and Prophetic traditions in ways not only different from the apparent meanings, but contradict them.⁷¹

All these dichotomies of knowledge are blameworthy innovations, of which the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

“The practicing or upholding innovations in religion leads to Hell-Fire.” He also said,

“He who introduces into our religion unwarranted things shall be rejected.”⁷²

Sufis support the innovative dichotomies by citing the abnormal things done by al-Khidhr when Musa was in his company, such as making a hole in a ship, killing a boy and restoring a falling wall, as chronicled in Surah al-Kahf (18:60-82). They justify Musa's objections to al-

⁷⁰ Sh. al-Djaza'iri

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Sahih Muslim

Khidr's deed on the grounds that Musa had acquired exoteric or manifest knowledge only, while al-Khidr was one of the elite possessed esoteric or hidden knowledge.

The Sufis do not realize that whatever al-Khidr did was in accordance with Divine revelation, nor do they know that Musa's objections were due to the fact that his Divine Laws were different from al-Khidr's. That is why al-Khidr responded to Musa by saying:

“I have knowledge given to me by Allah which you do not know, and you have other knowledge given to you by Allah which I do not know,” whereupon Musa acquiesced.⁷³

The Message of Islam makes no distinction between exoteric and esoteric, because they are the same. It abrogated all previous messages and religions. Those who founded Sufism and introduced it to Muslims as pure Islam meant to turn the Muslim nation into a static, dependent, indifferent and ascetic nation, living in poverty and degradation. They have opened the door to a host of clandestine and secretive sects to promote their perverse dogmas. They use esoterism as a pretext for misinterpreting the Qur'an and Sunnah, in order to drive Muslims away from sound religious knowledge, as indicated by some Sufi zealot, who consider knowledge as a hindrance in the way of the murid and a curtain which blocks his vision, *“I prefer that the beginner (murid) does not occupy his mind with these three things: earning his living, seeking the Prophetic traditions or learning how to read and write, so that his worries may be confined.”*⁷⁴

What does it mean when a Muslim does not read or write? It means he does not learn, and if he does not, how, then can he worship Allah in the manner that would qualify him to become His constant servant and His favourite? Al-Junaid's assertion actually means that the murid is to be kept ignorant and 'pure' enough to occupy himself with dhikr or wird, so that he may join the ranks of those who receive 'direct' revelation from God, i.e. esoteric knowledge.

9) AL-AQTAAB (Plural of Qutb)

Al-Aqtaab is the plural form of *qutb*, which means axis or pivot: the highest station in the Sufi hierarchy of saints. Sufis believe that the universe has a master pivot, which they call *al-Qutb*, which is to the universe as the soul is to the body; once the *qutb* departs, the universe can no longer exist. The secret of the power of the *qutb*, they allege, is kept by the one who keeps the greatest name of Allah.

They also claim that his person reaches the state of 'qutbhood' by acquiring the perfection of knowledge, observation and *mushahadah*⁷⁵ which includes witnessing the Divine essence. He who does this is, according to Sufis, the hierarch of the Sufi leaders of his generation. He is called *al-Ghaws*, or 'the source of help' and is alleged to be pre-eminently endowed with sanctity and miraculous powers.

⁷³ Sahih Bukhari

⁷⁴ Sh. al-Djaza'iri

⁷⁵ Mushahadah: In Sufi terminology, the viewing to Allah with the eye as a result of extensive efforts in the path of Sufism

The identity of *al-Ghaws* is known only to his agents, unless he chooses to reveal himself. At his death, Sufis believe that his place will be filled with another, who will attain verification from Allah in each stage he passes through, until he becomes *al-Qutb* and the new *al-Ghaws*.

The following points can be deduced from the above:

- ❖ The Sufis' beliefs are not based on the Qurʾān or the Sunnah. Reference to the qutb and his qualifications can be found only outside the Qurʾān and the Sunnah, in the literature of the Batini, or clandestine religions.
- ❖ If all of the universe is sustained by the spirituality of the qutb, then what is left for Allah to sustain? And what would be the meaning of the Qurʾānic verse:

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ لَهُ مَا فِي
السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ يَعْلَمُ
مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا
شَاءَ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا وَهُوَ
الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٢٥٥﴾

“Allah: there is no deity worthy of worship but He, the Living, the Sustaining....”(2:255)

قُلْ مَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَمَّنْ يَمْلِكُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَرَ
وَمَنْ يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَمَنْ يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ
فَسَيَقُولُونَ اللَّهُ فَقُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

ōSay, ‘Who provides sustenance for you from the heaven and the earth? Or who is that has power over (the faculties of) hearing and seeing? And who brings forth the living

from the dead, and brings the dead from the living? And who governs all affairs? They will say, ‘Allah.’”(10:31)

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُمْسِكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ أَنْ تَزُولَا وَلَئِنْ زَالَتَا إِنْ أَمْسَكَهُمَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا﴾
﴿٤١﴾

“Surely, Allah holds the heavens and the earth lest they turn away from their place. And if they did deviate, none can hold them after Him. Verily, He is Forbearing, Most Forgiving.”(35:41)

- ❖ Another question poses itself here: How did the Sufi aqtaab, out of all the slaves of Allah, know His greatest name? The authentic Prophetic traditions indicate clearly that the name ̣Allaḥ is the greatest name, greater than His other names, such as al-Hayy (the Everlasting) or al-Qayyum (the Sustainer).

Familiarity with this great name does not authorize one to manage the affairs of the universe. Rather, it is a name by which the slave of Allah asks Him to respond to his supplications for things which He may already have decreed. Allah the Glorious may respond, provided the slave does not ask Him for unlawful things.

10) AL-AWLIYAA' (Plural of Wali)

Al-Awliyaa' is the plural of waliy, which means a true, sincere believer or a friend. But the waliy as defined by the leader of the Tijaniyyah Order is he whom Allah distinguishes by handling or delegating his affairs and permitting him to witness His Divine deeds and attributes.

The conditions of ̣witnessabilitỵ and ̣distinguishabilitỵ produce a very ambiguous definition, since we know that Allah the Exalted does not take anyone other than a pious believer for waliy, and piety can be maintained by the acquisition and application of the knowledge of Allah and His names and attributes as stated in the Qurʾān and the Sunnah, in which lawful things are clearly distinct from unlawful.

Ahmad al-Tijani was asked: ̣Who is harder to know, Allah the Exalted or the waliy?̣ ̣To know the waliy is harder than to know Allah the Exalted,̣ he said, ̣due to the fact that the qualities of Allah are distinguished from those of His creatures, whereas the waliy's qualities

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are identical to those of his fellow human beings with regards to eating, drinking, marrying and the like. It follows that he can be detected and recognized only by the elite.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Ahmad at-Tijani, Jawahir al-Ma'aani, as quoted in al-Djaza'iri's Ilattasawwuf. p.50

IN DEFIANCE OF THE QUR'AN AND SUNNAH

The following are excerpts and quotations from well-known Sufi works presented along with corresponding beliefs from outside the fold of Islam. Relevant texts from the Qur'an and the Sunnah are also quoted for the sake of comparison, so that Muslims may judge for themselves whether Sufi beliefs are Islamic or not.

❖ Claim # 1:

The Sufis claim:

“The ways unto God are as numerous as the number of creatures in the world.”⁷⁷

Ibn Mas'ood (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

“The Messenger of Allah made a straight line on the ground with his hand, and then he said, ‘This is the straight way of Allah.’ Then he made (short) line on each side of the straight line; then he said, ‘These (short) lines, each one has a Shaytan inviting people to it.’

Then he recited the verse:

وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ
بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّيْكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٥٣﴾

‘And this is My path straight. So follow it, and do not follow (other) ways, lest they lead you away from My path.’”(6:153)⁷⁸

Allah the Exalted says:

⁷⁷ Fatemi, op. cit

⁷⁸ Ibn Katheer, Exegesis, Vol. II, p.315

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ لَهُ مَا فِي
السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ يَعْلَمُ
مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا
شَاءَ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا وَهُوَ
الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ



“His Kursi (footstool) encompasses the heavens and the earth.....”(2:255)

The Prophet said:

“The seven heavens by the side of the kursi (footstool) are naught but as a ring thrown down in a desert land, and such is the Kursi with respect to the Arsh (the Divine Throne).”⁷⁹

❖ **Claim # 2:**

The Sufis Claim:

“When you unite with the Beloved (God), then there is neither command nor prohibition in matters of religion.”⁸⁰

Sufis habitually reject the doctrine of öthe fear of God, the wrath of the Day of Judgment, the fury of the Hell-Fire and the promise of Jannah.ö Faith based on coercion, they say, is slavery, and God has created man with mind, free will and love. Therefore, the mainspring of Sufism is love not fear and obedience to the religious laws.

Allah the Supreme describes His Prophets, saying:

⁷⁹ al-Albani, Silsilatul-Ahaadith as-Saheehah, Hadeeth # 109 Vol.I

⁸⁰ Attar, op. cit.

فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ، وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ، وَيَحْيَىٰ وَأَصْلَحْنَا لَهُ، زَوْجَهُ
إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَيَدْعُونَنَا رَغَبًا
وَرَهَبًا وَكَانُوا لَنَا خَاشِعِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾

“They used to vie with one another in good deeds, and they called on Us in hope (for rewards) and in fear (of punishment).”(21:90)

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet said:

“When one of you finishes reciting the last tashah-hud (in prayer, and just before making tasleem), let him seek Allah’s protection from four things: from the torment of Hell-Fire, from the torture of the grave, from the afflictions of life and death, and from the affliction of the pseudo-Christ (ad-Dajjal).”⁸¹

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) also said:

“The Messenger of Allah said to a man, ‘What do you say, (ask Allah for) in your prayer?’ The man said, ‘I recite tashah-hud, then I ask Allah for Jannah and seek protection of Him from the Fire; by Allah, I do not know you dendeneh (making du’a in a low and faint voice) nor the dendaneh of Mu’aadth.’ The Prophet replied:

‘We make dendeneh about these two things.’”⁸²

Allah the Exalted describes His believers thus:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ هُمْ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ رَبِّهِمْ تُشْفِقُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾
وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾
وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِرَبِّهِمْ لَا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

⁸¹ Sunan Ibn Majah

⁸² Ibid.

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَا آتَوْا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجِلَةٌ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ رَاجِعُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾
أُولَٰئِكَ يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَهُمْ لَهَا سَابِقُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

“Verily those who fear their Lord with reverence, and those who believe in the signs of the Lord, and those who ascribe no partners to their Lord, and those who give what they give while their hearts are full of fear, because to their Lord they will return.”(23: 57-61)

Also in another hadeeth:

Aa’ishah (May Allah be pleased with her) inquired about the verse, “Those who give what they give...” saying, “O Messenger of Allah! Is it those who steal and commit fornication are fearful?” He said:

“Nay, daughter of (Abu Bakr) As-Siddiq, rather, those who fast and pray who are afraid (that their acts of worship may not be accepted by Allah).”⁸³

Allah the Exalted says:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣١﴾

“Say (to men, O Muhammad!), ‘If you love Allah, then follow me; Allah will love you and forgive your sins.’ (3:31)

Thus the love of Allah necessitates following the commands of the Messenger of Allah with hope for reward and fear of punishment in the Hereafter.

Jalal-uddin al-Rumi (d. 1273), an infamous Sufi philosopher, in his book *Masnawi*, confirms his belief in the theory of evolution. The following lines are recognized as the central theme of Rumi’s work:

“I died as mineral and became a plant, I died as a plant and rose to an animal, I died as an animal and I was a man.”⁸⁴

⁸³ al-Albani, Silsilatul-Ahaadith as-Saheehah

⁸⁴ R.A. Nicholson, Mystic of Islam, Bill, London, 1914, p.164

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What became the Darwinian Theory (Darwinism) states that the origin of species is derived by descent, with variation from the parent forms. In other words, man, according to the theory of Darwin and contrary to what Allah confirms in the Qurʾān, was not created as a separate species.

Allah the Exalted says:

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِنْ طِينٍ ﴿١٢﴾

ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ ﴿١٣﴾

“We have indeed created mankind from sounding clay and thereafter We made him (the offspring of Adam) as a *Nutfah* (mixed drops of the male and female sexual discharge) (and lodged it) in a safe lodging (womb of the woman).” (23:12-13)

NOTES ON THE TIJANIYYAH ORDER

Like the other Sufi orders, al-Tijaniyyah is a condemned bid'ah, since neither it nor the others existed at the time neither of the Prophet nor during the era of the two succeeding generations. Imam Malik (May Allah grants him His Mercy) said:

“He who introduces a bid'ah in the religion of Islam and deems it a good thing, claims by so doing that Muhammad betrayed (the trust of conveying) the Divine Message.”⁸⁵

In his critique on the Tijaniyyah Order, al-Anwaar Ar-Rahmaniyyah, the late al-Shaikh Yusuf al-Ifriqi wrote:

“Anyone who applies himself to the acts of devotion other than those brought about by the Divine Message of Prophethood, doubtlessly belongs to the Fire—doomed sects.”⁸⁶

This is confirmed by the statement made by the Prophet to his companions:

“He who will live (long enough) will see many different (ways). Keep yourself to my Sunnah, and the Sunnah of the rightly-guided khulafa'; hold fast thereto. And beware of innovations (in matters of religion). Verily, every innovation is a bid'ah, and every bid'ah is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the Fire.”⁸⁷

Al-Shaikh al-Ifriqi listed in his book the following tenets, quoted from the major writings of al-Tijaniyyah Order, with his valuable comments on each:

“They claim that their wird was kept by the Messenger of Allah , who did not teach it to any of his companions, knowing that the time to make this wird public was not due, and that the person by whom this wird was to be made public was not yet in existence.”⁸⁸

The *wird* in question consists of three lines, poorly constructed grammatically:

“O Allah, praise our master Muhammad, the opener of the locked, the seal of what had preceded, the supporter of the truth by the truth, the guide to Your straight path, and his family with the estimation and the great honouring that are due to him.”

By saying, “The Messenger of Allah kept that wird and did not teach it to any of his companions,” Ahmad at-Tijani, head of the Tijani Order, refutes the words of Allah:

⁸⁵ Al-Albani, op. cit.

⁸⁶ In the authentic hadeeth reported by Imam Ahmad, Abu Dawood and others, the Prophet said: “My nation shall be divided into 73 sects, all of whom are in the Fire except one.” His Companions said, “Which one is the save?” He replied, “(The one whose members adhere to) what I and my companions are adhering to today,” In another account, he said, “Ahlus Sunnah wal-Jama'ah” (The Sunni Muslim).”

⁸⁷ Abu Dawood (Sahih) & Tirmidhi (Hassan Sahih)

⁸⁸ at-Tijani, op. cit.

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا
بَلَغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ
الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾

“O Messenger (Muhammad (PBUH))! Convey to the people what has been revealed to you from your Lord, and if you do not, then you have not conveyed His Message (at all). Allah will protect you from mankind. Verily, Allah guides not the people who disbelieve.” (5:67)

Imputing distrust to the Messenger of Allah is unanimously agreed upon by Muslim scholars as an act of disbelief. In identifying himself as the person by whom this wird is to be made public, at-Tijani places himself above Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, the best man after the Prophet (Peace be upon him). This is utter flippancy and apostasy.

“A single recitation of the above wird, which is called Salatul Fatih, is equal to every celebration of praise that has taken place in the universe, and to every dhikr and every supplication major or minor, and is equal to reciting the Qur’an six thousand times.”⁸⁹

This is apostasy and impiety, and anyone who does not deny it becomes an apostate himself.

Is there anything better than the Qur’an? The person who made such a falsehood obviously did not know Muhammad (Peace be upon him), nor did he know the Message with which he was sent, or why he was sent.

Allah the glorious says:

وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَا تَصِفُ السِّنُّكُمْ الْكَذِبَ هَذَا حَلَلٌ وَهَذَا
حَرَامٌ لِنُفَرِّقُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ لَا
يُقْلِحُونَ ﴿١١٦﴾

“Surely, those who forge lies against Allah do not prosper.” (16:116)

⁸⁹ Ibid, p.96

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Recitation and application of the Qurʾān are the best acts of worship. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

“The best supplication is on the Day of Arafah and the best thing that I and the Prophets before me ever said was, ‘La ilaha illallah wahdahu la sharika lahu, lahu’l-mulk wa lahu’l-hamd wa huwa ‘ala kulle shay’in Qadeer.’”⁹⁰

A statement like at-Tijani’s is only a means of turning the more naive of the Muslim community away from the Qurʾān.

“He who does not believe in Salat-ul-faatih is from the Qurʾān shall be deprived of its reward.”⁹¹

And the Muslims say he who believes it to be from the Qurʾān is a clear kafir, or infidel, because Divine revelation was received only by the Prophets. This Salat-ul-faatih is found neither in the Book of Allah nor is even a fabricated hadeeth.

People are divided into two groups over this issue: those who believe that it is from the Qurʾān and those who believe that it is not. The former are out of the fold of Islam; the latter are out of the fold of at-Tijaniyyah Order.

“A pulpit of light shall be place for me on the Day of Judgment, and a caller will call out, loud enough to be heard by everyone in the assembly: ‘O people of the assembly! This is your imam, from whom you were seeking help unawares.’”⁹²

The writer of the above statement appoints himself as a prophet, because it is the Prophet Muhammad who will be the speaker on the Day of Judgment, as reported by Anas bin Malik. He also implies that the Prophets and the Messengers were all seeking his help, for they will also be in the assembly on that day, and that is impossible. A statement like that can be made only by someone who claims lordship.

“He who happens to look at us on Friday or Monday shall enter Jannah without reckoning or punishment; even if he were an infidel, he would die in the state of iman.”⁹³

Allah the Exalted says:

⁹⁰ Tirmidhi (Hasan)

⁹¹ Ibid, p.80

⁹² at-Tijani, Baqiyyatul Mustafid, pp. 79, 80

⁹³ at-Tijani, Jawahir al-Ma’aani. p.129

وَمِنَ الْإِبِلِ اثْنَيْنِ وَمِنَ الْبَقَرِ اثْنَيْنِ قُلْ آلَّذَاكَرَيْنِ حَرَّمَ أَمِ
الْأُنثَيْنِ أَمْ أَسْتَمَلْتُ عَلَيْهِ أَرْحَامُ الْأُنثَيْنِ أَمْ كُنْتُمْ
شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ وَصَّيْتُكُمْ اللَّهُ بِهِذَا فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ افْتَرَى عَلَى
اللَّهِ كَذِبًا لِيُضِلَّ النَّاسَ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ
الظَّالِمِينَ



“Who is more wrongful than he who forges lies against Allah, to lead people astray without knowledge? Surely, Allah does not guide the wrongful.”(6:144)

At-Tijani elevates himself above all Prophets by claiming such a privilege. Ash-Shaikh al-Ifriqi wrote:

“The Prophet lived with his uncle Abu Talib for years, yet the latter died an unbeliever. So did Abu Jahl and Abu Lahab, who looked at the Prophet. The son of Prophet Noah and the father of Prophet Ibrahim both died as unbelievers too. None of these unbelievers drew benefit from the company of the Prophets.”

Now compare the blasphemous statements of at-Tijani with words of the man most beloved of Allah, the last of the Prophets and Messengers, Muhammad (Peace be upon him):

“By Allah, (though) I am the Messenger of Allah, I know not of what is going to happen to me tomorrow.”⁹⁴

Allah, Glory be to Him, addresses His beloved Messenger:

قُلْ إِنِّي لَا أَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا رَشَدًا

⁹⁴ Ibid.

قُلْ إِنِّي لَنْ يُجِيرَنِي مِنَ اللَّهِ أَحَدٌ وَلَنْ أَجِدَ
مِنْ دُونِهِ مُلْتَحَدًا ﴿٢٢﴾

“Say: ‘It is not in my power to cause you harm, or to bring you to the Right Path.’ Say, ‘Surely none can protect me against Allah, nor can I find a place of refuge beside Him.’” (72: 21, 22)

At-Tijani further claimed that he met the Prophet personally, not in his dreams but while he was awake, and that the Prophet gave him his guarantee of security and freedom from fear in the Hereafter and that whoever says -at-Tijani would have the same guarantee if he died in the state of Iman.

The answer to this falsehood is a warning from the Prophet himself:

"He who will live (long enough) will see many different (ways). Keep yourself to my Sunnah, and the Sunnah of the well-guided khulafa'; hold fast thereto. And beware of innovations (in matters of religion). Verily, every innovation is a bid'ah, and every bid'ah is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the Fire."⁹⁵

⁹⁵ Abu Dawood (Sahih) & Tirmidhi (Hassan Sahih)

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I wish to commend the continuous efforts of the groups of the Salaf (those groups who follow the footsteps of the Messenger of Allah and his Companions) throughout the world to expose Sufism, and to criticize the deplorable silence of other Islamic parties and groups. The reason for this silence is that none of these other parties, large or small, has a dogmatic base with which it can be identified.

The Sufi movement has clearly suffered a marked decline in many places in the Muslim world which were once centres of Sufi activity. It has undergone an eclipse in its social significance, and become quite marginal to the wider Muslim society, as a result of the action rightly paid by the Salafi daʿwah and other activists among Muslims everywhere.

Today, having lost ground in the Muslim world, Sufis have shifted their activities to the North American continent, exploiting the spiritual vacuum experienced by the people there. But Insha Allah with the help of God Almighty Allah, and then the Ulema who have stood against it to educate Muslims against it, Sufism will continue to suffer one blow after another and Allah's word will prevail over all impious beliefs.

THE END
