The Development of Islamic Spirituality in Indonesia

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Abstraksi: *Artikel ini menggambarkan perkembangan spiritualitas Islam di Indonesia dan, secara singkat, posisi tasauf dalam ajaran Islam, berikut pandangan-pandangannya dan perannya dalam gerakan-gerakan relijius, sosial, kultural, pendidikan dan politik dalam masyarakat Muslim. Ia juga mengulas tantangan dan masa depan tasauf di Indonesia, dengan melihat perkembangannya dari sisi kekuatan dan kelemahannya. Diasumsikan bahwa kelebihan dan kelemahannya jika diperbandingkan dengan mancanegara ternyata mengalami hal sama. Lebih jauh artikel ini menjelaskan salah satu dari gerakan tarekat yang memainkan peran penting di Indonesia, yakni Ṭarīqah Qādiriyyah wa Naqsybandiyyah (TQN) di Jawa Barat. Dengan memahami kondisi keagamaan mutakhir, dapat digambarkan prospek tasauf di Indonesia masa depan.*

Katakunci: *Tasauf, Ṭarīqah Qādiriyyah wa Naqsybandiyyah (TQN), Islam Indonesia*

Abstract: *This writing describes the growth of Islamic spirituality in Indonesia and, in short, the position of Mysticism in Islamic teachings, with its objectives and its part in the current Islamic religious movements, as well its social, cultural, educational and political roles in Islamic society. It also views the challenge and its future in Indonesia. The progress achieved by sufi until now is considered, as well its weaknesses as its strengths, and comparing this with the situation outside the country, and assuming that in the case of Indonesia, such weaknesses and strengths might be relatively the same. Furthermore, the paper displays the example of one particular sufi order that still plays an important role in Indonesia, namely the Ṭarīqa Qādiriyya wa Naqshbandiyya in West Java. In addition, considering the current religious climate in the country, we may perhaps draw some conclusions as to prospects for sufi in Indonesia.*

Keywords: *Mysticism, Ṭarīqah Qādiriyyah wa Naqsybandiyyah (TQN), Indonesian Islam*

Introduction

Islam, from its arrival in Indonesia in the thirteenth century (or the seventh century according to some sources) was characterized by mysticism, or sufi as it is known in Islam. It certainly received a warm welcome from the people there, for it appears from what we know that the spread of Islam throughout the archipelago was made possible by the great and remarkable efforts of sufi preachers. In addition we find, especially in Java, evidence of the existence of various sufi orders as well as reports of the activities of the nine saints (*walisongo*) at the beginning of the fifteenth century, all of them helping to disseminate Islam, even in Sumatra Marco Polo found in 1292 that Islam had been established there.[1] In addition Ibn Baṭṭūṭa discovered that there had already long been an Islamic kingdom in *Samudra* (Aceh) when he arrived in 1346.[2] In Indonesia the type of approach adopted by sufis has attracted people to Islam, which has found the soil there fertile to its growth. However, the progress of Islamic mysticism has faced difficulties in recent decades due to the distractions of worldly life, to say

[1] Deny Lombard, "Les tarékat en Insulinde," in *Les Ordres Mystiques dans l'Islam*, in A. Popovic & G. Veinstein (ed.) (Paris: Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 1986), 140.

[2] Ross E. Dunn, *The Adventure of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa: A Muslim Traveller of the 14th Century* (California: California University Press, 1989), 257.

nothing of the influence of ideas of reform and perhaps also secularization. This paper will discuss the development of Islamic spirituality in Indonesia by first observing in brief the position of sufi in Islamic teachings, its objectives and its part in the current Islamic religious movements, as well its social, cultural, educational and political roles in Islamic society. It also looks at the challenge and its future in Indonesia. Then, I will consider the progress achieved until now by sufi, its weaknesses as well as its strengths, comparing this with the situation outside the country, and assuming that in the case of Indonesia, such weaknesses and strengths might be relatively the same. Furthermore, I will discuss the example of one particular sufi order that still plays an important role in Indonesia, namely the *Ṭarīqa Qādiriyya wa Naqshbandiyya* in west Java. In addition, considering the current religious climate in the country, we may perhaps draw some conclusions as to prospects for sufi in Indonesia.

Discussion

Early in the history of Islam, sufi was a reality without a name. The sufi understanding and interpretation of the mystical experience was more a type of individual *ijtihād* (struggle) which applied also to *fuqahā'* (jurists), *mufassirūn* (Qur'ān commentators) and others. Sufi as an awareness and a religious experience is not always easy to adapt to the principles of belief and the pattern of ordinary religious practices performed by ordinary people (*'awwām.*) However, to deny the existence of sufi would be too extreme.

Some western scholars have claimed that the origins of sufi are to be found in the Qur'ān and the Sunna, but they express themselves with numerous reservations, and suggest that in any event subsequent events took sufi far from its primitive roots.[3] In the Islamic world itself, various misconceptions of sufi have also gained popularity in recent years. As for the Arab world, the view of sufi as 'a harmful and repugnant excrescence'[4] on the body of Islam, as it is regarded by the *Wahh*ābī*s* and the *Salafiyya,* continue to exercise its influence. The existence of sufi orders throughout the Islamic world until the present time however, serves as a witness to the popularity of sufi. Its historical role, during more than five centuries of the Islamic era, indicates an organic relationship with the social, spiritual and intellectual life of the whole Muslim community, assuring it a large measure of unity, continuity, and vitality.[5]

Sufi, since its growth in the central Islamic lands in the eighth century until its golden age in the thirteenth, has been characterized by individual interpretations such as those of Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Rabī'a al-Adawiyya, which later grew into tariqas (Arab: *Ṭarīqa*) which had their own versions of *dhikr, bay'a,* etc. However, the tariqas are like lines which extend from the circumference of a circle to the center. These lines are numerous; however, they all will end in the center—imagine the wheel of the bicycle. The center itself is the *Qur'ān al-Karīm* and the *Sunna al-Ṣaḥīḥa*. The tariqa and *Ḥaqīqa* unite to designate them. Hence, sufi is not a separate school (*madhhab*) in terms of Islamic law; it is a path or a way which brings people to absolute truth, the *tawḥīd*.

In the history of Islamic thought, there have been two tendencies in the observation of religious belief: first, the tendency to observe outward rules (*sharī'a*); and second, the tendency to observe inner rules. There has been a long dispute concerning this matter, marked by mutual accusations of deviation

[3] Hamid Algar mentions the work of A.J. Arberry, *Sufism: An Account of the Mystics of Islam* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1950) as an example.

[4] Hamid Algar, "The Naqshbandī Order: A Preliminary Survey of its History and Significance," *Studia Islamica,* 44 (1976), 124.

[5] Hamid Algar, "Naqshbandī Order," 125.

from the faith and going astray; one thinker in particular however, al-Ghazālī, was successful in integrating *sharī'a* and tariqa. The principle of balance (*tawāzun*) that is mentioned in the Qur'ān (55: 7-8) should be maintained; any deviation from this principle will result in sin, for this goes against the rules which govern nature. If human beings may be said to be microcosms then they must observe the principle of balance in everything, including their spiritual life (see *sūra al-Aḥzāb* 39: 62.) The Prophet Muḥammad has provided us with an example, followed by his companions, and then later followed by the sufis.

The universality of the Qur'ān is reflected in the fact that it contains only 500 verses which have absolute legal force; the rest of the verses need to be interpreted according to various details of situation and time. Since human beings tend to interpret things differently, various interpretations therefore exist and one might choose a certain interpretation that suits the occasion. Hence the interpretation of Islam can be applied and employed in any place and any time. The basic Islamic teachings are universal while their interpretation and implementation is local.

The aim of sufi is to bring oneself as near as possible to God, even to unite with Him (*ittiḥād.*) Since God is immaterial and holy, the only element of a human being that could approach Him is the soul, hence the human soul should be pure. Purifying the soul (heart) is accomplished through worship; to be near to God, a sufi should follow the ways/paths (*ṭuruq*), which is a long and difficult process consisting of stages (*maqāmāt*) as well as certain conditions (*aḥwāl.*) As in philosophy, sufi discusses the basic principles, but unlike the former, which uses reason as a tool, sufi utilizes the sense of feeling which is in the heart (*qalb*) as a means to seek God.

Ibn Taymiyya believed that *taṣawwuf* (sufi) constitutes a type of *ijtihād* towards Allah. He found references to *dhikr* (remembrance of God) in the Qur'ān (e.g., *Ālu* 'Imrān/3: 191, al-Ra'd/13: 28, al-Ḥashr/59: 19.) The *dhikr* by sufis in his day consisted in reciting Allah (*lafẓ al-Jalāla*), whereas the *dhikr* recommended by Ibn Taymiyya, meant reciting *Lā ilāha illā Allah;* dhikr that consists in reciting 'a single name,' or *ism mufrad,* is not recommended.[6]

The teachings of tariqas which integrated well with the sharī'a were admitted as *mu'tabara* (legitimate), while those which did not integrate well were regarded as *ghayr mu'tabara*. In the Indonesian case, we may refer to a large organization which was founded by the *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU), the central board of *Jam'iyya Ahl Ṭarīqa Mu'tabara*[7] which has established its branches throughout Indonesia. At their national conference in Semarang in 1981, forty-five different sufi orders were accepted as members and considered as providing a link to the Prophet Muḥammad, peace be upon him.[8]

Current Islamic Religious Movements

In the nineteenth century Islamic religious movements fell into three groups: first, those advocating salvation through return to the basics of faith (the law) exemplified by Wahhābism. Second, salvation through the divinely-sent leader (or guide) as seen

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[6] Djohan Effendi (ed.), *Sufisme dan Masa Depan Agama*, 112. See also Muṣṭafā Ḥilmī, *Ibn Taymiyya wa Taṣawwuf* (Alexandria: Dār al-Da'wa, 1982), 515. Perhaps what he means by *ism mufrad* is reciting God's names (*asmā' al-ḥusnā.*)

[7] Zamakhshari Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi Tentang Pandangan Hidup Kiyai* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1985), 143.

[8] Idaroh 'Aliyyah, *Thoriqoh Mu'tabaroh Nahdliyyah* (Semarang: Toha Putra, t.t.), 38. In 1989 they gathered at a national congress (*mu'tamar*) in Pondok Pesantren Futuhiyya, Mranggen, Demak, Central Java and elected a committee for the period 1989-1994. See also Idaroh 'Aliyyah, *Hasil Muktamar VI Jam'iyyat Thoriqoh Mu'tabaroh An-Nahdliyyah* (Semarang: Wiradjati, 1990), 60-1.

in the case of Mahdīsm; and third, salvation through ecstasy and loss of self-volition, such as in the sufi shaykh (charismatic leader), characteristic of the tariqa revival. The attitudes of reformers towards sufi varied from the hostility of Muḥammad ibn ʻAbd al-Wahhāb who was against *bidʻa*; the ʻ*Salafi*ʼ movement, i.e. Muḥammad ʻAbduh and Rashīd Riḍāʼ, who were against sufi but tolerated the ethical teachings of al-Ghazālī; and Mustafa Kemal in Turkey who banned sufi orders outright in 1925.[9] In Indonesia these days we observe some prominent figures have shown their interest in sufi on one hand, but certain Muslim organizations/ institutions to some extent are against it such as Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia, *Sabili* Magazine, *Salafy* Journal,[10] Muhammadiyyah, Persatuan Islam etc.

The Roles of Sufi in Indonesian Society

In Indonesia, at first, the followers of tariqas were residents of the palace; later, however, the common people joined in greater numbers. Tariqas were viewed as a source of spiritual power at the same time as legitimating and empowering the position of the king. It is understandable however that the kings should have been reluctant to let the people encouraging people to have access to the same supernatural power.[11]

Prior to the 18th century, many different tariqas attracted followers from all over Indonesia. People who came back from Mecca and Medina disseminated the *Shattāriyya* order, which was sometimes integrated with the *Naqshbandiyya* or *Khalwatiyya*.

Indonesian Muslims were by no means homogeneous, yet while the community was culturally diverse it was unified at the same time. The main cause of a person's attachment to a sufi order was usually the family link, and what kept him/her there were the spiritual, social, and economic benefits derived from that relationship. You were, so to speak, born a Muslim, a secularist, or a *Shādhilī*; you were associated with your local community. The social significance of the orders was many sided but the religious significance was primary. It cannot be denied that to some extent sufi organization was fully blended with the saint-cult: exploiting it, in fact, represented the religion of the ordinary people. Participation in its ritual ministered to the individualʻs need to oppose or transcend society, raising him/her temporarily into timeless supernatural experience.

The legalistic approach to religion has little to offer people's deeper needs. The legal aspect of religions fulfills a social far more than a spiritual function, and it was the function of the sufi orders to mediate to the ordinary man the inner aspect of Islam. The sufi community, in its association with formal Islam, always held open the way for illumining the inner aspect of the sharīʻa. Many sufi orders offered a religious sphere to women, whose presence was little recognized in the legal religious set-up. Women could be enrolled as associates, and could be appointed as leaders to organize women's circles.

The social role of the sufi orders, though secondary to the religious one, was so important that no study on Islamic society,

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[9] J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 245. As a matter of fact the term *Salafi* according to Shaykh Muhammad Hisham Kabbani, has been misused and ahistorical, because the term *salaf* or *salaf al-ṣāliḥ* that is used worldwide by Sunnī people referred to the Ḥadīth of the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) and dealing with the tradition of Muslims in the first three century of Hijra. See Shaykh Muhammad Hisham Kabbani, *Encyclopedia of Islamic Doctrine* vol. 1 (Mountain View: As-Sunna Foundation of America, 1998), 54.

[10] Michael Laffan, "Crisis and Representation: Salafy and Sufi," Paper presented at International Conference on Sufism and the 'Modern' in Islam, Bogor Indonesia, September 4-6, 2003.

[11] Martin van Bruinessen, "Shari'a Court, Tarekat and Pesantren: Religious Institutions in the Banten Sultanate," *Archipel* 47 (1994), 17. See also Martin van Bruinessen, *Kitab Kuning Pesantren dan Tarekat* (Bandung: Mizan, 1995), 27.

and particularly that of Indonesia, ought to ignore them. In traditional life, religion was the synthesis of human activity. The sufi orders, binding together individuals with a supernatural bond, were themselves a social power. Orders came to be associated in various ways with different strata of society. They were organizations for mutual help, and a venerated shaykh could voice the people's grievances and condemn tyranny and oppression. They assisted the poor, and ministered to the sick and travelers.

Cultural and Educational Role

The importance of sufi in the culture of the Muslim lands is evident. The loss to Islamic thought and poetry, supposing the absence of sufi, can hardly be contemplated. It inspired a vast and rich tradition of poetry and music, not merely in educated and sophisticated circles in Persia or in Anatolia but in simpler spheres and in sophisticated expression in Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Urdu. The sufi orders acted as a bridge between the intellectualism of the high mystical reaches and the poetry of popular devotion.

L.W.C. van den Berg's research in 1880, showed that a great number of nineteenth century sufi works were then studied in the *pesantrens* (Traditional Islamic Boarding Schools), such as *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* of al-Ghazālī, in addition to his *Bidāya al-Hidāya* and *Minhā*j al-'Ābidī*n, al-Ḥikam* of Ibn 'Aṭā' Allah al-Iskandarī, *Shu'ab al-Īmān* of Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allah al-Ījī and *Hidāya al-Adhkiyā' ilā Ṭāriq al-Awliyā'* of Zayn al-Dīn al-Malibarī (d. 928/1522.)[12]

At the same time it is a well known fact that the *aliran kebatinan* (Javanese mysticism) and other religious beliefs which have existed in Indonesia still flourish among their followers, reflecting the deep spiritual beliefs of the people. And given the fact that most of this population is Muslim, sufi might be the religious tendency which will experience greatest expansion in the future.

Political Role

The political role of the sufi orders has been historically significant, and their impact profound. After the fall of Baghdad to the Mongols in 1258, they served to prevent the breakup of the Muslim world into Arabic, Turkish and Persian speaking regions. They had a stabilizing role in critical periods of change and political uncertainty. They became a significant element in establishing nations. We find leaders of orders aspiring to political power, revolting against established authority, and sometimes actually succeeding in founding a dynasty. The most remarkable example of such a movement was that which led to the foundation of the Safavid dynasty in Persia. It was especially in the nineteenth century that the orders were in the forefront of Muslim reaction against the expansion of colonialist powers. This may be seen in the case of Indonesia, where the *Ṭarīqa Sammāniyya* actively opposed the Dutch in Palembang in 1819 and in South Kalimantan in 1860. The *Ṭarīqa Qādiriyya wa Naqshbandiyya* took part in the peasant's revolt of Banten in 1888, and in 1891 in Lombok against Hindu oppression in Bali. In West Sumatra, where there is also a strong *Naqshbandī* presence, strong resistance was shown in 1908 to Dutch presence by the *Shattāriyya* order. In addition, the *Sanūsiyya* in the late nineteenth century inspired the Acehnese war against the Dutch while its shaykh in Libya was fighting against Italian incursions there from 1914 to 1918. In Indonesia, we may observe the establishment of a political party named *Partai Politik Thariqat Islam* (PPTI) in 1950 by Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn, a *khalifa* of Shaykh 'Alī Riḍā' of Jabal Abū Qubays. He used to claim that the PPTI had been established as early as 1920, and that the initials then stood for *Persatuan Pembela Thariqat Islam* (Union of Defenders

[12] Karel A. Steenbrink, *Beberapa Aspek tentang Islam di Indonesia Abad ke 19* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1984), 154 and 157.

of the Islamic Ṭarīqa.) This organization seems to be attached to the Naqshbandī order[13] and in the first Indonesian elections in 1955, a Sumatran *Naqshbandī* was elected to the national parliament as the sole representative of the tariqa political party.

The progress achieved by sufi can be seen in the development of the tariqa, which consist of 3 levels:

1. The level of the *khanqa* (sufi center), where the shaykh leads his disciples in their devotions. They perform spiritual exercises separately and collectively. At this stage, there is little specialization until the 10th century, at which point sufi entered its golden age.
2. The stage of the tariqa, which occurred in the 13th century. At this stage the teachings, rules and methods had been developed. The *silsila* of each tariqa was declared and there was developed a new, collective method in spiritual exercise, sufi reached the people of middle class. Nevertheless, it also started to decline at this stage.
3. The *Ṭā'ifa* stage occurred in the 15th century. At that time the teachings and rules were being transmitted from the teacher to his disciples. The cult of shaykhs was a common feature, and at this stage, sufi was catching on at the grass roots level.

The tariqas became great communities, comprising all strata of society, offering something to the educated and uneducated alike, tolerating a wide range of folk practices, yet preserving and extending a great tradition of spirituality. The *khanqa* offered lodging to travelers, medical treatment for the sick and help for the poor. For the period between the twelfth and nineteenth centuries it is hardly possible to write on any aspect of religion and society in the Islamic world without reference to the tariqas, yet it is precisely this period that has been most neglected by modern scholars.[14] Until the beginning of the 20th century the tariqas still played a great role in Islamic society, where the orientation to the life in the hereafter was very influential.

In spite of their political vitality it is not surprising that the influence of the tariqas was reduced to a minimum after the appearance of reformist movements inaugurated by people like Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, Muḥammad 'Abduh, and Rashīd Riḍā', but especially Kemal Ataturk who believed that the tariqa was one of the factors that contributed to the weakness of the Muslims. The opposite, however, may be the case in our own time, when the influence of materialism creates various complicated social problems. One might say that to face these we need to return to the value of spiritualism. sufi with its inward elements and noble attitude could play an important role. However, it should be emphasized here that the practice of spiritual exercises does not necessarily result in neglect of worldly concerns.

On the one hand sufi may fulfill one's need for spiritual and moral values in the challenging times of today and the positive value given by tasauf maybe seen as a means toward educating a community as to its moral responsibilities. On the other hand, the imaginary aspect of sufi might become a boomerang that would weaken the critical faculties of a Muslim, thus causing stagnation and setting back Muslims' progress. Even al-Ghazālī explains that sufi people are not interested in the knowledge of *ta'līmiyya* that can be learned from books. They prefer mainly the knowledge gained through *ilhāmiyya* and *laduniyya*. The knowledge of the *ladunnī* is regarded as greater than that of the *ta'līmi*.[15]

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[13] Martin van Bruinessen, "The Origins and Development of the Naqshbandī Order in Indonesia," *Der Islam* 67 (1990), 175.

[14] A.H. Johns, "Ṭarīqah," in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, Vol. 14, Mircea Eliade (ed.) (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987), 351.

[15] Al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* (Beirut: Dār al-Khayr, 1990), vol. 3, 132, 140.

In practice, the imaginary aspect of sufi is seen as weakening Muslims and leading them to innovation (*bid'a*), superstition (*khurafāt)* and imagination (*takhayyul.)* At this earlier period sufis tended to emphasize the development of sufi brotherhoods which were devoted to practices such as *wird* and *dhikr,* whereas religious revivalism tended to emphasize rational thinking as such and the abandonment of mystical beliefs.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth century saw the orders attacked on all sides, but it was not this which made the difference from past time. Attackers had never been wanting; their beliefs had been refuted, their practices condemned, their dervishes ridiculed and occasionally executed, and their shaykhs castigated. None of this abated their popularity to the slightest degree. What we have seen in our time has been a process of erosion set in motion through the twentieth-century spread of secularization, with consequent changes in the social order and the infiltration of secularist ideas. This process of change has so undermined the sufi orders that in many parts of the Arab world in particular and other Islamic countries in general, they have declined.[16]

Reform took the form of struggle against *bid'a* (innovations) and reinforcement of the *Sunna*. So it had been with Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, though this type of reform aroused the opposition of the *'ulam*ā'. Then towards the end of the century, the *Salafi* movement ascribed the stagnation of Muslim lands to the corruption of life through *bid'a*, and stressed that reformation could only come through the elimination of aberrations and a revivification of the *Sunna*.[17] The *Salafi* movement, associated with Muḥammad 'Abduh and Rashīd Riḍā', opposed nearly every aspect of the orders as degenerate and sufi proper as un-Islamic, whilst tolerating the type of thought signified by the ethical teachings of al-Ghazālī.[18]

Attacks from *fuqahā'* and secular authority have been persistent, albeit intermittent, throughout the whole history of sufi, though in practice a parallelism of religious authority was admitted; but in the past these attacks had never done more than lead to the condemnation of individual sufis and the suppression of particular orders. They never affected their position in the life of Muslim communities, since they ministered to a religious need and filled a gap in the expression of the deeper meaning of Islam. We have seen that the virtual disappearance of the orders in many lands by the middle of the twentieth century did not come through attack, either external or internal. It was the changing outlook that made the attacks of the critics, *'ulamā'*, modernists, and new men, more effective and enabled them to enlist the aid of authority.[19]

Turkey, where the secularizing movement of Mustafa Kemal brought about their prohibition in 1925, is an example of what has been taking place less spectacularly in other countries through the process of secularization; changes in the outlook and in the social order undermining confidence in former religious ways.

To begin with there was the spread of ideas of Islamic reform; return to the purity of primitive Islam, condemnation of innovations, and the struggle against superstitions became watchwords. The orders were particularly susceptible to this form of attack, for they

[16] Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, 246.

[17] Rashīd Riḍā', *Iḥyā' al-Sunna wa Imatat al-Bid'a*, 17.

[18] A distinction must be made between those castigating the orders as enemies of progress and the opinion of orthodox circles following old lines. Al-Sanūsī quotes Shaykh al-Zarrūq as saying that "the work of al-Ghazālī are the Mysticism of the legalists" (*Inna kutuba 'l-Ghazālī taṣawwufu 'l-fuqahā'*.) See al-Sanūsī, *Al-Salsabīl* (Cairo, 1935), 9.

[19] J.W. McPherson's account in *The Moulids of Egypt* (Cairo, 1941) is almost a lament on their decline and the effect of governmental restrictions upon *mawlid* festivals.

have paid the penalty of institutionalization and especially of the adoption of the principle of heredity in holiness. Formerly, legal treatises had been taught together with sufi in their establishments, but during the last hundred years those seeking Islamic learning had turned almost exclusively to centers such as the *Azhar* or *Qarāwiyyīn*. This broke the alliance between orthodoxy and sufi, and meant that the content of studies became formal and unilluminated and that the orders lost the support of many of the *fuqahā'* class.[20]

Others, influenced by new conceptions, who felt that Islam must be ready to relate itself to the new world into which they were being drawn, were even more opposed to the orders. Few objected outright to sufism as an individual spiritual discipline on Ghazālīan lines, even though they may have thought it a waste of time, but the form it had taken, its extravagant popular manifestations, was a different matter, and they held the orders responsible for the stagnation that had overtaken life in Muslim countries. They sought to discredit the shaykhs, not merely on this account, but also because they were particularists, limited, unenthusiastic about burning issues like nationalism, and were too attached to clan, family, and local traditions.

But most important of all was the general process of secularization, meaning by this term the process of change from a social and cultural system informed throughout by religion, to an order in which the spheres of life, science and art, political and economic activities, society and culture, and also morality and religion itself, became autonomous spheres. This movement of change was largely unconscious, unnoticed, and continuous. The sufi orders were the vehicles, not the substance, of the mystic life, and as the urge to the mystic life weakened so did the orders.

The decline of sufi has coincided with the decline of the Islamic religious sciences i.e., Islamic philosophy, theology, exegesis, and law. Today, opposed by the *'ulamā'*, by the *Salafi*-type of fundamentalist reformers, and by the secularized new men, and primarily undermined by changes taking place in the whole social and religious climate, the *sufi* orders are in decline everywhere.[21]

Rationalizing religion will lead to a formalized legalistic Islam, and will tend to narrow its religious aspects and moral values. An attitude that does not distinguish between *Ḥalāl* (lawful) and *Ḥarām* (unlawful) has already become a style of life in the society. The development of modern thinking which emphasizes rational logic will decrease the sacred value and awareness of the existence of sin, which is sometimes full of temptation. Crime, drug addiction, corruption and violence, and the disappearance of moral values in the community are phenomena of the decline of this awareness. Hence we notice perhaps the appearance of counter culture which aims at re-actualizing the teachings of sufi in modern life.

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[20] Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, 248. See also W. Cantwell Smith, *Islam in Modern History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 56, who points out that many nineteenth-century reformers had experienced sufi influence in their early years-such contrasting persons as the pan-Islamic Afghānī, the Egyptian *'ālim* Muḥammad 'Abduh, the Nubian Mahdī Muḥammad Aḥmad, the philosopher of the Ataturk revolution Ziya Gokalp, and the Pak-Indian Muhammad Iqbal. Light is thrown upon this aspect of the lives of Afghānī and 'Abduh in Elie Kedourie's *Afghānī and 'Abduh* (London, 1966.) 'Abduh's scepticism went beyond intellectual bounds, since his relationship to Afghānī was that of some form of *tawajjuh* or *rābiṭa* (see pp. 8-14 and letter of 'Abduh to Afghānī on pp. 66-69), a technique Afghānī may have acquired in India. Afghānī also maintained the Sufi distinction between exoteric and esoteric teaching, between what one professes openly and what one divulges to the adept. So pervasive was Sufi influence in Islamic life that contact was involuntary and unavoidable. But these same men reacted against their shaykh and mode of worship, and discarded the whole system, even though their thought was colored in some respects by their early experiences. Today, in the modern world, children grow up without even that unconscious experience.

[21] Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, 250.

The appearance of young artists and poets among Indonesian Muslims who are paying more attention to the practice of sufi has surprised an Australian professor, who sees it as an unusual phenomenon, since such enthusiasm, when allowed to develop without the reformation of the teaching of sufi, might create *khurafāt, takhayyul* and *bid'a*. That is why Prof. Hamka suggests that sufi should return to the Qur'ān and Sunna because this approach will help it adjust to the spirit of modern times. Others call for a reformation of sufi to make it the third pillar of religion, which is *iḥsān*. *Iḥsān* means that "you worship God, as if you see Him, and when you do not see Him, indeed He sees you."

Though the orders can never regain their former influence in Islamic life they will continue to exist, for there are always some peasants, artisans, and intellectuals who need the type of spiritual solace they offer, or are ready to seek in them a way of escape or refuge from the anxieties of life in the modern world, as their ancestors found in them a counterbalance to the ordinary man's political, economic, and religious impotence. Secular institutions and a modern outlook do not satisfy a minority, who feel the need to maintain spiritual values.

Sociologically speaking, we have seen religion displaced, or reduced from being the regulative principle behind life, sustaining and molding society, to become one among many aspects of social life, though receiving special recognition as a factor of differentiation within the universalism of secular culture. At the same time, Islam continues to be the guiding principle in the personal lives of vast numbers of people, and within Islam the sufi tradition will continue to fulfill its mission of maintaining the deeper spiritual values through the special linkage and relationship with the spiritual world that the tariqa represents.[22]

In modern Indonesia, Hamka, according to Nurcholish Madjid, is responsible for having promoted the notion of a new sufi in Indonesia. He appreciates the role that it can play in the implementation of an esoteric Islam. It can dispense with the practice of *'uzla* while still being actively involved in society. Once in a while however the practice of *'uzla* could be recommended as a means of refreshing one's mind and as a starting point to perform more good deeds.[23]

According to Fazlur Rahman,[24] Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, both classical figures, were the pioneers of neo-sufism. Neo-sufism is characterized by an emphasis on moral motive and the application the methods of *dhikr* and *murāqaba* or spiritual concentration on God. The objective and the context of concentration are the same as those in *Salafi* doctrine. The purpose is to strengthen belief in the true *'aqīda* and assist in the moral purification of the soul. The phenomenon of neo-sufism can contribute to the re-birth of *Salafi* activities and a positive attitude towards the world.[25] To some extent they admit the true claim of intellectual sufi: they accept the *kashf* (experience of capturing God's truth) of the sufis or their intuitive inspiration but reject sufi claims of infallibility (*ma'ṣūm*); indeed both Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya admitted that they had experienced *kashf*. The legitimacy of *kashf* is

[22] Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, 258.

[23] Nurcholish Madjid, "Sufisme Baru dan Sufisme Lama: Masalah Kontinuitas dan Perkembangan dalam Esoterisme Islam," in Djohan Effendi (ed.), *Sufisme dan Masa Depan Agama* (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 1993), 112. In fact the practice of *'uzla* or even *zuhd* by sufis is only a pre-condition or a stage, not an end, therefore this does not mean denying being active in social life.

[24] Fazlur Rahman, *Islam* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), 195.

[25] In fact this attitude has been performed since the Prophet's lifetime, followed by his Companions and early sufis. To some extent it is true that some individual sufis tried to emphasize more the aspect of the hereafter since the Qur'ān mentions its importance.

equal to moral cleanness and the purification of the heart to an unlimited degree.

There is a sufi element in 'Social Spiritualism' (*al-Rūḥāniyya al-Ijtimā'iyya*) as well, which features certain signs of spiritualism (*ma'ālim al-ṭarīq*):

1. Reciting and contemplating the meaning of the holy Qur'ān.
2. Reciting and studying the meaning of prophet's presence through *Sunna* and his *sīra* (biography.)
3. Maintaining relationships with good people such as *'ulamā'* and Muslims who perform *zuhd*.
4. Keeping oneself away from bad attitudes and behavior.
5. To study the soul and metaphysics as these are portrayed in the *Qur'ān* and *Sunna* with a sense of īmān (belief.)
6. To perform obligatory worship and *Sunna*, five times a day, and *taḥajjud*.[26]

In the Indonesian context, for example, one might consider the case of the tariqa *Qādiriyya wa Naqshbandiyya*, which through the efforts of its most dynamic branch in Suryalaya, has gained a lot of attention from the mass media for its system of curing young drug addicts. Abah Anom, the head of the tariqa's pesantren there, has developed a system for curing drug abusers through *dhikr*. This system was developed as a result of his belief in the practical experience of sufi masters and the concept that *dhikr Allah* contains enlightenments, special characteristics and secrets which help to cure the hearts of Muslim believers. This belief is based on God's saying, "Remember me, I'll remember you. When you remember your God, the curtain of heedlessness will be removed from you, you will be the *dhākir* (and you) will be remembered, the one who is thankful (and you) will be thanked."[27]

Whatever the reason for the success and benefits of *dhikr* in Pesantren Suryalaya, the results are beyond question, as is demonstrated by the large numbers of those who have been cured of their dependency.[28] Normally the healing process will take between 40 days and 6 months or more.[29]

From the elements of the sufi teachings and practices discussed in the above, we can perhaps see that the genuine nature of sufi tradition is being maintained, and that this will never be lost. The Path, in our age as in the past, is for the few who are prepared to pay the price, but the vision of the few who, following the way of personal encounter and commitment, escape from Time to know re-creation, remains vital for the spiritual welfare of mankind.[30]

Conclusion

From our discussion above we may conclude that the emphasis of sufi on individual piety results in personal satisfaction, fills a personal need for a link to the creator as the beloved. This attitude would be better if it could be manifested towards God's creatures as well, both to human beings and nature. Individual piety should not be separated from social piety and environmental piety.

In worldly life where various conflicts and misunderstandings have colored society, the spirit of love needs to be fostered in the hearts of human beings. The essence of sufi is love and care which people can utilize as a means to develop and actualize their relationships with human beings and their environment. Through sufi the difficulties

[26] Sa'īd Ramaḍān, *Al-Rūḥāniyya al-Ijtimā'iyya* (Geneve, 1965), 53-61.

[27] Abah Anom, "Miftāḥ al-Ṣudūr" in Harun Nasution (ed.), *Ṭarīqa Qādiriyya wa Naqshbandiyya: Sejarah, Asal-usul dan Perkembangannya* (Tasikmalaya: Institut Agama Islam Latifah Mubarokiyah, 1990), 306.

[28] Bachtiar Djamily, *Dari Pondok Pesantren Suryalaya ke Ka'batullah* (Bogor: Ummi Hajjah Mar Ibrahim, 1990), 75. See also Harun Nasution (ed.), *Ṭarīqa Qādiriyya wa Naqshbandiyya*, 173. By 1990, about 8000 addicts had been cured in the Pesantren.

[29] Harun Nasution (ed.), *Ṭarīqa Qādiriyyawa Naqshbandiyya*, 410-1.

[30] Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, 259.

in life that are caused by materialism and hedonism, this world that is full of pollution and lacks resources, can all be solved by changing pessimism into optimism, worry into hope and hate to love. Only sufi has the spiritual potential to avoid the absolutism that enslaves people. Perhaps those seeking to develop their religious life should turn more to sufi, for in it lies the essence and the future of religion.

Sufi can still play a significant role as a tool of moral education, as well as in the field of psychiatry. This remains to be seen in many parts of the Islamic world, but the potential is always there. It is difficult to measure its success and yet at the same time is perhaps too early to say that it is in decline because the general trend in the Muslim world since the nineteenth century, in which people try to rationalize or secularize many aspects of human life and develop their nation for the sake of economic success and profit-making only, seems to ignore its importance. In fact sufi preserves the truly important aspects of life for human beings without rejecting the world. Sufi can be quite realistic without being materialistic.