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## INTERPRETATIONS ON THE THEORY OF SUFISM (VIEWS ON THE TERM SUFISM, PLACE AND TIME OF ITS EMERGENCE)

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### ABSTRACT

*In the article, the interpretations of the theory of Sufism, the terminology of Sufism, the views on the place and time of its origin are interpreted in comparison with the opinions of Eastern and Western scholars. If there was science, it would be learned through education. Sufism is morality with the qualities of divine morality”<sup>9</sup>. Here the Sufi observes Sufism in a comparative way, because even if a Sufi is knowledgeable and feels a lack of morality, he cannot be a true Sufi. The term of Sufism was debated with different opinions about the place and time of its emergence. Some opinions of foreign scholars on this subject were found to be relevant.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Hard Wool Fabric, “Suf”, Sufism, Sufi, Interpretations, Asceticism, Quran, Hadith, Messenger (PBUH), Terminology Of Sufism, Eastern And Western Scholars, Different Views And Theories, Christian Mysticism.*

### INTRODUCTION

The teachings of Sufism are among the scientific problems that have attracted the attention of many scholars not only in the countries of the East, but also in the world. Therefore, there are different views about it, and the concept of Sufism is also given different definitions. In particular, the research of well-known foreign scientists R.Nicholson, A.Arberry, L.Massignon, J.Trimingham, A.Shimmel and F.Mayer, aimed at shedding light on the concept of Sufism, is known to scientists. A.Arberry, who lived and worked on the threshold of the last century, left a number of great works on the teachings of Sufism. Explaining the meaning of the word mysticism, A.Arberry says that it is derived from "hard wool cloth", ie "suf", and that those who wear it are among those who voluntarily renounce this world<sup>1</sup>. At this point, A.Arberry calls them "Sufis" and points out that this dress was made in competition with Christianity. It can be

seen here that the scholar is referring to Islamic Sufis as imitators of some secular Christians. However, in the East, they knew very well that mysticism was gaining attention as the Sunnah of the Prophet (s.a.v.). J. Trimmingham also explains the meaning of the word mysticism in a way closer to A. Arberry's interpretation, and says that the clothes worn by Muslim ascetics in the early Islamic period were mainly "suf" and therefore they were called "Sufis". According to the scholar, the word "suf" gave rise to the mystical doctrine of Sufism<sup>2</sup>.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

A. Arberry's "Mysticism" also deals with Islamic mysticism and expresses its attitude to mysticism through the views of several Western scholars<sup>3</sup>. The first page of the article begins with an idea from U. Inge's "Christian Mysticism". This idea is about the existence of the Creator and his eternity, determined by religious mysticism, and A. Arberry shows that the following opinion of Professor R. Zeiner is precisely related to Islamic mysticism. According to R. Zeiner, Islamic mysticism is a doctrine that is difficult to imagine. A. Arberry points out that some of the definitions of mysticism have been revised and clarified through R. Zeiner's "Mysticism is sacred and secular." A. Arberry supports the opinion of R. Zeiner and informs about the work of Professor R. A. Nicholson on the doctrine of mysticism<sup>4</sup>.

Hence, the teachings of mysticism and the definitions given to it have been sufficiently studied by foreign scholars since the beginning of the last century.

It can be seen that A. Arberry and J. Trimmingham's views and descriptions of mysticism and Sufism are limited to a single, apparent meaning. That is, the purpose of the Sufis from wearing that "suf" is described in a very superficial way. However, mysticism is a very broad concept, and the goals and ideas of those who hold these teachings are large enough.

Sheikh Ali ibn Sheikh Uthman al-Jullabi al-Hujwiri, in his book *Kashfu-l-mahjub* (The Opening of the Barrier), states that in addition to the ideas of A. Arberry and J. Trimmingham, mysticism also has inner meanings and "purity is clarity, clarity, transparency." He explains that it is derived from the word "suf" - "sof" (pure). This proves that the word can also mean purity, open volunteering<sup>5</sup>.

Some scholars in the West and the East say that mysticism is derived from the word "suffa," meaning that the "companions of the suffa" are pious people who have passed away during the lifetime of the Prophet (saas), and Sufis come close to them. Abu Rayhan al-Biruni, in his *Osar-ul-Baqiya*, states that the word is derived from the Greek word "suf," meaning doctrine<sup>6</sup>. It is clear from the above definitions that different definitions are used in defining the concept of mysticism. In A. Arberry's article "Mysticism" and in J. Trimmingham's "Sects of Islamic Sufism" only the most proven and correct is that "suf" means "hard woolen cloth". It is possible that these two scholars were aware of other meanings of mysticism, but this fact is not reflected in the works known to us. We can say that the descriptions given by Sufis, especially in the early days, are important for mysticism. Many scholars can be attributed to the Sufis who lived and worked in the first period. But only a few of them are limited to describing mysticism in their works. It is expedient to include in the scientific circulation the works of Abu Nasr Sarraj "Al-Lum'a" ("Shu'la"), Khujviri's "Kashfu-l-mahjub", Abulkarim Qushayri's "Risolai Qushayri", Suhrawardi's "Avorifu-l-maorif". The following are the descriptions of mysticism in these works. Ma'rufi Karhi: "Sufism embraces the truth and turns away from the hands of the creatures."<sup>7</sup>

Abu Hafs al-Haddad said: “Sufism consists of manners. Each time has its own literature. There is literature in every case. They have the rank of a perfect man who pays attention to the manners of the time ...”<sup>8</sup>

While the first definition is seen as a concept (science) that calls for distance from greed, the second states how important the issue of time is to mysticism. The description in Gal gives it clarity.

Abu Husayn al-Nuri said, “Sufism is neither a tradition nor knowledge, but morality. If Sufism was a ritual, it would be achieved with difficulty. If there was science, it would be learned through education. Sufism is morality with the qualities of divine morality”<sup>9</sup>. Here the Sufi observes Sufism in a comparative way, because even if a Sufi is knowledgeable and feels a lack of morality, he cannot be a true Sufi. Of course, morality should not be equated with simple, worldly morality. Scholars who have studied the teachings of Sufism seriously for many years abroad have succeeded in presenting this teaching - the great works of Sufism that we have not yet studied properly.

Turkey is one of the most studied regions in the West on Sufism. There are special "Theology" faculties in the existing scientific institutions. From this it can be understood that the views on Sufism, its terminology, essence, place, spread and time of origin are being studied in all aspects, in-depth research is being conducted. The fact that large-scale research has been done in this regard is recognized by today's scholars on Sufism. Scientific, popular, religious and moral works containing scientific, philosophical, socio-political views on Sufism and its history are being translated into Uzbek with great skill by scholars and translators on Sufism in our country<sup>10</sup>. Although the descriptions of Sufism in the works of this translation take different forms, the content, the sequence of views, the complementarity of ideas, in a sense, make one aware of what the essence of Sufism is. Of course, we are far from saying that we have found the perfect answer to Sufism with the opinions of Turkish scholars. Therefore, if Sufism is an ocean, those who describe it have not yet discovered the meanings that lie at the bottom of that ocean. However, we will focus on the definitions given in some translated works.

Professor Mahmoud A'sad Joshan, a theologian who had been active in spreading the teachings of Naqshbandi in Australia and had risen to the rank of Murshid (Master), describes Sufism in his works as follows: “Sufism is a way of life in religion. Sufism is a doctrine based on the Qur'an, the Hadiths, the words and deeds of the Prophet (PBUH) and the source of his main idea.”<sup>11</sup>

Professor Usman Turar gives a general definition of Sufism as a branch of science and states the following: “Sufism teaches how to get rid of bad qualities in the human heart, shows the good qualities in the heart and ways to achieve them, and is the highest “perfect person”. It is the science that teaches the rules of attaining status and, finally, explains the secrets of monotheism (*Tavhid*).”<sup>12</sup>

Muhammad Nurullah Sayido Jazari, a well-known Sufi and an active follower of the Naqshbandi sect in Turkey, also describes Sufism as follows: “Sufism deals with man and humanity. It conveys the essence of Islam by teaching a person the most important information about his self (*nafs*), the most important social etiquette in his relations with other people, and the things that benefit and harm him in the relationship between a slave and his God.” Shaykh 'Umar

Faruq Sayyid al-Jazari continued this definition: "Sufism is the religion of Islam, the command of Allah, the dignity of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), and the priceless *sunnah*. He teaches us true love, sincerity, respect and dignity."<sup>13</sup>

It is not fair to ignore the opinions of Shari'ah scholars when describing Sufism. Because the Sufism and the attitude towards the followers of Islam, which originated from Islam, must be carried out through the science of *Shari'ah*, we have found it possible to cite some of the definitions in the book "The Imagination of Sufism"<sup>14</sup> by late Sheikh Muhammad Sadiq Muhammad Yusuf. Although the same work of the Sheikh is not seen as a source that can give a perfect description of Sufism, it is given brief, succinct ideas from the Islamic point of view, citing examples from the Qur'an and Hadiths. It briefly dwells on the issue of *Murshid* (Master) and *Murid* (disciple) and some of the representatives of the sect.

The scholar scientifically substantiates the ideas of Sufism related to the words "suffa", "saf", "safa" and "suf", and also notes that there are opinions related to the name of that person because he attributed many worshipers in ancient times to Sufayn Uddibn Tlobiha. However, denying anything other than their word "suf", many say that the word "Sufi" is derived from the Arabic word *suf-jun*. First of all, in terms of vocabulary, this name is very accurate. In addition, those who were devoted to many prayers also wore very simple clothes. They usually wear only wool, they say."<sup>15</sup>

According to Shahida Bilqies<sup>16</sup> the etymology of the Word Sufi has been analyzed with 7 meanings of the word "*suf*".

1. Safaa-which means cleanliness, particularly the purity of heart, soul and actions of a man.
2. Ahle Suffa-During the life time of Holy Prophet (saw) there were certain ascetics (Zahids and Abids) whose sole occupation in life was nothing but continuous study and recitation of the Holy Qur'an, meditation, prayers and absolute devotion to God in the Prophet's historical mosque at Medina.
3. Suff-means row [Those Muslims who always tried to offer their Namaz (prayers) in the coveted first row of the 'five daily' congregations during the Prophet's (saw) time].
4. Soofa-It is the name of an old Arab tribe who were dedicated to the service of Kaaba (Mecca).
5. Safoot-ul-Qafa-The hair that grows at the back of the neck.
6. Siyu Soofia-It is a Greek word which means Divine knowledge.
7. Sufana-A kind of Plant.
8. Soof-means Wool.

Sufism is deep and wide in terms of time and space, and has been gaining status for centuries. It is therefore not possible to describe Sufism in a complete sense based on its appearance in certain regions. In our opinion, it should be studied in regions by separating them into territories. Because the views of Sufism in North Africa are different from the views of Sufism in Central Asia, the views in Turkey are different from the definitions of Sufism in Iraq and Egypt, and the views in America and Europe are completely different.

Various, truthful and correct views on the history of mysticism have been expressed by many Western and Eastern scholars. A.E.Krimski in his "Development of Sufism until the end of the third century AH" sees two factors in the emergence and formation of mysticism: one is the traces of Christianity in the West, which spread to Christian countries before the conversion to Islam, and the other to Buddhist-oriented countries in the East."<sup>17</sup>

P.Tsvetkov's "Islamism", A.Kazanski's "Islamic mysticism" and I.Goldtsier's "Lectures on Islam" are seen as superstitious approach to Sufism.

F.A.Toluk writes that Sufism originated from the "generation of priests". He later rejected this unproven hypothesis and became convinced that Sufism was an Islamic teaching<sup>18</sup>. Foreign scholars supporting this view are A. Nicholson, L.Massignon, A. Arberry, J.Trimingham, A.Simmel, and others.

According to Ed.Brown, O.V.Macdonald, A.Venzink, Sufism originated from asceticism in Eastern Christianity and was developed by Syrian monks belonging to the Neo-Platonism form of Christianity. R. Dozi, referring to Iranian sources, writes that Sufism is a doctrine contrary to the Arabs and Islam<sup>19</sup>. Sufi scholars Richard Hartman, Max Horten, and others say that this doctrine originated from or was influenced by Hinduism, Buddhism, and the early Vedantas<sup>20</sup>.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Apparently, these ideas are primitive views, and attitudes to them are new today. That is, Sufism is being studied as a science based on Islam, the Qur'an, and the Hadith, and this, of course, has come at the cost of a great deal of evidence.

As a result of our thinking, we can cite the attitude of Western scholars Louis Massignon and Reynold Nicholson to Sufism, who were engaged in this doctrine in the first half of the twentieth century. They set aside various alien ideas and tried to prove that Sufism is based on Islam<sup>21</sup>. When we study J. Trimmingham's "Progress of Islamic Sufism", we realize that the scholar saw the basis of Sufism in Islam in his description: "Sufism derives its experience from asceticism and Eastern Christian philosophy, the basis of which depends on the Qur'an."<sup>22</sup> Here it is difficult to agree with the scholar's phrase "Eastern Christianity."

To understand the origin of Sufism, which is considered to be very complex in the Muslim world, we must first have a clear idea of the state of the Islamic society in which it arose. It is not enough to state the existence of elements of knowledge, Neo-Platonism, monism and other similarities in Sufism, it is necessary to try to explain what conditions allowed these elements to flourish. Only then can we correctly understand the historical role of Sufism and its future destiny<sup>23</sup>.

J.Trimingham emphasizes that the attainment of enlightenment (*ma'rifa-gnosis*) through a sense of pleasure is a feeling of Sufism and an open doctrine<sup>24</sup>. It is known that Sufism consists of four statuses, and enlightenment (*ma'rifa*) is one of its statuses. They are concepts that are inextricably linked to the Islamic law (*Shari'a*), the Divine Way (*Tariqa*), the enlightenment (*Ma'rifa*), and the higher status of The Truth (*Haqiqat*). Whether enlightenment is left out of the view of some scholars or for some other reason, it falls within these four statuses, i.e., it is recorded as *Shari'ah*, *Tariqah*, and *Haqiqat*. A similar idea can be found in an article by Western orientalist J.A.Gross<sup>25</sup>. In it, J.A.Gross identifies the state of Sufism during the Soviet Period and

expresses it through the thoughts of the Russian scholar O.Sukhareva. According to the article, O.Sukhareva describes Sufism as a syncretic aspect of Islam and an easily adaptable "divine inclination." At the same time, he gives a brief commentary on the three statutes, interpreting the Shari'ah as the means by which a Murid (disciple) must follow the "official" rules of Islam, understand the essence of all things, and finally achieve the Truth through divine knowledge and ecstasy<sup>26</sup>. But according to ancient Sufi scholars, enlightenment is recognized as one of the statutes.

## CONCLUSION

The term of Sufism was debated with different opinions about the place and time of its emergence. Some opinions of foreign scholars on this subject were found to be relevant. The essence of Sufism has been explained by many examples, but finding a perfect answer that provides complete content remains a challenge. However, in view of the above, we have come to the conclusion that Sufism can be defined as follows: Sufism is the religion of Islam, that is, the teachings based on the Qur'an and Hadith, and the Sunnah of the Prophet (saas) is followed by the Sufis. It is basically an inner science, and the person who enters it is called a Sufi. It is derived from the Arabic word "suvf-jun". The scientific proof of the other definitions given to it is scarce or questionable. We remain of the same opinion.

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