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Sponsoring Sufism

How Governments Promote "Mystical Islam" in their Domestic and Foreign Policies

Fait Muedini

Palgrave Studies in Religion, Politics, and Policy

Series Editors: Ted G. Jelen and Mark J. Rozell

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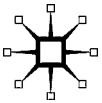

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To Kaltrina, Edon, Dua, and to my parents,
Atli and Mudzefer Muedini

Contents

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Introduction

Government leaders who have previously shown little interest in religion as it relates to policy are now using Islam for the advancement of their own political objectives. While Islam has been applied in the domestic and foreign policies of government leaders for quite some time (Esposito, 1998), the issue of Islam in domestic and international politics has received greater attention as of late, and in particular since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon (Philpott, 2002). Since these attacks, the teachings of Islam have become a major point of examination, toward which significant media and policy attention have been directed not only to understand Islam but also to discuss how individuals aim to use religion for achieving political goals. And within this specific debate, governments and other actors have aimed to address how to stop the spread of puritanical Islamic interpretations, in the name of preventing future attacks.

Because of the worry over radical interpretations and the effect that such interpretations may have on individual actions, many individuals have been quick to try to find other approaches to Islam, or specifically, other groups of Muslims that promote what these individuals perceive as a different, more tolerant message of the faith. But while such interpretations of Islam have been promoted by governments in hopes of preventing future terrorist acts, Mahmood Mamdani (2002: 766) argues that within these actions, the emphasis by policymakers has not been on "distinguishing terrorists from civilians . . . [,]" but rather, the "talk has turned religious experience into a political category . . . " He argues that in order to understand why individuals commit specific actions, a person's religion should not be the only issue examined, nor should religion be viewed in a vacuum. But rather, a detailed understanding of a range of factors is needed. Yet, he argues that some people are quick to believe that whether one interprets religion "literally" as

compared to "metaphoric or figurative" is the difference in distinguishing whether or not a person will commit acts of terror (Mamdani, 2002: 767). Applying this distinction specifically to the case of Islam, what he says is happening is that "we are now told to distinguish between good Muslims and bad Muslims. Mind you, not between good and bad persons, nor between criminals and civil citizens, who both happen to be Muslims, but between good Muslims and bad Muslims" (767).

This last point is important to understand, and should be extended to include other specific approaches within Islam, because with the intention of governments to pigeonhole different interpretations of Islam, we have seen as of late a move toward promoting one specific form of Islam, namely Sufism, in the effort to fight religious extremism. Sufism itself is understood as the mystical branch of Islam, although the term Sufism is much more complex than just Muslim mysticism (Heck, 2007b). And while it is obviously necessary for people to speak out against extremism, within this discussion about attempting to categorize and preempt individuals' actions (and even intentions) based solely on religion, not only has this approach inaccurately stereotyped Muslims who do not adhere to the Sufi teachings of Islam, but within the discussion some have also promoted a common misconception suggesting that Sufis themselves are not concerned with politics, and thus they are dismissed as any sort of political (violent or nonviolent) challenge to a government.

Regarding the categorization of Sufism as a separate (and nonthreatening) entity in domestic and international affairs, this dichotomy of "Sufi" and "non-Sufi" Muslim has even played out in the United States with the debate surrounding the construction of the "Park 51 Mosque" in New York City. What is interesting about this case is that here the "good Muslim" has been seen as "good" specifically because of an affiliation with Sufism (Safi, 2011). Omid Safi (2011) explains that in attempts to show that those individuals—including Imam Feisal Rauf, the leader of the proposed mosque—were not a threat, news sources, among others, pointed out that he was a Sufi Muslim. Safi (2011) argues that the statements by New York leaders such as those of Governor David Paterson fit within this framework of categorizing Islam. Specifically, he quotes Paterson, who when speaking on the mosque construction issue, stated that "[t]his group who has put this mosque together, they are known as the Sufi Muslims. This is not like the Shiites. . . . They're almost like a hybrid, almost westernized. They are not really what I would classify in the sort of mainland Muslim practice" (Safi, 2011). His including the "Sufi" in this false dichotomous categorization presumes that Sufis are not concerned with politics, as well as portrays an inaccurate picture

that Muslim individuals can either be a "Sufi" (and thus the "good" Muslim), or an "Islamist" (Safi, 2011). As we shall see, this picture is often much less clearly defined.

But while this is a recent case of the referencing of Sufism in politics, this is far from the only time that Sufism has been advocated by governments. In fact, many examples exist in which government leaders—and in a number of cases dictatorial regimes—often highlight Sufism and Sufi groups in order that they may offset any political threat to their control of the political system. In fact, as I shall argue, many governments seem quite eager to promote Sufism, not necessarily just because of a positive message that Sufism may provide[1] but also because Sufism and Sufis in such cases are often seen as a minimal "political threat" to the current system, and in other instances provide religious legitimacy for a political leader.

This book will lay out the different reasons why governments are promoting Sufi Islam as an official (and sometimes unofficial) government policy, as well as the benefits that those specific Sufi orders (which work with governments) receive in this relationship. I will focus primarily on the cases of Algeria, Morocco, Pakistan, Russia, Uzbekistan, Britain, and on think tanks in the United States to illustrate exactly how and why leaders and other actors are sponsoring (and supporting) Sufism. In many (but not all) of the cases, leaders seem to be devoting time and government resources to promoting Sufism with the intent not only to combat extremism but also out of a perception that Sufism is not concerned with politics, and thus is not a legitimate political concern to the respective political leaders. This becomes quite prevalent in the many cases in which leaders worry about the challenge of Islamist parties to their governments. As I will argue, in such instances, these governments have been rather unwilling to provide genuine political and civil reforms within the state. Yet, as is commonly observed in the literature on authoritarianism, such leaders attempt to find ways to maintain power. This issue has received increased attention recently with the Arab uprisings, with many scholars examining government responses as to whether these states would actually provide genuine reform, limited reform, or provide no reform and risk revolution.

Moreover, I will also examine the role of patronage networks between the government and religious organizations, and the manifestation of various Sufi-state relations. As I will argue, Sufism and Sufi groups are not just being "used" by the state. They also benefit from relationships with the state. As I will point out, having ties to the government can increase their reputation in society, while driving up membership

numbers. This is all the more important in attempting to understand the role of the sheikh, and the importance of a sustained reputation and a religious following for such orders (Villalon, 1994). Furthermore, as they are attached to the state (in some capacity), Sufi groups also often gain political and financial benefits, as well as religious benefits such as the space to operate openly, something often restricted to other religious organizations depending on the government's position. As we shall see, in a number of these cases, the Sufi organizations are clearly receiving some sort of benefit by working with the state. And while the cases may differ in terms of the exact benefits received, similarities do exist across the board.

Authoritarian Leaders and Theories on Power

Much of this book will analyze the actions of authoritarian leaders in relation to the promotion of religion generally, and Sufism in particular. However, a quick point must be made that, in no way does this argument necessarily need to be limited to authoritarian leaders. As I will argue in the last chapter on Britain and the United States, even those individuals in liberal democracies have at times argued for promoting specific religious orders or organizations as a political policy. Furthermore, one does not need to look far to find nonauthoritarian leaders still courting religious groups (whether they are Muslim, Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, etc.) for political reasons. But while this is the case in even liberal political systems, I argue that in the cases of authoritarian leaders who have large Muslim populations under their control, there seems to be very specific attention paid to Sufism, particularly when considered in the context of rising Islamist challengers in those states. Therefore, observing how such leaders approach the Sufis will lead to a better understanding of the state's attempt at holding onto political power, while the Sufis at the same time increase their religious legitimacy. This last point is crucial in a number of the cases in which Sufism is quite popular in the society, but also in which the Islamists themselves are becoming more influential religiously and politically, often due to their strong social services and continued critique of the state.

In many of these cases (but not limited to instances of an Islamist presence), there are leaders who claim to be heading a democracy, but in reality, who are not overseeing what we would call a "constitutional liberalism," but rather, what falls under the category of an "illiberal democracy" (Zakaria, 1997). As Fareed Zakaria explains, a liberal or constitutional democracy is "a political system marked not only by free

and fair elections, but also by the rule of law, a separation of powers, and the protection of basic liberties of speech, assembly, religion, and property" (22). It is not enough to call a country a democracy merely because it holds elections. In fact, as Zakaria (1997) explains, "to go beyond this minimalist definition and label a country democratic only if guarantees a comprehensive catalog of social, political, economic and religious rights turns the word democracy into a badge of honor rather than a descriptive category" (25).

Thus, in the case of authoritarian leaders, we must understand that while they are concerned about maintaining political power, how they approach this goal often varies (Brumberg, 2003). Scholars have specifically identified two camps into which such leaders often fall: "liberalized autocracies" and "full autocracies" (Brumberg, 2003: 4). In the case of the full autocrats, leaders rely on rather direct methods of control. One often-cited approach leaders use in their attempts to stay in power is through the distribution of resources to key supporters (Brumberg, 2003). In turn, such supporters back the incumbent leader (and do not defect) because of the benefits they expect to receive. The group that supports the leader is defined as a "minimum winning coalition" (or the least amount of support needed for them to remain in power [Bueno de Mesquita, Smith, Siverson, & Morrow, 2003]). Along with the distribution of resources, leaders will also use "sheer force and intimidation" (Brumberg, 2003: 4).

This is in contrast to liberal or "competitive authoritarianism" (or illiberal democracy), in which "formal democratic institutions are widely viewed as the principal means of obtaining and exercising political authority. Incumbents violate those rules so often and to such an extent, however, that the regime fails to meet conventional minimum standards of democracy" (Levinsky & Way, 2002: 52). However, the policies of illiberal democracies themselves vary, in terms of the different amounts of respect they display for democratic norms. And while some scholars have argued that these "stages" are the growing pains toward an eventual democracy, others argue that "[f]ar from being a temporary or transitional stage, it appears that many countries are settling into a form of government that mixes a substantial degree of democracy with a substantial degree of illiberalism" (Zakaria, 1997: 24; 2007).

There are a number of ways in which liberal authoritarian leaders—who offer some reform while at the same time maintaining political control—attempt to survive. As Zakaria (2007) mentions, what has happened is that the "elected governments claiming to represent the people have steadily encroached on the powers and rights of other elements of the society, a usurpation that is both horizontal (from other branches of the

national government) and vertical (from regional and local authorities as well as private businesses and other nongovernmental groups such as the press)" (102). As mentioned, there are a number of ways in which leaders try build up their power, while simultaneously continuing to present a continuous image of democracy. One of the common tools these leaders often use for staying in power is actually the electoral system. Of course, this is not to suggest that these elections are completely fair and without bias, but rather, that a leader can manipulate elections carefully in order to ensure no stunning electoral result that would remove her/him from power. For example, a leader can often claim to provide free and fair elections, while finding ways within the system to ensure that her/his power will not be seriously challenged. These "safety-valve" elections (Buehler, 2012 working paper) provide the perception of open elections, when in reality they are just a way for the leadership to continue their strong hold on power. By not allowing a serious opposition to form (this can be influenced by electoral rules, corruption, influence over other branches of government, etc.) (Brumberg, 2003), even these so-called "fair" elections are anything but. As Levinsky and Way (2002) explain, in such a "competitive authoritarian" government, "[a]lthough elections are regularly held and are generally free of massive fraud, incumbents routinely abuse state resources, deny the opposition adequate media coverage, harass opposition candidates and their supporters, and in some cases manipulate electoral results. Journalists, opposition politicians, and other government critics may be spied on, threatened, harassed, or arrested. Members of the opposition may be jailed, exiled, or—less frequently—even assaulted or murdered. Regimes characterized by such abuses cannot be called democratic" (53).

Moreover, as we shall see later in the case of the king in Morocco, a government can structure electoral rules, along with other constitutional laws, to strongly favor the incumbent or the incumbent's prime political party. But along with this, even parties that the ability to perform very well in these challenging conditions may actually choose not to, as their increased influence in the state (through electoral success) may raise red flags to the government, which in theory could cause more serious problems for the challengers (Brumberg, 2003). However, authoritarian leaders themselves have an interest in allowing elections because they benefit from situations in which formerly violent parties now operate in the electoral system. By doing so, such groups move away from violence, and even if they perform well, the authoritarian leader can now alter the system in her/his favor (Brownlee, 2011, in Buehler, 2012 working paper).

Thus, liberalized autocratic leaders, while adopting a similar politics to that of fully autocratic regimes on some positions (such as resource distribution), do take a slightly different approach to holding onto their authority. It has been argued that such leaders will carry out a number of measures to show an indication of liberal change, while further solidifying their political control. As Daniel Brumberg (2002) argues, leaders in this category are open to giving up some, but not "final control" over the political system (57). They do this in a number of ways. Along with elections (as we have discussed), some states will also loosely define their political ideology, not solely promoting one position, which allows them flexibility to better handle any rising opposition forces (Brumberg, 2002). Moreover, as alluded to earlier, in some ways such governments actually want additional parties and organizations to be active in the political system. With more actors, there exists more competition among the different parties, which continues to benefit the state, as groups are often confronting one another for more political control (Brumberg, 2002: 61). Thus, by allowing limited political activity, this allows the autocrat not to have to rely on military force alone to achieve her/his objective of staying in power (Brumberg, 2003). In addition to these approaches, as mentioned, the state can often use resources (both rents and nonrent economic incentives) in order to gain additional support. Providing economic incentives provides additional political backing, with different nongovernmental actors attempting to gain said resources (Brumberg, 2002).[2] Furthermore, such leaders in general provide consistent financial incentives to backers of their regime (Smith, 2004, 2006; Way, 2011). And because liberalized autocrats in this category may not want to worry about an all-out military battle, or they may be looking to build some trust from within the society, they may want to find ways to provide material support to not only the military but also many others as well. In fact, this approach to opening the political situation (even if just slightly) for some form of political liberalization outside of the sole reliance on force can be—and has been—used in post-civil conflict situations such as Algeria, in which a history of internal fighting has left leaders sensitive to any additional protests against their rule (Brumberg, 2003).

The Theory of Patronage Networks, "Échange de services,"[3] and Power

I argue that different authoritarian government leaders are providing numerous resources to select groups that will receive political and

religious backing, which will help in the leaders' attempts to ward off challengers to the state. Leaders often engage in such actions through the establishment of domestic groups through patrimonialism (Bellin, 2004). As Bellin (2004) explains, "[p]atrimonialism confers a number of distinct advantages on authoritarian regimes that can contribute to their longevity. They include demobilizing the opposition and building a loyal base through selective favoritism and discretionary patronage" (145). Thus, while many leaders are able to stay in power through patrimonialism, I believe that in the case of government attitudes toward Sufi groups, a specific form of neopatrimonialism is a more useful explanation for authoritarian leaders' ability to build support through such networks. Neopatrimonialism is similar to patrimonialism in that a level of allegiance to the leader is involved, but it differs in that the ties are often less a result of certain "values or norms" and are more due to a "rationally driven exchange of interests" (Ilkhamov, 2007: 66) between the state and the Sufi groups. This relationship may differ from other patrimonial and neopatrimonial relationships the state has with other actors within the state (secular groups, other religious networks, certain business sectors, etc.), but is equally prevalent in the government's attempt to ensure its political and (in some cases) religious legitimacy.

As I shall argue, this "échange de services" (Loimeier, 2007: 62) between the different incumbent regimes and the different Sufi organizations vary, both for (and within) the different state leaders as well as for the Sufi groups. But as I shall argue, the primary interest for the states is the promotion of Sufism to combat violent and nonviolent Islamist groups, all of which are seen as a threat to the states (albeit for different reasons). As we shall see, a number of these regimes do go after Islamist groups that they find threatening. But along with this, they make it a point to offer benefits to groups that they see that helping them maintain their hold on power.

Sufi Interests

While the state attempts to court different groups for its own specific interests, (and in this case it approaches Sufi groups for religious legitimacy, as well as to establish a relationship with a group that the state leaders expect will not challenge the regime, thus accepting the rule), Sufi groups also have varied interests in either siding with or challenging the state. Before I discuss the different benefits such groups often receive, I must spend some time stressing the point that not all Sufi groups engage in close ties with the state. Again, it must be noted that Sufi groups, like

any other group, are equally complex, and thus assuming that all enter into agreements with states is false. In fact, we know historically that it is not the case that Sufi groups have always worked with the state. While some may have had ties with a government, many more not only did not establish a relationship with the ruling regime, but actually led campaigns to remove the colonialists from their lands (Loimeier, 2007). And even after the anticolonialist movements had ended, the relationships between Sufi orders and different state leaders continued to remain complex. As Loimeier (2007) explains when speaking about the relationship between Sufis and the state in Sub-Saharan Africa, he says that "[t]he political role of Sufi movements in sub-Saharan Africa is thus continuously negotiated, ranging from 'being in power' or 'being close to power', to accommodation and cooperation, political withdrawal and quietism, and finally political resistance to the state" (60).

One historical case that illustrates such a relationship between the state and the Murid Sufi orders can be found in Senegal, in which in exchange for tolerating the French presence, the Murids Sufi order was allowed to dictate its own internal affairs with regards to religion, as well as other issues such as development projects (Loimeier, 2007: 63). By cooperating with one another, both the French government and those members of the Sufi orders benefited. Economically, the *tariqas* (Sufi orders) were provided French support in their education and economic interests, namely peanut production (Galvan, 2001). And thus, early in the twentieth century, the relationship between the two "had settled into cozy collaboration; *marabouts* became a rural peanut-farming elite with firm control over agrarian lands while French administrators provided market access, infrastructure, and overall security" (58). Thus, while the Sufi orders were able to improve their economic conditions by working with the state, the colonialist regime was able to more smoothly ensure the production of the product, touting the "democratic" system that was in place, while reducing political challenges to the state (Galvan, 2001: 58). In fact, the variations in Sufi orders often depended on the benefits they could receive by working with the state as opposed to challenging France's colonial rule. Furthermore, in many cases, the type of economic production controlled by the Sufi orders seemed to play a major role in their approach to the state, and vice versa. Groups whose economic viability was more tied to the state may have had an interest in supporting colonialist powers compared to those that did not (Loimeier, 2007).

Even after the end of colonialism, such relationships continued.[4] Following the departure of the French, Senagalese leaders would

themselves enter into relationships with the *marabouts*, namely, providing economic benefits in exchange for political support (Galvan, 2001). And despite more recent attempts to end such a system, those individuals critical of this relationship have been unable to eliminate it from Senegalese society and politics,[5] although due to a shifting economic landscape (namely, the government has less control of resources to distribute), the relationship has clearly evolved away from its historical makeup (Loimeier, 2007). Thus, in Senegal, as the state's control over resources declined, the Murid (and other Sufi) groups' economic holdings increased (thus becoming less reliant on the state), and in turn their degree of support for the state shifted (Loimeier, 2007). For example, as a result of a great reduction in capacity to administer resources in the mid- to late 1980s, *marabouts* often quit publicly supporting the party of Abdou Diouf, while not calling for the opposition's success (Galvan, 2001). Even in today's politics, orders that have supported the state and benefited economically have often continued this relationship (even though it may not necessarily translate into public political power in the form of government positions), whereas groups that have not benefitted economically, for example, are less likely to support the state, which in turn reduces their political power within the system. However, this does not mean they do not have power within specific geographical, class, or certain professional settings, which in turn may give them the ability to distribute resources within the political system (while having a more antigovernment public stance) (Loimeier, 2007: 71).

Again, such patterns are not restricted to Senegal. In the case of Nigeria, for example, many people join the Tijanniya-Ibrahimiyya order partially because of the various "political and economic contacts as well as spiritual protection" membership provides (Loimeier, 2007: 76). But such groups did not gain such influence overnight. In fact, religious leaders often compete with one another for followers (Loimeier, 2007). And because of this, many try to build their own religious ties and networks, connecting themselves to other important orders or sheikhs (Loimeier, 2007). In Turkey, the Naqshbandi order has been able to play a critical role in the religious education of society, while increasing its activities in the economic sector. Thus, in the case of Turkey, "one of the major reasons why many Suri groups are so eager to have a foothold in various departments of government is that the more numerous the loyal men of substance, the more these organizations can benefit economically" (Ayata, 1996: 51). Again, in Turkey, such groups have been concerned not only with economic success but also religious education, as well as an increase in membership and influence throughout

the country (Ayata, 1996). However, as Ayata (1996) argues, success in such endeavors does not come without costs. The rising influence of the Sufi orders through their societal influence in economics, education, and specifically religion seems to be due to the increased role of Islam as the primary message for the orders. However, this can be difficult given Turkey's heavily secular history. And thus, before the most recent electoral success of the Islamist Justice and Development (AKP) party, the Sufi orders had to consider how feasible such an agenda was, as well as contemplate the "considerable sacrifices" involved in being a member of a party like the Welfare Party (some members went over to the Justice and Development Party following the banning of the party), or remaining aligned with it without giving a full commitment (Ayata, 1996). However, with the rise of Islamist parties, Sufi leaders' historical role as the main religious voice in Turkey is no longer the case, with Islamist parties being more active in attracting citizens to their Islamist and Muslim message, while directly "weakening tarikat bonds" (Ayata, 1996: 55). And because of this, Sufi leaders have had to consider the benefits of working with secular parties (and risking possible alienation), or to move toward the Islamist parties (Ayata, 1996). This example further illustrates that Sufi relationships with governments and political parties are clearly weighed against what their interests are. Sufi groups are not only indeed political but their relationships with the state often are understood based upon their goals in society, and how the government helps them reach (or hinder) such objectives.

Thus, the brief examinations of these cases offer further evidence for the theory that in order to understand the state's actions in relation to Sufi orders, one must spend time looking at why some Sufi groups would build relationships with the state, whereas others would not, and more specifically, what benefits await the groups that cooperate with the government, as well as the risks that exist for those that do not. In the case of Senegal, for example, some groups were more willing to profess their alliance to the state, whereas other orders were adamant about challenging the regime. Differences even existed within orders based on internal differences (Loimeier, 2007: 69). And for the Sufi groups that have established this relationship with the state, they often receive funding, have the ability to practice and promote their faith and religious traditions within the purview of the state, and increase not only their role and presence in society but also in some cases do so with the ability to help their recruiting efforts. They are able to wield such power because of the influence and respect that Sufi orders have within civil society (Galvan, 2001: 59). Thus, when the government and religious

leaders go into an agreement, both benefit. The religious leaders have additional resources that they can then use to increase their influence locally (often by providing services to the community), but then they are reliant on the state, which in turn benefits from having ties to an influential religious figure (Brynen, 1992: 80). Again, such patronage relationships are not confined just between governments and Sufi leaders and *tariqas*. However, as is the argument in this book, governments are reaching out to such orders for the specific benefits that they believe the Sufis can provide in their objective to hold power, while gaining (or continuing their) religious legitimacy, often at the expense of rising Islamist powers.

In the case of a number of these states, not only can they use domestic rents to build their "religious legitimacy" against Islamist parties but in many cases, they also have a stream of foreign aid to help them hold onto power. Many of the world's major powers have used resources essentially to buy support in the international community. One of the most recent major instances of this was the decades-long Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union (Bellin, 2004), with both spending billions of dollars in hopes of receiving the support of allies. Such actions of course did not subside with the fall of the Soviet Union. In fact, countries such as the United States have been very active in continuing to provide support to leaders—many of whom are quite authoritarian in their regime policies. Many observers argue that the reason for this support can vary, but in the case of the Middle East and North Africa, at least a part of this has to do with ensuring ties to oil, and the rising concern about violent Islamists (Bellin, 2004). It is this second point that I believe at least partly drives not only the United States' relationship with a number of these countries but also allows the domestic leaders themselves to use this threat of Islamists to increase their own patronage networks—both internationally through resources, and domestically in order to reduce any threat such groups pose to the state.

Countering Religious Organizations

Thus, while Islamists are viewed as a major problem for these political regimes in terms of a threat to their hold on power, I will argue that related to this, governments continue to advocate Sufism because they also see that religious popularity is an important aspect for their own political survival. As I shall discuss throughout the book, not only do many governments view Sufis as apolitical but also advocate Sufism (in

which leaders often ties themselves to Sufi orders), which provides these governments with additional religious legitimacy. As I will discuss, Sufi leaders have historically maintained a strong following in their societies. This has often posed a political and societal threat to regimes, as they were confronted by a power outside of the control of the government. Thus, historically as well as currently, many state leaders have had a complex and intricate relationship with Sufi leaders in an attempt to increase its religious, as well as often its political "legitimacy"—to further establish an uninterrupted and unchallenged reign. And therefore, in some cases, leaders of these respective states have also promoted Sufism so that it can help their image as religious leaders. As I shall argue later, a clear example of where this is played out is in Morocco, where Mohammed VI relies on his religious legitimacy (Brumberg, 2002) as Commander of the Faithful to survive as the political leader.

In addition to the leaders of governments believing that Sufis can help them improve the public perception of them as having religious influence, leaders have found additional "uses" for Sufism. Courting and promoting Sufis can help a government by not only providing it with additional religious credibility but also with Sufism highlighted in society, the government can have it serve as the poster child for the "correct Islam" in that state, and thus can have significant say in the type of Islam that prevails in society. This may not only lead to increased religious restrictions placed by the government on the ability other actors—such as Islamist parties—have in terms of religious interpretations within the country, but also with the government's "taking sides" in terms of how to interpret Islam, this can also have an impact on nonviolent political Islamists politically. For example, a party that has already bought into the idea of running in elections must now combat not only the politics of the state but also often accusations that their interpretations of Islam are either "foreign" or inherently violent. Because the government may be using religion to promote the type of Islam it feels is "correct" or beneficial to its society, it can (and as we shall see, in some cases does) begin an extensive media campaign of promoting said perspective (i.e., Sufism), which will make it more difficult for non-Sufi Islamists to operate and/or to become viable in the eyes of the public.[6]

Governments have often solicited Sufis because of a perceived belief some leaders hold that Sufism alone is directly related to a philosophy of peace and nonviolence. Leaders seem to be playing into this "good Muslim/bad Muslim" (Mamdani, 2002) dichotomy in which, if they promote one type of Islam, this will automatically bring about

positive nonviolent outcomes, all of which will help the stability and enhance the protection of the country, and sometimes related to this, the leaders' own political stability and longevity. Thus, this reason for the promotion of such groups is often related to the perception of Sufis as apolitical. Thus, leaders have promoted specific Sufi groups because of a belief that any Sufi will automatically promote peace and love, and not concern her-/himself with politics, as opposed to other Muslim groups, which may take issue with state policies. Thus, "bad" Muslims are those who challenge state policy, whereas "good" Muslims are supposedly beyond such interests. But as I hope to show, the motivations behind government actions in promoting Sufism are highly flawed for a number of reasons. Sufism itself is a highly complex concept, and individuals within Sufism fall into a range of characteristics in terms of religious belief, religiosity, politics, attitudes toward the state, levels and attitudes toward the use of violence, and differences in their support for the protection of human rights. Thus, while some Sufis are apolitical, many more are not. Furthermore, while many Sufis believe human rights should be protected, others are quite restrictive of equal rights when it comes to issues such as gender equality, as just one example. This is not limited to Sufism, but rather, can be equally applied to other religious traditions as well. Moreover, despite the characterization of Sufis as disinterested in politics, in many examples, some of the biggest threats to the state—both historically and presently, have been/are Sufi-inspired groups.

Furthermore, just as one cannot place all Sufi groups in one category (and one also cannot suggest that they are all driven by the same interests), this is equally the case with different political Islamist groups, as well as different Salafi groups. As I shall discuss later, political Islamist groups have a range of motivations. Some are willing to work within an electoral system (even one that is corrupt and favors the authoritarian leader), whereas others are not willing to operate in such political spaces. In this vein, some are willing to lose a bit of local credibility within civil society with the hope of gaining political power, and working from within the system, whereas others are not. The same goes for Salafi groups. As I shall discuss, their interests and political positions also vary. While some Salafi-inspired groups are violent organizations that have used terrorism, others have condemned such actions. The point is that all of these groups have different interests and different motivations in their activities. Related to this, some groups are willing to compete for government resources and attention, whereas others are not. And while governments have attempted to work with Sufi and non-

Sufi groups in a similar fashion, in this book I focus on governments' relationships with Sufi groups in particular, arguing that leaders seem to think that working with Sufis not only gives them a religious credibility that other groups do not provide as well as the Sufis, but also, in addition, that they work with Sufis because they also view such groups as nonpolitical, and thus a minimal threat to their political existence.

As difficult as it is to define and pigeonhole Sufi groups, political Islamist organizations, and Salafi groups, it is equally problematic to suggest that all leaders have the intention of carrying out government policies (and within this—sponsoring religious groups) for the ultimate objective of a peaceful society that ensures human rights, of which the government is freely elected and held completely accountable under the voices of the masses, and in which a plethora of citizen rights are protected. Every government has different objectives, and within this, different goals that it wishes to reach. In the cases of Morocco, Algeria, Russia, and the Chechen state within Russia, as well as Uzbekistan, to list just a few examples, these governments have promoted Sufism, all the while repressing human rights. Moreover, they have attempted to paint pro-Sufi activities as a part of a much needed antiterrorism campaign. And while antiterrorism measures are of course important, governments have often manipulated such policies so that they can go after any actors who are viewed as a threat to the state. These are just some of the issues that I wish to explore.

Now I must briefly clarify my upcoming argument in relation to Sufism in general. This book is in no way a condemnation of Sufism as an approach to human rights or politics, nor is it a suggestion that governments cannot work on antiterror measures. I am a firm believer that Sufism does indeed offer another set of contributions within the human rights discourse (Muedini, 2010). However, so do countless other religious and nonreligious traditions. My issue is that we must be very mindful of holding governments accountable for their policies. We must step back and ask why it is that government leaders are promoting this particular form of Islam. What are their intentions? Can we trust a government to carry out policies that truly are in the interest of citizens, or is something else taking place here? Unfortunately, in many cases, I believe that governments are attempting to "manipulate the mystics," so to speak, with the goal of maintaining their political power. As I shall argue, this is just another mechanism for such an end. Today a favorite (and simplified) government policy is the promotion of Sufism. As I will discuss later, yesterday it was often providing support for Islamists to counter the secularists who were a threat to a regime. What will a

government's policy be tomorrow? Will another political or religious group be a "favorite" for a government, which benefits from promoting said group(s)?

One other related point that I must address has to do with the state-Sufi relationship. I wan to say that this book is in no way suggesting that the relationship is one-sided, that only a government has the ability to "use" Sufis without any benefit to these groups. As I will also point out, the different Sufi individuals and groups themselves are quite politically active, aware not only of a government's actions but also themselves are receiving benefits by strengthening their relationship with the state. As I will discuss, much of this support often manifests itself in increased economic and political power, as well as higher recruitment abilities in the state. Often, some groups will acquiesce to the state, while other groups may directly challenge the regime. And often, the same group may take different positions, depending on the conditions. For example, in Paul Pinto's (2003) work on Sufism in Syria, he argues that in Sufi groups in Syria have at times been some of the most active challenges to the state and at other times more in line with the state (namely, where the state was more willing to allow Sufi Islam to be active in society).

Sufi groups that work with the government have their own specific interests for doing so, which may or may not differ from prior historical contexts, depending on the specific Sufi group, as well as local political, economic, and other conditions. We thus need to keep in mind that while much of my discussion will center on the motivations of the state, this in no way suggests that the different Sufi organizations do not have their own interests. In fact, I will also argue that in the different cases in which the state is receiving some sort of benefit, it is only because the Sufi groups have themselves accepted a relationship with the state (in which they themselves have some sort of interest). As we shall see, in a number of these cases, Sufi groups clearly are benefitting from working with the state. At the same time, it seems that they are aware that ties that are too close may hurt their credibility with members of their society, many of whom may question their independence from the state's control. Having said this, I believe that, first and foremost, examining this relationship from the framework of the state, in the context of authoritarianism, as well as Islamism as it relates to the challenge of the state will be useful in building upon the literature of regime stability, and the state's approach toward religious actors in society.

This book will proceed as follows. I will begin with a discussion of Sufism. I will define the term "Sufism," while briefly discussing some of the characteristics that may be common to Sufi groups. I will then

discuss the role of Sufism in relation to politics. As we shall see, Sufis have not only been political but also have often played roles in anticolonial and revolutionary movements. Then, I will examine a set of cases in which governments have promoted Sufi groups for a host of reasons, and consider why these different groups are willing to establish ties with the state. The cases that I will look at include Algeria, Morocco, Russia, Chechnya, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Britain, and the United States. I will then conclude with a summary of the main points of the preceding chapters, as well as a discussion of other areas in which the promotion of Sufism is currently taking place.

CHAPTER 1

What Is Sufism? History, Characteristics, Patronage, and Politics

In order to understand the ways in which government leaders attempt to use Sufism in their domestic and foreign policies, it is imperative to begin the discussion by examining what is meant by the term "Sufism." The problem with defining Sufism (*tasawwuf*), however, is the "difficulty" of how to "approach" the discussion of Sufism [,] particularly "[s]ince the very concept . . . is hotly contested among both Muslims and non-Muslims" (Ernst, 1997: 1–2). Sufism is the understood and "accepted term name for mystical Islam" (Schimmel, 1975: 3). But while this is the case, "[T]he terms, however, are not precisely synonymous, for 'Sufi' has a specific religious connotation, and is restricted by usage of those mystics who profess the [Islamic] faith" (Nicholson, 1963: 3). The term "mysticism" itself is often understood as "love of the Absolute—for the power that separates true mysticism from mere asceticism is love. Divine love makes the seeker capable of bearing even enjoying all the pains and afflictions that God showers upon him in order to the test him and purify his soul" (Schimmel, 1975: 4). The mystic, or "[t]he enlightened sees God in everything and in every space" (Bentounes, 2002: 14). And because one can see God in everything, then perceiving God in humans is not an exception. Lings (1977) explains that the Sufi theology of *tawhid*, or "Oneness of Being," suggests that "what the eye sees and the mind records is an illusion, and that every apparently separate and finite thing is in Truth the Presence of the One Infinite" (Lings, 1977: 65). He relates this concept to "orthodox" Islam

by citing the Quran, which explains that "Wheresoever ye turn, there is the Face of God" (Lings, 1977: 65).

Thus, while Sufism does not have one definition, it does aim for a "personal engagement with the Divine" (Chittick, 2009: 207). The goal of many of these Sufis is not only to have connections to God but also to become "absorbed" in God (Degorge, 2005: 23). Sufis place extensive value on recognizing God in the world, which includes the presence of God within the individual. Furthermore, some argue that Sufism, while recognizing the value of rituals and physical acts of prayer, "Tends to generally stress inwardness over outwardness, contemplation over action, spiritual development over legalism, and cultivation of the soul over social interaction" (Chittick, 2009: 207). Sufism places considerable value on God's attribute of displaying "love" and "kindness" as opposed to meting out punishment (Chittick, 2009: 207). Sufism is also known for its emphasis on *dhikr*, or remembrance of God, a practice in which Sufis will often chant the name of God as a form of worship (Chittick, 2009).

The term Sufism actually first originated from European travelers during the Middle Ages (Schimmel, 1975) who viewed Sufism as a "sect" of Islam (Ernst, 1997: 3), while the "practice" of Sufism itself is said to have been present during the establishment of Islam in the time of the Prophet Muhammad (Fadiman & Frager, 1997), although it was only "institutionalized" between "the ninth and eleventh centuries" (Buehler, 1998: 1). There was not one single reason for the formation of Sufism. Some scholars have suggested it formed as a counterforce to Islamic movements that were solely reliant on sharia (Islamic law), while others point out that Sufism is actually built on sharia, but that other elements of faith, and namely *tariqa*, or the "path," were also emphasized (Malik, 2006). In addition, Sufism should not be seen as a "unified" position within Islam. A wide range of thoughts and beliefs exist within the historical and current positions of Sufis and Sufi orders, and often these positions either influenced or were influenced by other frameworks and ideas (Malik, 2006: 3).

Early Western interpretations of Sufism saw it as a lifestyle that was often compared to that of "Catholic monks . . . [who were] known for their solitary way of life" (Ernst, 1997: 3), because of the practitioners' dismissal of the material world. Sufi definitions have also included the terms "pure" and "wool" since it was said that Sufis would dress in wool "cloaks" to further indicate their "poor" life (Fadiman & Frager, 1997), although others suggest that mystics did not commonly wear wool in Islam (Lings, 1977: 46). Nevertheless, this notion of a "poor" life

associated with Sufism was not specifically related to material wealth, but rather spiritual poverty, most notably the idea that a person has nothing, and thus needs God for everything (Fadiman & Frager, 1997). The importance of the concept of poverty in the original Sufi context was therefore more in-depth than the European interpretations of the customs of Sufi life, since Sufis believed that being poor reflected the importance of needing God (Ernst, 1997), particularly since one of the main goals of a person on the Sufi path is to become completely attached to God, and some take steps to detach themselves from the world so as to become solely reliant on God (Nasr, 2007). In fact, some suggest that the Sufi movement actually arose in opposition to what many saw as increased materialism in the early years of the Muslim community after the death of the Prophet Muhammad. Specifically, this movement positioned itself away from "[t]his ostentatiousness and display of wealth [that] were seen by those in power as a way to legitimize their position and beliefs" (Degorge, 2005: 24).

Thus, along with such understandings of Sufism, other terms for Sufism include "dervish," which translated from Persian means "from door to door" (Fadiman & Frager, 1997: 3). This term was used for Sufis because of their habits of going to homes and asking for food, which is indicative of their simple lifestyle (Fadiman & Frager, 1997). However, Sufism further developed into more structured group organizations (understood as *tariqas*) that were often headed by a spiritual leader, often called a sheikh or *pir*. It was here that individuals would have access to spiritual knowledge, and where they were able to practice exercises in their spiritual development (Degorge, 2005). As we will see later, the role of *tariqas* and Sufi spiritual leaders becomes important in the politics of the different regions. However, we must remember that in early Sufism, while the sheikh had religious authority, a "systematic rule" did not exist (Ernst, 1992: 12).[1] It was only later that Sufi orders began to develop (Ernst, 1992).

Historical Perception of Sufism

Thus, while Sufism itself has taken on a number of characteristics as it has developed as a mental and spiritual framework, the perception of Sufis by non-Sufis from the "Muslim world" as well as from Europe has often incorrectly generalized their beliefs and activities, sometimes labeling Sufis under a very narrow definition or identification. For example, "[i]n modern times, European orientalists sometimes argued that Sufism was not really Islamic, basing themselves on an abstract definition of Islam that was often derived from the hostile context

of European colonialization of Islamic countries" (Ernst, 1992: 6). Furthermore, there existed a push to suggest that this notion of mysticism in Islam was alien to the faith, instead coming from other religious and philosophical sources (Ernst, 1992: 6). Others, in an attempt to identify what Sufism was, equated the religious philosophy with whirling dervishes (Ernst, 1997), taken from the whirling dervishes of the Mevlevi Sufi order that originated after the death of "Rumi. But while being poor and focusing solely on the need and reliance of God in one's life was esteemed in the early Sufi Islamic tradition, European travelers failed to give the Sufi lifestyle, along with the whirling of particular Sufis, an insightful religious explanation, and instead viewed the acts as "bizarre behavior" (Ernst, 1997: 4). Understandings of Sufism by orientalists were centered on the notion of the *fakir* (poor man) or dervish. In discussions about the areas that the colonial powers controlled, they would report on the actions of the dervishes, often labeling these individuals as "mad" (Ernst, 1997: 8).

This perception of Sufism was not only held by Europeans, however, as Sufism was also losing standing with Muslims in parts of the "Muslim world" such as Persia, where Shi'ism was taking hold (Ernst, 1997: 4). Sufism continued to be seen as a "deviation" from Islam by early colonizers who encountered Sufi poetry that emphasized actions such as drinking, which is seen as forbidden in Islam (Ernst, 1997). Sufi orders continued to be under persecution at the beginning of the 1800s when Sir John Malcolm, who was the ambassador to Persia for the British East India Company, built ties with the Shia religious leaders (or *ulama*) in Persia. This group, lead by Mahomed Ali, emphasized going after the Sufis whom they saw as ruining Islam because the Sufis were viewed as not living up to high "moral" standards (Ernst, 1997).

The criticism against Sufism has not been limited to historical cases. Challenges still exist today. Julia Day Howell and Martin van Bruinessen (2007) explain that one of the major issues with which Sufism has been charged—which is one of the underlying assumptions about Sufism—is that because of its heavy emphasis on spiritual matters, the ultimate objective being to reach the divine, there is little that Sufism can contribute to "social and economic development" (7). However, this is not the only current critique of Sufism. We find that many within the Muslim tradition also take issue with Sufism on a number of other matters. For example, critics of Sufism have been upset because Sufis were often willing to downplay the importance of custom and prescribed worship, instead suggesting that any form of prayer with God in mind was acceptable (Ernst, 1997). This sort of criticism

of Sufism is prevalent in Muslim societies to this day, since Sufism, while it is revered in some Muslim communities, is seen as "heretical" in many others (Fadiman & Frager, 1997: 7). Part of the reason for this "heresy" against Sufism, according to some Muslims, is because of what they see as "innovations" by Sufis in terms of what is "Islam." For example, "[r]eformists have regarded as particularly objectionable the Sufis' repetitive *dhikr* litanies, which can facilitate ecstatic experiences, especially in extended group performances where people may punctuate their utterances with emphatic bodily movements or accompany them with dance" (Day Howell & van Bruinessen, 2007: 7). However, the criticism is not only limited to what is seen as Sufi practices that are "not Islam." Some scholars have also taken issue with Sufi orders themselves, and in particular the idea that a particular spiritual leader is necessary for the growth and development of an individual on the path to God. Along with this, some have suggested that certain practices of Sufi orders have been hidden from the outside, and this has further upset some non-Sufi Muslims (Day Howell & van Bruinessen, 2007).

Examining the persecution of Sufism in historical as well as modern contexts is relevant because of the tension that exists between Sufi interpretations of Islam by those who adhere to a "puritanical" interpretation of Islam, and those who view any other readings of the Quran as a "threat" to their control of what they have attempted to brand as "true" Islam. "Fundamentalists" view Sufism as completely opposite to their position of Islam (Ernst, 1997: 212–213). In fact, we have seen increased persecution of Sufis in modern-day Muslim countries such as the Islamic Republic of Iran, in which there have been "clashes" between Sufis and "more orthodox traditions of Islam" (Esfandiari, 2006: 1). But despite the increased persecution of Sufis, there are many Sufi orders (or *tariqas*) (Voll, 2009) around the world, which are often founded for a number of different reasons. While many orders are established because a particular individual has a following, other orders may be founded based on a particular attitude or action (such as orders based on "fasting") (Voll, 2009: 218). Some of the larger Sufi orders include the Qidiriya, Naqshbandi, Chishtiya, and Tijaniyah orders (Willis, 2009), while other Sufi orders such as the Bektashiye and Mevleviye orders are also popular (Godlas, 2009).

Sufism and Worldly Detachment

A key point within the examination of Sufism and its relation to politics is the question of Sufi perspectives on the material world, and namely

the belief that the Sufi aims to create distance between her-/himself and the world. This idea, which suggests that the Sufi is detached, is important, as this perception plays a key role in what current misconceptions about Sufism and politics are built upon. When one is talking about the view of Sufi philosophy, it must be recognized that a main objective within this religious approach is this understanding that "Sufism concerns itself with the relation of the soul to the other (i.e., nonmaterial) world" (Heck, 2007b: 149). This idea of Sufi "asceticism" (Afzaal, 2005) is critical in Sufi thought, and is often seen in mainly two different lights. On the one hand, not only can this asceticism help one increase her/his spiritual state but it can also serve as a foundation for consciousness in regard to ideas such as the need to protect the environment (Afzaal, 2005). On the other hand, some have the concern that "[i]n its extreme manifestation, asceticism can lead to an excessive otherworldliness and withdrawal from the world—an attitude that could lead to a disregard for the concrete social and ecological reality in favor of person union with the divine" (Afzaal, 2005: 1605). Nevertheless, thinkers have discussed the idea of asceticism in an attempt to understand effective ways for Sufis to "remove the veils" and arrive closer to this goal, namely the Divine. Because the objective of the Sufi was to reach God, "this world was thus seen as a threat to one's salvation, making it necessary to renounce it as an abode of temptations" (152), as Paul Heck (2007b) explains.

Consideration of the connection that a Sufi should have with the world is not new, but rather, has been a highly discussed topic within the evolution of Sufi thought. For example, some of the historical Muslim mystics advocated the removal of the individual from any world concerns, which included "power," in order to truly become closer to God (Awn, 1983). Such mystics often had the belief that internally the human was good, but that the outside world, the material world, was a hindrance, often coming between the Sufi and her/his goal of reaching God. In fact, this emphasis on the value of the material world was not lost in Islam (Awn, 1983: 245). In an examination of the historical literature of Sufi attitudes toward the material world, sufficient evidence exists to suggest that, while it was not universal by any means to believe that one had to remove oneself from the world, that some did hold the position that the world was a negative insofar as one wanted to attain God. Peter Awn (1983), in a detailed analysis of this question, shows the attitudes that early thinkers held about the material world. For example, Hasan al-Basri, in a communication with the political leader Caliph 'Umar Ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, expressed his concern for the material world by saying,

> Beware of this world with all weariness; for it is like a snake, smooth to the touch, but its venom is deadly. . . . For this world has neither worth nor weight with God; so slight it is, it weighs not with God so much as a pebble or a single clod of Earth; as I am told, God has created nothing more hateful to Him than this world and from the day He created it He has not looked upon it, so much He hates it. (from Arberry, 1950: 33–34, in Awn, 1983: 245)

Awn (1983) has found that in other areas of the world some Sufis compared the material world to "a rotting corpse with a dog (i.e., the devil Iblis) perched on top" (245), or, in the case of Ibrahim Ibn Adham, saw issues of family, as well as power, as highly problematic in regard to the ultimate objectives of the Sufi on the path of God (245).

However, many Islamic thinkers (even within the Sufi tradition) have been quite critical of the idea that Sufis must be disengaged from the current world. For example, "[Bediuzzaman Said] Nursi . . . opposes the Sufi disdain for the world" (Kuru & Kuru, 2008: 106). More specifically,

> [w]hen asked about the Naqshibandi method of discarding all worldly things, he rejected it. A questioner asked Nursi whether it was necessary to give up this world in order to reach the knowledge of God and human perfections, as the Sufi orders instructed. Nursi noted that if a human being consisted of only a heart, it would be necessary to renounce everything other than God, but human beings have many senses such as a mind, ego, and soul. (Kuru & Kuru, 2008: 106)

These feelings toward Sufism are not limited to historical cases. In fact, we have seen the position held by "revivalists," who believe that Sufism is not concerned with issues in the world (Afzaal, 2005: 1604). For this reason, they do not believe that Sufis have any interest in politics (Afzaal, 2005). And since, according to Sufis, their ultimate objective is God, even some contemporaries have interpreted their actions and goals as not focusing on the here and now. Sufism itself emphasizes helping individuals through any difficulties in this life, aiming to elevate a person beyond such concerns. However, this does not mean that a person has to turn her/his back on this life (Nasr, 1972). Sayyed Hossein Nasr (1972) explains that a range of tools can be used to get an individual closer to God. Specifically,

> [i]n order to express its truths Sufism can make use and has made use of every legitimate means, from weaving to archery, from architecture to

> music, and from logic to traditional theosophy (hikmat-I ailahu). The goal of Sufism is to lead man from the world of from to the world of the Spirit; but since man lives in the world of form and at the beginning of the spiritual path is not detached from it, by means of this very world of form Sufism turns his attention towards the spiritual world. (2)

Nasr (1972) has also discussed in detail how things such as music can be used to help bring Sufis closer to God. Thus, it is not too difficult to think of Sufis as using the political sphere, whether in terms of human rights or other approaches related to social justice, both theoretically as well as practically to become closer to God (Muedini, 2010). There is no reason why the Sufi must renounce this life. Instead, s/he can find benefit from the different activities if that allows her/him to become closer to "the next world." In fact, many Sufis have felt that "one's involvement in the world should be only to the extent that it foster's one's progress along the Path" (Awn, 1983: 246). Within this, the belief is that "[d]etachment leads to a renewed freedom since one is master of one's psychological and emotional needs. Instead of being the pawn of his or her human instincts, the Sufi is able to employ both interior strengths and the world of creation to foster continued progress" (Awn, 1983: 246). It is along this line that many Sufi spiritual leaders advocate living in the world and dealing with possessions and so forth, namely, having an interest in them, but only in such a way as they help one grow spiritually (Azhaal, 2005).

Therefore, to say that Sufis are not concerned with the material world is to overlook a slew of evidence. Heck (2007b) explains just how involved past Sufi leaders were in a range of daily affairs, many of which were quite connected to politics, when he says that

> Although focused on other-worldly sanctity, Sufism has had important socio-political dimensions. The saints of Islam have been both counselors and challengers of sultans, at times extending their blessing to legitimate rule and at other times asserting their spiritual authority over the temporal powers of the day. In tribal society, as personages standing above clan interests, they have proven effective mediators of conflict, whereas in villages and cities, they are moral figures whose distance from corrupt politics earns them the trust of the people, allowing them to act as a facilitating link between society and government (thus making sense of the state to the local populace). A saint's followers can function as a realm of their own and thus a force with which other groups, government and nongovernmental alike, have to contend in negotiating interests, values, and balance in society. (150)

This discussion becomes important later in the present book in relation to the examination of Sufism and politics.

Sufi Orders and the Sheikh

One other point that needs addressing before we move to the discussion of Sufism, politics, and government actions toward Sufism is the organizational structure of orders, as well as the important role of the sheikh, or spiritual leader. Sufi institutions have served as a central locale in which individuals carry out religious rituals (Ernst & Lawrence, 2002) or congregate with others. The makeup and organizational structure of most orders begins with the leaders or sheikhs. Those who follow the sheikh are the *murids*, or disciples. The orders operate through the sheikhs, who not only provide the spiritual instruction within the orders but also deal with relations with those outside of the order. For example, the Sufi sheikh will often engage with political leaders. As I shall discuss later, the sheikh, through a *silsila*, or chain of genealogy to the initial founder of an order (Ernst & Lawrence, 2002: 19), has a high authority within the Sufi group. And because of this influence, followers often give themselves to the sheikh, adhering to her/his spiritual instructions. In fact, as has been argued, "[i]t is hard to overestimate the importance of this relationship. Manuals of practice and discipline contain extensive discussions of how the discipline is to behave with respect to the master . . . " (19). Thus, in these orders, many of the decisions clearly come from the shakyh, with adherents following them, but usually only after an initiation into the order (Ernst & Lawrence, 2002). Furthermore, the sheikh or a trusteeship often controls any donations that come to the order (Ernst & Lawrence, 2002).

In fact, the Sufi leader is a critical concept in the historical (and modern-day) practice of Sufism, and as we shall see, also in relation to politics. In order to fully understand the relationship between political leaders and Sufi groups, we have to first examine the role and importance of the Sufi leader, since the esteemed status of a Sufi sheikh is a reason why political leaders often even approach Sufi groups. As I will discuss later, political leaders have often courted Sufi leaders for reasons that include increased influence, as well as the desire to gain additional respect and legitimacy. The terminology for labeling a Sufi leader varies. Terms such as sheikh, *baba*, or *pir*, which can be defined as a religious "elder" or *mauwlana* (master), are often used (Buehler, 1998: xxiii). In many other cases, Sufi leaders are often seen as *awliya' allah* (or "friends of God") (Ernst, 1997: 58). This term for Sufi leaders has often been

translated to mean "saint" (Ernst, 1997: 58; Rozehnal, 1997: 40). These sheikhs or *pirs* are the leaders of the Sufi order (Shryock, 2009), and serve as "a spiritual leader and guide . . . " (377). In many Sufi orders, the *pir* will often have a number of students or "disciples" who follow her/his spiritual advice and guidance. The role of the saint is prevalent in many of the Sufi orders that exist. Those who are viewed as being a Sufi saint are believed to have a very close relationship with God. In terms of understanding a Sufi saint's position and role, Robert Rozehnal (2007) explains that "[t]he *wali Allah* [friend of God] combines piety and sanctity with power and authority. Though he lives, works, and worships in the world, the Sufi saint is unbound from the laws of nature by virtue of his intimacy with God" (43). Sufi leaders have been perceived as aids for individuals on their path toward God. Much of the belief in these "special" individuals who have a heightened state of awareness toward God or the Ultimate Reality arises from *hadiths*, of which Muhammad is believed to have said "that there is a special class of servants of God, often numbered as 356, upon whom the maintenance of the world rests, though they remain unknown to the world" (Ernst, 1997: 60).

In terms of how Sufi leaders are perceived by Muslims, it is important to note that many Sufi leaders do not suggest their influence and status is above the messengers of God. The separation and order (namely, messengers of God, followed by Sufi leaders) have been made clear throughout the history of Islam (Ernst, 1997). But while many Sufi Muslims do not see Sufi leaders as prophets, they do highly revere the saint. *Pirs* or *sheikhs* are often seen as possessing vast spiritual knowledge, which they have received either through extensive prayer and contemplation, by "inherit[ing] their spiritual power from either a pious Sufi ancestor, or from their connection to the shrine of a past Sufi" (Shyrock, 2009: 378). As noted, the reason why Sufi saints are so respected is that, while many of them live among other humans, they are also said to take on an "ideal state" (Kugle, 2006: 29) that all individuals do not attain. Thus, saints are spiritual examples for other human beings, as saints have conquered temptation and sin, and those who have not reached that point believe that they too can ultimately reach this goal (Kugle, 2006). Scott Kugle (2006) explains the relationship between the individual who has not reached sainthood, and the role of the saint in this endeavor, comparing it to individuals watching a show. He says,

> As in a theater, the interaction between the audience's hopeful expectation, the hidden light source, and the actors' gestures become fused as images on a screen. These images are mythic; they are neither real (in

> the sense of social-historical fact) nor unreal (in the sense of the meaningless lie). The images allow people to live out a drama through which they create meaning in their lives, meaning witnessed as outside the self but which emerges from deep within the self. The difference is that in cinema, the audience can never become the screen. In the theater of Sufism, the audience can become the screen because the medium is not mechanical but rather social, and the driving power is not electricity but the dynamics of human consciousness. Through mystical experience, spiritual discipline, and the social interaction to which it gives rise, Sufis can hope to become realized saints, who are saints-become-real in the eyes of others. At the individual level, achieving recognition as a saint is rare; its causes are subtle and its results are open to contention. However, at the level of society, the presence of saints is common, consistent, and predictable, as observed by William James. (29)

And it is this notion of sainthood that brings about a strong power dynamic. The saint takes on this authority. Thus, along with the teachings and sayings of the saint, the body of the saint itself as well as material objects that the saint has come across, can all bear additional significance (Kugle, 2006). Again, while the follower of the saint hopes to emulate the saint's actions, in order to reach this spiritual level her-/himself, others continue to admire the power and position of the saint, even if they are aware that they cannot reach the same spiritual state (Kugle, 2006).

Given the importance of the saint in Sufism, it is therefore also necessary to examine the "process of sainthood." In terms of how individuals and groups recognize who has reached this "saintly" status, the process is not as direct as what one might see in Catholicism (Ernst, 1997: 59). As Carl Ernst (1997) points out, a major issue within the discussions pertaining to sainthood is the question of who is actually a saint. A number of historical texts have suggested that humans cannot know who is a saint: "the saints are known only to God" (62). Thus, in order to "observe" a saint, the role of Sufi biographies becomes ever so important (Ernst, 1997; Rozehnal, 2007). Some of the first recordings of this nature occurred in the 900s (a.c.). In these biographies about the Sufi masters, a history of their teachings, anecdotes, stories, and spiritual prescriptions are often included (Rozehnal, 2007). What is found in these writings is both an emphasis on the history of the life of the individual (many take the form of stories about the Sufi master that were often set within a spiritual message or within a point that highlights "the spiritual power of the saint" [Ernst, 1997]), as well as key statements the person made regarding spiritual matters (Ernst, 1997).

Another way in which the power of Sufi leaders has often been illustrated is to bring forth how they used such powers, which would take the form of their performing miracles (Ernst, 1997; Shyrock, 2009) "and [the ability] to confer the blessings" (Shyrock, 2009: 378). Miracles have served to play a key role as a mechanism of recognizing and accepting sainthood for an individual, and are often used as one point of relation between Sufi leaders and historical prophets of Islam (Renard, 2008: 95). Some of these miracles "can include such unusual abilities as thought-reading, healing the sick, reviving the dead, controlling the elements and animals, flying, walking on water, shape-shifting, and bilocation" (Ernst, 1997: 68).[2,3] Some (although not necessarily common) stories about Sufi sheikhs have suggested that such individuals have had the ability to provide food for those who are hungry, in cases in which food was not present (Renard, 2008). John Renard (2008) cites an example of this, explaining,

> [i]n one story, as Abu 'Abd Allah ar-Rammad walks toward the seashore, apparently intent on performing his ablutions for prayer, he instead walks across the water. He spreads out his prayer rug on a rock and utters something. After one fish jumps onto the rug, the shaykh says that one fish is not enough, whereupon nine more fish surrender themselves one at a time—and then another three jump onto the rug. As the shaykh prepares to return to shore, one of his disciples suddenly appears behind him. Rammad asks how the man found him there, and the follower explains that he merely traced the leader's steps. For the sake of the disciple, the shaykh explains, God provided three more fish than usual. The disciple then tells a surprised Rammad that he will only accept the cooked fish. Though the shaykh finds the demand audacious, he assures the disciple that God will respond. Soon another disciple appears at the first follower's house with three cooked fish. (101–102)

Along with the "Friends of God" being able to perform miracles, many Sufi leaders have also been attributed a number of other special characteristics that further heighten their persons. For example, we find in hagiographies that the "[f]riends of God invariably have the protection of divine power, which is often revealed in relatively mundane settings" (Renard, 2008: 95). For example, John Renard (2008) cites a story related to the Muslim Sufi mystic Rabia in order to illustrate how such powers were often associated with such leaders.

> In one delightful story, a thief enters Rabi'a's room intent on making off with her mantle. Attempting to exit, the thief can no longer find the

> door. He puts down the garment and again sees his way out. Seven times he attempts unsuccessfully to make his getaway, but a voice informs him that he is wasting his time, for even Satan does not dare to test the divine protection around this woman. (98)[4]

The importance of the Sufi saint can also extend far beyond the person's death. Sufi shrines are often erected at burial sites of saints. This has been a major point of contention by some Muslims who view such actions as *haram* (prohibited) in Islam (Ernst, 1997) because such tombs are seen as elevating individuals to an almost God-like status through the setting up of shrines, as well as when followers offer supplications and prayer at the tomb of the saint (Ewing & Mannan, 2009). They do not agree with the idea that some hold, which is that the deceased saint has the ability to intercede for the said individual (Ernst, 1997). Because of the significance given to this idea of intercession by many followers of saints, although a pilgrimage to Mecca is one of the five pillars of Islam (an expectation that able-bodied Muslims carry out), pilgrimages to the tombs of deceased spiritual figures can also be commonplace (Ernst, 1997).[5,6] However, as this book will discuss in greater detail, these religious sites have also served various political functions.

It is against this background of Sufism and the Sufi sheikh that we should approach the notion of politics as is relates to Sufism. For the weight of Sufism as more than a religious force in society has been and still is quite prevalent. The Sufi order, and specifically the saint, not only possesses the ability to influence individuals' religious behavior but also can organize and move individuals socially and politically. Therefore, this explains why political leaders are often concerned about the role of Sufi sheiks, and why they have expended large amounts of time and resources to suppress the role of the sheikh (and the Sufi order) either by offering incentives that might enable an increased public relationship to form between the religious and political leaders, or attempting to illuminate their positions of religious authority by taking some of the political, societal, and religious influence away from Sufi orders through a variety of measures.

But along with the state's approach toward Sufi sheiks, the Sufi leaders themselves are not without specific interests. Keeping this in mind will help us when examining the Sufi-state relationship. Not only the government benefits from these alliances. Sufis also have specific goals. In the case of Sufi sheikhs, working with the government can provide certain benefits to them and their order. As I will show, many of them are very interested in publicizing and expanding their order in

civil society. Thus, using the state and its resources can be beneficial in accomplishing such goals. Moreover, the Sufi leaders themselves may have other interests in promoting the faith. Namely, they may need to maintain their reputation as an important religious figure in society. For as Villalon (1994) explains, while "[i]t is undeniable that *marabouts* [or sheikhs] carry great weight, . . . it is also crucially important to note that their clout is neither unlimited nor guaranteed. The maintenance of *maraboutic* status requires constant attention to legitimating and reinforcing the bases of that status, and their role in facilitating this process is an important function served by the rituals which marabouts sponsor" (417). Thus, these religious leaders often try to find ways to sustain and, if possible, increase the number of adherents they have (Villalon, 1994: 417). One way to do this is through the establishment and continuation of religious ceremonies (Villalon, 1994). And thus, as I will argue, the specific Sufi groups that work with the government in their respective state are given opportunities to practice religious ceremonies and to care for Sufi shrines. This helps them in that they are now able to engage in practices that have historically (in some cases) been banned by the state, whether it was due to a negative reputation of the shrines or to secular movements within the state. And by allowing the shrines to serve as religious sites, this in turn increases their religious influence in society.[7]

Sufism and Politics

As previously alluded to, an underlying assumption of Sufism that many people hold is the idea that Sufis are apolitical, and thus not concerned with either political power or with those who govern politically. Part of this outlook has stemmed from Sufis' asceticism and disregard for material matters, which includes politics, as discussed previously. Paul Pinto (2003: 2) explains that "Sufis are usually portrayed as quietest and non-political forces" (citing Gellner, 1993: 57–59), or as simple instruments of state domination (citing Luizard, 1991: 29). In fact, the idea of governments using Sufism or Sufi orders for political purposes existed in some areas well before September 11, 2011.

But while some may espouse such beliefs about Sufism and Sufis, the notion that Sufis show little concern for politics in order to only focus on spiritual matters has little support (Islam, 2002, in Rozehnal, 2004; Pinto, 2003; Safi, 2011).[8] For example, Sufi orders have had a long history of involvement in politics and community affairs (Heck, 2007a) that include specific political campaigns against colonialism

and authoritarian regimes (Heck, 2007a; Pinto, 2003: 2). Historical Sufi movements have not only been political in nature but they often challenged the colonial powers directly. By understanding the history of Sufi political movements, one can hope to further address the misconception that Sufi Muslims are "apolitical." Now, it must be noted that no single approach by Sufis regarding politics was taken. In order to have a clear understanding of the relationship between Sufis and political leaders (and politics itself), it is necessary to make a detailed and case-by-case examination.[9] What is particularly interesting regarding a discussion of Sufism and politics is the relationship between the political state and Sufi leaders and their orders, for as political leaders, the Sultans were often attempting to ensure political power (and loyalty) among those whom they were governing (or attempting govern). The Sultans became aware of (or paid attention to) the position of the *shakyh*s and the power (and not limited to just religious power) that they had. As we shall see, political leaders have often attempted to influence Sufi leaders for political interests. Moreover, as this book will show, this is far from limited to historical events. Political leaders are attempting to use Sufism for political and religious power today. Thus, because of this need to recognize the power of Sufi leaders (and the various actions of Sultans that resulted from this recognition), Sufis and Sufi leaders often

> Responded cautiously and even suspiciously to the overtures of the sultans, and their attitude toward royal sponsorship varied considerably. On the one hand, some Sufis sought to influence the sultanate to make it genuinely Islamic in character, but others on the other hand opposed the injustice of the kings and tried to avoid having contact with rulers whose wealth was illegally extorted from the people. (Ernst, 1992: 15)

We find that Sufis were often some of the most critical of their political leaders' actions in terms of following Islam personally, as well as their harmful policy decisions (Ernst, 1992).

But while this was often (although clearly not always) the case,[10] a more developed relationship between political and Sufi leaders occurred later. In fact, many Sufi leaders and orders often purposely avoided criticizing their ruler leaders, and in some cases advocated adherence to their leaders, similar to religious adherence to God (Ernst, 1992). Thus, historically, the influence of Sufi leaders needs to be understood at least partly in the context of the political structure that existed. For example, as Sufi leaders continued to become more influential as a religious

voice—attracting adherents to their respective orders, political sultans at the time began to take notice. And in order to build their relationship with Sufi leaders, they would often offer political and economic benefits to Sufi places of worship. They would attempt to identify closely with Sufis in order to receive the perceived benefits that resulted from this association (Ernst, 1992). Therefore, Sufi leaders and Sufi followers were not unaware of politics at that time. The idea of detachment by all Sufis is not only misleading but clearly incorrect.

Not only did Sufi groups play a role in the anticolonial movements that existed in many Muslim-majority states, but often, these groups survived when other political leaders were removed from power upon the arrival of the colonialists (Ernst, 1997). And because of this, the colonial powers knew the influence that the Sufi groups held in society (Ernst, 1997). Moreover, Sufis also participated in "call[ing] for equality and democracy" (Werbner, 1996: 116), and specifically have had a history of political influence in places such as Morocco (Mojuetan, 1981; Zeghal, 2009), where the Nasiriyya Sufi orders played an influential role in trade (Gutelius, 2002), along with Sufi groups that fought against outside forces in Morocco, in Lebanon (Hamzeh & Dekmejian, 1996), and in Senegal (O'Brien, 1975, in Ellis & ter Haar, 1998; Glover, 2007, in Clark, 2009), as well as in Syria (Weismann, 2005). But these are far from the only examples of Sufi political activity. An examination of the cases of Sudan and Libya provides further evidence to illustrate the level of Sufi involvement in politics.

In the Sudan, the Mahdiyya order was key in the fight against the Ottoman Empire (and specifically Egypt) and Britain (al-Shahi, 1979; Collins, 2008). But in order to understand the Mahdiyya movement's actions in establishing a political campaign, one must first look at the context within which the anticolonialists were operating in politically. Sudan was invaded by Muhammad Ali, the Governor of Egypt, which was then under the territorial control of the Ottoman Empire, beginning in 1820 (Collins, 2008).[11] Ali had a number of interests in the Sudan, one of which was to establish a slave army with the goal of furthering development in Egypt. But this was not all, as Ali, along with his descendants, were also interested in gold, ivory, and access to the Nile River. In fact, Muhammad Ali made a set of agreements with Britain regarding access to ivory (Collins, 2008), which led to Britain's moving into the Sudan (in and around Khartoum) with the goal of acquiring ivory. During the time of Egyptian and British control of the Sudan (and in this case particularly the North), most of the resources were concentrated in Khartoum and areas within close proximity of the

city. This was at the expense of areas in Southern and Western Sudan (including but not limited to Darfur).[12]

And as outside actors had extensive control of the political system in the region, during this time they often ignored the interests of many in order to pursue their own political desires. Moreover, because of the policies that often primarily benefited British and Egyptian leaders, frustrations began to set in, in the Sudan. At that time, a number of rebellion movements formed. Some of the organizations that fought against the colonial system in the Sudan were Sufi groups (Matt, 2006). One of the main (and arguably most successful) anticolonial movements was the "Mahdiyya" movement, led by Muhammad Ahmed. Ahmed himself, like many people in Sudan, followed Sufi Islam. He belonged to the Samaniyyah Sufi group, or *tariqa* (Holt, 1958; Matt, 2006), and for years studied under Sheikh Muhammad Sharif Nur al-Da'im, who was a grandson to Sheikh Ahmad al-Tayyib, who founded the Sammaniyya Sufi order (37).[13] Furthermore, in the case of Ahmed, not only did he help in organizing political opposition to Egyptian and British control of Sudan but he was also successful in establishing political control of Sudan, in which he set up an Islamic government from 1885 to 1898 (Matt, 2006).

Regarding the importance of Sufism in the thinking of the Mahdi in the Sudan, Aharon Layish (1997) explains that

> The Sufi background of the Mahdi may have also have contributed to his legal reformism, as most of the revival movements of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were associated one way or another with a tariqa tradition. There seems to be a causal connection between the Mahdi's legal reformism and his association with a Sufi tariqa, the Sammaniyya. The new Sufi Tariqas put special emphasis on adherence to the Prophet's virtues (al-takhalluq bi-akhlaq al-nabi) and even claim to have met the Prophet in person, as in the case of the Mahdi, which may perhaps explain the growing interest in the study of Prophetic Hadiths characteristic of revivalist movements. (45)

Furthermore, it has been noted that some individuals who were interested in becoming a disciple of the *shaykh* approached Ahmed to ask him to serve as their guide (Holt, 1958). However, it must still be noted that, following his declaration as being the Mahdi, Ahmed did attempt to reduce the power and influence of Sufi orders in the Sudan (Holt, 1958).

Nonetheless, there was so much concern about the Mahdi movement and Sufism in general spreading to other parts of the Sudan that the

British government in this case allowed non-Sufi interpretations (and groups) to operate in order to counteract any potential influence that the Mahdi movement had (Collins, 2008). The British were worried about Sufism even after they defeated the Mahdi movement and took control of Sudan in 1899 (Collins, 2008). It was at this time that a large amount of instability was evident, which Britain thought was due to Sufi Islam (Manger, 2002: 145). In response to this concern, "[t]he British administration developed a policy of support and encouragement of orthodox Islam, creating a Board of Ulema in 1901, building mosques, appointing judges (qa-dis) to judge according to *shari'a* law, and the like" (Warberg, 1971: 100, in Manger, 2002). Moreover, any potential Sufi challenge to British control of Sudan often resulted in harsh penalties that included, but were not limited to, the death of anyone involved in any such political activity (Manger, 2002). It was at this time that Sufism was actually seen as a "dangerous form of fanaticism" (Manger, 2002: 145), instead of the "moderate" and "tolerant" Islam that we often see associated with it today. In terms of the level of British concern about the Sufi groups' political actions and ability to counter their control of Sudan, it has been suggested that there was indeed a credible challenge to Britain's colonialist control throughout Sudan, as the Sufi opposition groups were not limited to one area within Sudan, but were active throughout much of the region. In fact, Leif Manger (2002) argues that

> [t]he Islamic brotherhoods did indeed turn out to be supra-tribal mass organizations, and the roles played by the Ansar of the Mahdist-based Umma Party and the Khatmiya of the Unionist Party in the politics of the Sudan should suffice as examples. The thin layer of British-made Sudanese clerics could not stop the spread of Sufi sects, nor attenuate their political importance. (146)

And while Sufism has continued to be influential in the Sudan, there has been a crackdown on Sufi organizations since Omar al-Bashir and Hassan Turabi took power (Manger, 2002: 147).

But as mentioned, Sufi groups as actors in anticolonial politics were not limited to Sudan. Another example of Sufi anti-colonialist movements is the Sanussi order in Libya. Regarding the history of colonialism in the region known today as Libya, the Ottoman Empire controlled much of this area in 1511, and then put a *pasha* in charge of the territory. The pasha himself garnered the support of the janissary military (St. John, 2008), a group that was seen as one of the elite fighting

forces not only in the Ottoman Empire but also throughout the world at that time (Cleveland & Bunton, 2008). The janissaries were unable to marry, invest in property, or become involved in trade, in order to continue their loyalty to the Sultan (although this began to shift later as the janissaries gained more strength and influence) (Cleveland & Bunton, 2008). In the case of Libya, the janissaries provided their military services to "whomever paid them the most" (St. John, 2008: 31). In terms of income for the different areas of Libya controlled by the Ottoman Empire, the Barbary corsairs played a key role in maintaining the financial stability of Tripoli. The corsairs made a living capturing states' boats on the Mediterranean, often with the intent of taking material possessions, some of which would then be given to the pasha who controlled Libya at the time (St. John, 2008). However, as the janissary army gained strength, it attempted also to influence the political system by aiming to establish its own representation in Libya. But the members of the army were not the only ones interested in political power. The corsairs also took an interest in establishing themselves as the political leaders of the territory (St. John, 2008: 33). With this, political fighting emerged among various groups, all of which wanted to administer the area.

These political struggles lasted until 1711, when a local military leader named Ahmad Karamanli established his authority over the region. The Ottomans would not officially re-establish authority in Libya until 1835. But while Karamanli did establish and expand his own influence over Libya, "[o]nce he had seized control, Karamanli immediately swore allegiance to the Ottoman sultan . . . " (St. John, 2008: 34). Having power, they were able to increase their finances through trade as well as by continuing the activity of the corsairs. However, "[i]n the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars, the European powers put an end to Barbary privateering" (St. John, 2008: 36). With the reduced income, the Karamanli dynasty began to increase taxes on a number of goods (St. John, 2008). This, however, led to increased political opposition throughout different parts of Libya. The outrage among individuals in Libya was heightened when Yusuf Pasha, the leader of Libya at the time, placed a special tax on the military. Then, the military attempted to remove him from power. Yusuf Pasha, fighting off local opposition, asked the Ottoman Empire for military support (St. John, 2008). Thus, in 1835, the Empire arrived with troops in order to thwart any military threat, and regained control of Libya (St. John, 2008).

One of the major challengers to colonial occupation in Libya was the Sanusi order, which was first established by Sayyid Muhammad

Ibn Ali al-Sanusi in 1842 in the city of Cyrenaica. The Sanusi Order, which was based on ideas of Sufism (St. John, 2008), was a group that advocated a return to the lifestyle lived during the time of Muhammad (Cleveland & Bunton, 2008). The Sanusi order gained popularity and influence throughout parts of Libya into the late 1800s by emphasizing the instruction in Islam, while setting up "rest houses for travelers along the trade and pilgrimage routes" on which the Sanusi Order was already established (St. John, 2008: 48). It must be noted, however, that while the Sanusi order had Sufi influences, the order cannot and should not be understood solely as a religious movement in Libya. The group has had a history of political involvement in Libya, which began during the Ottoman control of Libya. With their increased religious influence they came to play a broadened role in the making of laws and on issues of trade, even though their level of involvement was strongly strained by the Ottoman presence. The Sanusi order played a much more direct political role upon the Italian colonization of Libya, in which they attempted to challenge the Italian presence militarily. The resistance culminated with the establishment of "a Sanusi state and [a] declared *jihad* (holy war) on the Italian invaders in 1913 in the region of Cyrenaica" (St. John, 2008: 62). They were successful in negotiating control of large parts of inner Libya in 1916 and 1917 (St. John, 2008), and although new negotiations took place after World War I in attempts for Italy to control parts of Sanusi-Libya, tensions between the two continued, with the Sanusi order continuing to pose a political threat to the Italian political presence in Libya (St. John, 2008). The Sanusi order played an important role in fighting against Italy's goal of "reconquest" in the 1920s, and although Libya did come under the control of Italy, fighting by the Sanusi order continued into the late 1920s. Bruce St. John (2008) explains that it was in response to the Sufi resistance movement that Italy committed "what has been aptly termed a policy of genocide, emphasizing repression and terrorism in which men, women, and children were detained in large concentration camps, wells were blocked, and livestock slaughtered . . . " (72). This act of genocide took up to 70,000 lives (St. John, 2008: 73).

The Sanusi order continued its political activities when it helped Britain fight Italy during World War II. They members of the order thought that such actions would also help allow them to control their own territories in Cyrenaica after the war ended (which they held in 1947 with Sanusi Amirate) (St. John, 2008: 92), but were frustrated that the international community continued to debate a range of alternatives that included continued outside presence (specifically from the

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics [USSR] as well as Italy) in regard to the future of Libya (St. John, 2008). In terms of its political status, some members of the international community—through the United Nations—finally decided that Libya would be granted independence, which was realized in 1952 (St. John, 2008). With this new independence, the Sanusi leadership of King Idris took the main leadership position in Libya (Vandewalle, 2006). Thus even after independence, the Sanusi order continued to be highly influential in day-to-day affairs, posing a major politically entity in a post-independent Libya that had little centralized control (St. John, 2008; Vandewalle, 2006).

However, the role of the Sanusi order was reduced after Muammar Qaddafi's coup against King Idris al-Sanusi in 1969.

After coming to power, Qaddafi promoted non-Sufi Islam, while significantly reducing the activity of the Sufi group (Berkeley Center, 2011). Qaddafi, who had a history of attempting to influence religion in Libya (Athanasiadis, 2010), for years monitored the activity of religious groups—including Sufis—by controlling the funds of such groups, banning Sufi shrines from operating, and limiting the activity of these Sufi organizations, in the belief that they would pose a challenge to his political hold on power (Wehrey, 2011). Upon establishing political control of Libya in 1969, Qaddafi "dissolved the main brotherhoods and persecuted particularly fiercely the Sanussiyah order, which possessed extended charity and economic networks" (Athanasiadis, 2010), and which was a key organization in anticolonial efforts against Italy and their colonialism in Libya (Wehrey, 2011). However, Qaddafi later shifted his position, thus appealing to Sufism for specific political goals. A shift took place in Qaddafi's position on Sufism, in which he "bolster[ed] Sufi charitable networks as a buffer against radical Salafism" (Wehrey, 2011), due to a concern with an increase in Wahhabi interpretations in Libya. Specifically, some believe that the rise in Libyan fighters in Iraq, as well as the establishment of military training camps in Libya by violent Islamist groups such as the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat led Qaddafi to advocate Sufi Islam (Athanasiadis, 2010). In explaining the increase in attention paid to Sufism in Libya, Kahlifa Mahdaoui, a military officer, quoted in a 2010 *Global Post* article, said that [Qaddafi] "abolished the zawaya [Sufi prayer halls] but they're now rebuilding them because they realize Wahhabism failed and this is the only way to fight the influence of the U.S. . . . Sufism decreases passions while Wahhabism inflames them."

Qaddafi not only promoted Sufism to counter Islamist groups but also advocated Sufi thinking on asceticism in order to put up a challenge

to what he saw as the actions of "Western colonialism." Qaddafi, speaking about his ideas of "colonialism" and how he saw Islamic societies being attached to Western-made products, as well as a counterforce to Islamist groups in Libya, said,

> Because if we allow ourselves to pursue these and other needs we will be in need of them and their products. We will make ourselves a consumer market. So when Islam calls for Sufism, a rough life and asceticism, it is, in fact, a call which should make us come to our senses and be happy with less, with only the necessary and the good, so that we might be able to do without the many things which are not good for use and which might kill us and gives strength to the enemy . . . Sufism should spread. By Sufism, I do not mean dervishism. Sufism and its modern meaning are not clearly understood in the Islamic world. I do not mean here Sufism as it was portrayed in the old books. For me, Sufism, which is an essence of Islam, should spread. . . . In place of the spread of the veil and of preventing women from working, which means treating women with contempt and doubting their ability and their resistance in comparison with men, Sufism and Islamic principles should spread. It should spread instead of the misuse of religion, instead of the jugglery, distortion of religion, Muslim Brotherhood, Takfir Wal-Hijrah . . . and all other calls which have harmed Islam as much as Western Christian colonialism. (BBC, 1988)

Based on the examples briefly discussed above, it can be concluded that the importance of Sufism and Islam (Matt, 2006) in the history of political movements in countries such as the Sudan and Libya is quite evident. Such examples illustrate that "[t]he militancy of Sufi order in late colonial and contemporary contexts contrasts sharply with common attribution to Sufis of peace loving, tolerant, and inclusivist attitudes" (Day Howell & van Bruinessen, 2007: 10). Again, these are far from the only examples showing that Sufi movements have played a crucial role in politics. While this book examines how governments use Sufism for political reasons, we have seen in the history of Sufism examples in which governments took issue with Sufi groups, not so much because of their teachings, but more so because of the influence that they have had in the respective society. Specifically, governments were concerned about Sufi groups and their ability to attract citizen support. They were primarily concerned about "the strong bond of loyalty and commitment that typically develops between master and disciples in institutionalized Sufism, as well as the strong organization and motivation of Sufi centers, could be threatening to their political power" (Afzaal, 2005: 1605).

But while I have examined such historical cases of Sufi political involvement in an attempt to highlight the point already made by many others that Sufism indeed has been (and can be) tied to politics, political leaders have recently promoted Sufism as a political strategy for various reasons: the goal of some leaders is to promote Sufism with the intention of stopping any less tolerant interpretations of Islam from forming, which they view as the main cause of terrorism that is carried out in the name of Islam. Some do so to counter religious extremism, but it seems that they also do so because of a belief that Sufis will not be concerned about domestic politics, further emphasizing the divide between citizens and authoritarian leaders who hold power, whereas others associate Sufis with "good" and "nonproblematic" citizens. Others attempt to court the Sufis to further increase their own religious legitimacy. This book will examine a number of examples as to how and why leaders promote Sufism for what they see as effective political strategies, depending on their specific political context.

CHAPTER 2

Algeria: Abdelaziz Bouteflika, Sufism, and Authoritarianism

Sufism has had a strong presence in Algeria for centuries. One of the first appearances of Sufism in that country was related to Abū Madyan Shuʿaib al-Andalusī (Mackeen, 1971: 405), who traveled extensively to Morocco, as well as Mecca for religious study, and upon "his return to North Africa he made Bougie the centre of his activity until the year 594/1197, when the reigning Muwahhid sovereign Abū Yūsuf Yaʿqūb al-Mansūr (reg. 580–595/1184–1199), disconcerted by the growing popularity of this preacher, ordered his transfer to Marrakesh for trial" (406). Sufi orders continued to grow extensively after this time, with a number of orders established throughout North Africa from the 1500s onward (Andezian, 2002).

One of the larger Algerian Sufi orders, the Tijāniyya Sufi order, was established by Ahmed b. Muhammad al-Tijāni (Wright, 2005). Al-Tijānī moved to Fez, Morocco, in 1799 due to the Ottoman invasion (Benaissa, 1997). The Tijāniyya had (and still have) a large following throughout North Africa (Seesemann, 2009). Sufi groups such as the Tijāniyya were a main force against the colonial efforts of France in Algeria. But they were not the only ones to play a role in the political landscape in the region. In the early1800s, one of the first Sufi-led resistance movements appeared, headed by Emir ʿAbd al Qadīr of the Qādiriyya order (Ruedy, 2005). In 1834, an agreement was established between the French government and ʿAbd al Qadīr, giving him control over parts of Western Algeria. However, the fighting between these two actors continued, and ʿAbd al Qadīr eventually lost control to France, and was captured in 1847 (Ruedy, 2005: 65). What is interesting to

note about these events is the way in which the French government attempted to use 'Abd al Qadīr's name for political purposes after his capture. As John Ruedy (2005) explains,

> [t]hroughout the colonial period, the French were at considerable pains to manipulate the legacy of 'Abd al Qadīr in such a way as to limit its value for Algerian reformers or nationalists. One line of this manipulation focused on what appear to have been the Amir's rather good relations with the French after he left for the Near East: his friendship with Napoleon III, the contention that the resistance leader in his later years believed the French occupation to be beneficial for Algeria, and in particular the claim that he condemned the massive Kabylie insurrection of 1871. (65)

But even after 'Abd al Qadīr, the Sufi resistance to French colonialism continued into the late 1800s and 1900s. Omar Benaissa (1997) cites examples of Sufi sheiks who emphasized increasing the faith and "piety" of citizens during the time of colonialism, as this was seen as one aspect of anticolonial resistance, explaining that "[t]his piety . . . was the best form of the [defense] against the more insidious, because less visible, forces of the secularization that underlay the French *mission civilistrice*; colonialism as stressed at the outset, was not just an assault on external liberty, it was, much more, an attack on the traditional Muslim mentality and way of life."

However, not all Sufis were opposed to French activities in Algeria. For example, some within the Tijāniyya order continued to maintain a relationship with political leaders of the state, and in the case of the 1900s in Algeria, with the French colonial power (Seesemann & Soares, 2009). For example, France attempted to shore up support from Muslims in their colonies during both World War I and World War II, with a goal of establishing backing from Sufi leaders during these periods of time (Seesemann & Soares, 2009: 94–95). One major Sufi leader who had a close relationship with the French government was Sidi Benamor, a leading figure in the Tijāniyya order. The French government, aware of "Sidi Benamor's known pro-French proclivities" (Seesemann & Soares, 2009: 98), allowed him to travel to other areas of North Africa to meet with fellow Tijāni Sufis. They backed this trip because of a belief that their having ties to Sidi Benamor would help in terms of continuing their work as a colonial power in areas of heavy resistance. Rudiger Seesemann and Benjamin Soares (2009) say that "Sidi Benamor seems to have been traveling on a semiofficial mission,

at least in French colonies" (99). Thus, this trip benefited France since some speeches given by Sidi Benamor were quite supportive of French actions, and ran counter to many of the anticolonialist movements (Seesemann & Soares, 2009).

Following colonialism, the Sufis were mostly pushed out of any control of power due to the rise of Salafi influence in Algeria (Andezian, 2002). But while Sufi leaders may have had limited direct access to national governance, Sufi orders were still prevalent in Algeria, continuing to function as religious institutions (Andezian, 2002). L.P. Fauque (1961) (in Trimingham, 1971: 256) reported that the Khalwatiyya, the Shādhiliyya, and the Qādiriyya orders combined had a total of 500,000 adherents, whereas other figures suggest that right before independence (in 1961), it was believed that four of the larger Sufi groups (Khalwatiyya, Shādhiliyya, Qādiriyya, and Khalwatiyya) had roughly 500,000 members (Benaissa, 1997). But despite their larger population figures, it was only after Houri Boumediene came to power that Sufi orders had more room to operate; some who were previously seen as a challenge to the government now had more freedoms within the state (Andezian, 2002). This was because after independence, the government aimed to severely restrict the influence of the Sufi brotherhoods. Part of the reason was due to the societal and political influence the state perceived the Sufi brotherhoods as having. Their worry led them to suppress such groups so that the state structure (and leadership) would not be challenged. Moreover, there were some within the National Liberation Front (FLN) government that saw the orders as not advancing society, but rather as "backwards and outdated" (Werenfels, 2011: 2). The government used examples of Sufis who did work with the French as evidence that they needed to be limited in power. And from this, they carried out a host of actions, with "Policies [that] ranged from nationalization of territories, the closing of religious and worldly schools run by the *zaouias*, prevention of pilgrimages of intimidation of members and the imprisonment of sheikhs" (Werenfels, 2011: 2). However, as I shall discuss shortly, the prevailing government attitudes toward Sufis changed drastically with the rise of Islamist groups in Algeria.

Islamism and the Algerian State

In the case of Algeria, the leading political party for decades was the FLN. The FLN was a highly popular organization that led the anticolonialist movement against France in Algeria. After independence, the FLN was the sole political party in the government. And while a number

of Islamists were initially associated with the FLN, their push for an increased Islamist agenda did not fare well within the FLN government. The FLN limited any political opposition—which included the Islamists—doing so through their reputation as the major anticolonialist force in Algeria. But while they were able to shut out Islamist groups, they also ensured that they (as the government) would not turn their backs on the role of Islam in independent Algeria, as the faith was an important part of the anticolonialist movement, particularly within the FLN organization. Therefore, a number of policies reflected the importance of Islam in society. For example, "[t]he 1963 constitution declared Islam the state religion and stipulated that the head of state must be a Muslim, principles reaffirmed in the 1977 constitution" (International Crisis Group, 2004a: 1). Furthermore, "[t]he government included a Ministry of Religious Affairs, which supervised the religious field, converting imams to salaried civil servants, establishing Islamic institutes to train religious officials, and taking responsibility for organizing the annual pilgrimage to Mecca" (International Crisis Group, 2004a: 2). Moreover, the government ensured religious leaders had influence in areas such as education, the military, and the press (International Crisis Group, 2004a: 7). But while the government attempted to establish control over politics (and Islam in politics)—often at the expense of Islamists—the restrictions on forming any political parties counter to the FLN further limited any direct action by the Islamists in terms of their entering into the electoral process as a direct challenge to the FLN (Boubekeur, 2008). Nevertheless, they did form an organization called Al Qiyam, although it "was dissolved, however, after it publicly denounced [Egyptian] President Gamal Abdel Nasser for executing Sayyid Qutb, who had been the leading thinker in the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, in August 1966" (Boubekeur, 2008: 4).

But despite the fate of Al Qiyam, political Islamist movements increased throughout the Middle East and North Africa in the late 1960s and 1970s. While some Middle Eastern and North African leaders actually encouraged Islamist groups in order limit the influence of secular and Marxist organizations (International Crisis Group, 2004a; Ruedy, 2005), many Islamist groups were viewed as problems, since they were highly outspoken against their respective governments, and capitalized on what they saw as the inability of the governments to carry out effective policies for their citizens. For example, in the case of the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, one reason for their increase in popularity stemmed from the decreased support of the Wafd party, which, while at one point it was the major anticolonialist party,

lost significant credibility when it became a part of the government at the behest of the British government. The Muslim Brotherhood gained credibility and support partly as a result of their continued criticism of the Wafd party (Munson, 2001). In fact, Islamists throughout the region gained supporters. John Ruedy (2005), explaining the reasons for the overall rise of Islamism in the region, says that

> This perception of failure cut to a considerable extent along generational lines. As older people rested on the laurels of victories past, younger people were looking for produce. Their dissatisfaction was reinforced by the fact that slow economic growth limited their upward mobility. Those who had made and profited from the revolution could not now make room for their own children, or at least for the children of those who had not profited. Unemployment, underemployment, and inappropriate employment were the greatest among the youth, most of whom ironically now boasted better education than their parents. Rapid urbanization and disconnection from networks that provided material and psychological support within the framework of unquestioned value systems begot alienation and bewilderment. Finally, political systems which almost universally failed to institutionalize mechanisms for voicing opposition, unwittingly left the mosques as the only forum for such expression. (241)

Thus, although often suppressed by their respective governments, political Islam was rising in political and social popularity. And even though the Islamists' political influence (in terms of forming official and recognized parties) was limited, in the case of Algeria (and elsewhere), they still retained their voice within society, and primarily at universities, where they built their influence throughout the 1960s and 1970s. For example, in Algeria, members of the former Al Qiyam organization were still involved in civil society, and particularly in mosques, as well as in higher education (Boubekeur, 2008). And although Islamist professors such as those associated with the Muslim Brotherhood were active in the universities in Algeria during the rule of Boumediene in the 1970s (Echeverria Jesus, 2004), the support and presence of Islamists was beginning to be seen within the student population in the late 1970s, and particularly in 1979, an influential year for the role of political Islam in the Middle East and North Africa. And it was around this time that violent confrontations between the government and Islamist organizations were developing (Ruedy, 2005).

For example, Islamists were targeting certain establishments that sold alcoholic drinks (Ruedy, 2005: 241), and they began to organize "street-side and other informal mosques" to highlight their message (Ruedy,

2005 : 241). The rise of Islamist groups intensified in the 1980s with a range of protests in Algiers and other areas within Algeria related to what was seen as ineffective economic policies, as well as Chadli Bendjedid and his government's inability to address the political concerns of citizens (Ruedy, 2005). Namely, political parties opposed to Bendjedid had no ability to operate within the political system as compared to the "single-party socialist regime" (Echeverria Jesus, 2004: 2) that existed. Therefore, the calls against the government by Islamists and other non-Islamist political actors came as a result of a history of military control in Algeria, led by the FLN, which, while once viewed as the most visible anticolonialist party in Algeria, now became one of the many authoritarian regimes of postindependence, often not allowing real political opposition to form (Bouandel, 2003). And because of such tension, in 1982, episodes of violence between Islamists and government forces burst forth at the universities. During this time, the Islamist groups were advocating the end of higher education for women, all the while calling for an Islamic state. It was the killing of a leftist student that led to hundreds of Islamists being arrested. These arrests brought protests by the Islamist groups both in 1982, and in 1984, when one of the major Islamist leaders, Sheikh Abdelatif Sultani, who was one of the individuals arrested in 1982, died in 1984. His funeral brought out thousands, with some supporters suggesting that as many as 400,000 people were present (Ruedy, 2005).

The Islamist groups were becoming a major problem for many within the government, but also for others who were against their notions of increased Islamization in society. Nevertheless, a number of Salafi Islamists devoted their attention to the advancement of issues that were viewed under the Islamization platform.[1] For example, family law, and particularly in relation to women's rights, was becoming a major point of political division in the early 1980s. After Bendjedid came to power, his government began to work on legislation related to a government-backed family law. However, initial movement on the issue was faced with challenges by feminist groups that were upset because the "commission [set to write the legislation] included no women . . . " (Ruedy, 2005: 242). Thus, heavy protests led to the defeat of the legislation. However, a few years later, in 1984, when additional attempts at presenting a family law were taking place in the government, the level of protest compared to 1981 was minimal. This was because some activists were serving jail sentences at the time of the introduction of the legislation. In addition, at this same time, an increasing role (and intimidation) of Islamists also existed[2] against those who took issue with a number of points of the law (which they felt did not provide equal

rights for women) (Ruedy, 2005). For example, Muslim women were not allowed to marry men who were non-Muslim. Furthermore, for a woman to be allowed to work, she was expected to have the support of a "guardian" (Ruedy, 2005: 243).

But while Islamists were becoming more influential as an opponent to the government, they were not the only ones who took issue with the policies and actions of Bendjedid and the FLN (Ruedy, 2005). Many Algerians were upset with the increased level of authoritarian control exercised by Bendjedid, along with what they saw as a lack of results from his five-year economic plans to reduce the national debt (which was $14,766,000,000, and which was affected by the decrease in oil prices in the mid-1980s, and when gross domestic product (GDP) growth levels "slowed and then turned negative" in 1987 and 1988). The high level of government control of the political system came to a head when, in 1988, mass protests took place against the government (Bouandel, 2003) in Semoule, Algeria (Echeverria Jesus, 2004). It was during these years that students and labor organizations protested what they saw as high unemployment, as well as difficulties in finding staple foods (Ruedy, 2005: 248). As a result, many began to organize labor strikes throughout the country. In response, the army used violence against the protesters, with over 500 persons killed (Bouandel, 2003).

In response to these events—and concerns about individuals moving to follow join radial groups (Evans & Phillips, 2007)—Bendjedid proposed political changes within a new constitution. One law that allowed for new political parties to form seemed to alter the political landscape, as many l parties organized following the reformed legislation (Evans & Phillips, 2007). Furthermore, he reduced the influence of the military, primarily moving them it from a political role. Moreover, the ability for individuals to speak about and protest political issues at least became embedded in the new law. This initially brought hope to a large number of Algerians, which was reflected in civil society. Martin Evans and John Phillips (2007) explain their reactions to these developments in Algeria during this time, saying that

> [v]isiting Algeria in 1989 and 1990, we were struck by the way in which people, particularly students, academics and journalists of the post-independence generation, were genuinely excited by this new type of politics, even though they understood its adoption to be a long process. They saw Algeria as poised at the beginning of a steep learning curve whereby Algerians could break free of authoritarianism and embrace democracy. (144)

However, issues with the legislation existed that limited other parties' political abilities (namely, bias toward incumbent parties and within the FLN) (Cuberford, 1990, in Bouandel, 2003; Ruedy, 2005). For example, the government (FLN) required parties to register with the Ministry of the Interior. Furthermore, parties that focused their platforms on ethnicity (such as various Berber organizations) were unable to do so on such terms. Also, in order to operate, parties received their resources from the state. Thus, this limited some from fully challenging the FLN (and government) at the time (Evans & Phillips, 2007: 144–146). And as discussed earlier with authoritarian regimes, while there was an image of transparent democratization, it has been suggested by some that "Chadli's policy was based upon the belief that preservation implied transformation. By controlling the nature and direction of change, he hoped to produce a system by which the FLN would still predominate" (Evans & Phillips, 2007: 144).

It is within this political and social context in 1989 that the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) decided to enter the electoral arena and serve as one of the major political challengers to the FLN. The FIS was an Islamist organization and party founded in late 1989 based on Salafi ideology (Evans & Phillips, 2007). While the FIS had strong Salafi influences, it did support the idea of running for elected office (Boubekeur, 2008). This group was led by Abbasi Madani and Ali Belhadj (Evans & Phillips, 2007), and was made up of a number of actors, including members of the younger generation in Algeria who were not being included in the political system dominated by the FLN. Not having the credentials of serving as revolutionaries during the French colonization, their access to political power was therefore restricted (Boubekeur, 2008). Due to this frustration, many turned to Islamists, who, as mentioned, were quite active at the universities (Boubekeur, 2008).

Interestingly, many have suggested that when the FIS formed, this "aroused little controversy . . . " (International Crisis Group, 2004a: 4), even though the government's decision itself to recognize the party became an issue (Evans & Phillips, 2007). What began to happen was that non-Islamists in Algeria were suspicious about a party that viewed the democratic system as un-Islamic (International Crisis Group, 2004a). Some suggested that "The FIS' positions would not have mattered had other substantial parties existed and been able to mobilize larger shares of the electorate, thereby keeping the FIS within bound. But there were none. Under the circumstances, the FIS's attitude toward the constitution and democracy were not inconsequential matters" (International Crisis Group, 2004a: 5). The authorities, while not happy with the FIS

party, preferred that they could see its actions out in public, as opposed to any discreet activity, and thus recognized the party (International Crisis Group, 2004a). Furthermore, Bendjedid observed the repression of Islamists in other Maghreb states and decided to instead bring them into the political system, and even "Intended to use the FIS to break the political hegemony of the FLN and allow the president himself to act as arbiter in the new pluralistic arena" (Evans & Phillips, 2007: 147).[3] Moreover, while the constitution excluded supporting parties based "exclusively" on religion or ethnic identification, it did allow parties with a religious or ethnic emphasis (Bouandel, 2003).

However, by not allowing other parties to run, along with having many secular parties not involved in the elections at the time, the situation was poised for a strong Islamist showing. The FIS, which was gaining increased influence in civil society by "targeting symbols of Western 'corruption' such as satellite TV dishes that brought in European channels, alcohol, and women who didn't wear the *hiyab* (the Islam veil)" (Echeverria Jesus, 2004: 2), was becoming a political threat to Bendjedid. After its official formation, the FIS began speaking out against the government, which it viewed as "thieves" (International Crisis Group, 2004a: 6). Basing itself on an Islamist message with connotations of coming together under such a banner (similar to the anticolonialism period), it quickly gained strength and support from many who were frustrated with economic policies that were felt to have done a bad job in helping Algerians of a lower economic class (Evans & Phillips, 2007). But while this was the case, the FIS spoke in favor of some of President Bendjedid's policies, thus building a base within both the urban setting, and among Islamists who were supporting the FIS (International Crisis Group, 2004a). This approach, however, soured "following enactment on 1 April 1991 of an electoral law giving disproportionate weight to rural constituencies (where the FLN was strongest) and disadvantaging the FIS's urban bastions" (International Crisis Group, 2004a: 6). In response, the FIS led strikes against the government, which resulted in military action (and over 20 deaths). As a result of these actions, Bendjedid resigned as the FLN president (International Crisis Group, 2004a: 7).

Overall during this time, the FIS maintained a significant following. They had the support of young Algerians, many of them without jobs, who voiced their frustration with the economic and political state of Algeria through the new party. The FIS capitalized on their frustration by blaming the government for this, questioning why many continued to suffer when significant oil rents where at the disposal of leaders. This support by Algerians of the lower economic class further increased in late

1989 when the FIS carried out a major postdisaster relief effort in Tipaza after an earthquake hit. The FIS used the mosques to help provide necessities such as food and clothing to those affected by the natural disaster. All the while, the government was very slow to respond, thus leading to a further increase in the popularity of the FIS (Evans & Phillips, 2007). In addition to their support among the lower socioeconomic classes, the FIS also had the backing of key business leaders throughout Algeria, namely those who wanted less influence of socialist policies and "a more business-friendly economy" (Evans & Phillips, 2007: 150–151). Lastly, the FIS received the support of those who took issue with policies favorable to francophone citizens (Evans & Phillips, 2007).

These conditions formed the backdrop leading up to the first elections, which were scheduled for June of 1990 (Evans & Phillips, 2007). In these initial local elections, the rules stated that if no party won an outright majority, the party with the most votes would gain the majority of seats (Ruedy, 2005). And although it became obvious that the electoral rules "[were] clearly designed to favor the largest party which all presumed to be the FLN" (Ruedy, 2005: 253), the FIS came away victorious, successfully winning a majority of seats (Ruedy, 2005). While the FIS did have support in Algeria, much of the reason for its victory came from a low percentage of the population voting (Bouandel, 2003: 11). For example, electoral turnout was said to be at 65 percent, partly due to boycotts by the Front des Forces Socialistes (FFS), as well as the Rassemblement pour la Culture et la Democratie (RCD) (Evans & Phillips, 2007). Thus, with the FIS receiving over half of the votes (at 54%), "[t]his gave the FIS control of 856 out of the 1541 Assemblees Populaires Communales (APSs), whilst for the Assemblees Populaires de Wilays (APWs) the FIS won an absolute majority in 31 out of 48 and took control of 45 in all" (Evans & Phillips, 2007: 157).

This victory elicited a strong government response (Evans & Phillips, 2007). Having observed the victory by the FIS, officials ordered a number of FIS leaders to be arrested (Ruedy, 2005). In addition, to counter any potential victory in the next round of elections, the state redrew electoral districts and limited where the Islamists could campaign (Ruedy, 2005). Moreover, the government cut off resources to areas governed by the FIS (Evans & Phillips, 2007). The military also become involved, namely "order[ing] the removal of Islamic slogans from FIS controlled town halls, to be replaced by banners carrying the motto of the national liberation struggle: 'By the people and for the people'" (Evans & Phillips, 2007: 165). But despite these actions, in the first part of the 1992 elections, "[t]he FIS won absolute majorities in 188 of

the 430 electoral districts" (Ruedy, 2005: 255), compared to 15 won by the FLN (Evans & Phillips, 2007). Because of the overall expected FIS victory, military leaders not only put pressure on Bendjedid to resign but also formed the High State Council (HCE) and banned the FIS as a political party (Ruedy, 2005), as they were concerned about the influence of Islam in the government (International Crisis Group, 2004a).

In response, the FIS and police both engaged in acts of violence against one another, where thousands of individuals, including many innocent bystanders were killed (Ruedy, 2005). In fact, after this coup by the FLN, some Islamists began to take up arms against the state.[4] Upset at the treatment of the FIS, some felt that violence would be the way to overtake the state. Many of the Islamists who chose violence were younger members of society who were not initially included in the political system. Many formed the Groupes Islamique Armes (GIA), whereas some former FIS members formed another violent Islamist group, namely the Islamic Salvation Army (ISA) (Boubekeur, 2008). Overall, the total number of those killed in the civil conflict between the government, the FIS, and other Islamist groups is said to be as high as 150,000 persons (Ruedy, 2005).

In response to this conflict, the President of Algeria in 1999, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, with much support of the public (Roberts, 2007), set on a path of new legislation in an attempt to bring stability to Algeria (Chowdhury Fink & El-Said, 2011).[5] Bouteflika specifically pressed for the implementation of two different pieces of legislation, the first, the *Civil Concord Law* (CCL), during his first year in office, and the second, the *Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation* (CPNR), six years later, (Chowdhury Fink & El-Said, 2011: 4). Within these pieces of legislation, the measures called for amnesty for individuals fighting in the conflict, so long as they "Had [not] committed, participated in or called for the implementation of collective atrocities such as rape or the use of explosives in public places" (Chowdhury Fink & El-Said, 2011: 4). Next, there was an emphasis on "reconciliation, solidarity, and reintegration" efforts that included health care for those who were related to fighters in the conflict and those who were affected by the fighting, as well as subsidies for families whose breadwinner was locked away in jail (Chowdhury Fink & El-Said, 2011: 4). Lastly, Bouteflika took steps to "[prohibit] political activity, in whatever form, by any person responsible for the excessive use of religion that led to the national tragedy," as well as by "those who refused to acknowledge responsibility for devising and implementing a policy of glorifying violence against the umma and the state institutions" (Chowdhury Fink & El-Said, 2011: 4).

In order for all of these measures to work, Bouteflika placed an emphasis on civil society groups in fostering dialogue toward stability in Algeria (Chowdhury Fink & El-Said, 2011). But while there has been some indication that such problems have helped in reducing conflict, Bouteflika has still been concerned with terror attacks against the state. It has been said that as of 2008, "almost 1000 terrorists are still at large" (Boubekeur, 2008: 7). For example, in 2006, a pair of car bombings took place (McDougall, 2007), with three individuals dying, and 24 hurt (Evans & Phillips, 2007: 296).

On April 11, 2007, the group Al Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM) carried out terror attacks in Algiers (McDougall, 2007), in which 33 people were killed and over 222 were injured. One of the attack targets was the office of the prime minister (Evans & Philipps, 2007). Later in 2007, the same group carried out a bombing against a UN building in Algiers (Chowdhury Fink & El-Said, 2011).

Salafi Islamist groups have been particularly targeted in Algeria. Salafism, which began to develop in the mid-1800s, is the doctrine that in order to practice "true" Islam, one must live according to how the Prophet Muhammad lived. Thus, "Salafism urge[s] believers to return to the pristine, pure, unadulterated form of Islam . . . " (Denoeux, 2002: 59). Many who claim to be adherents of Salafi Islam have viewed any action or idea that is not found in the Quran or during the life of Muhammad as problematic. It is within this context that we have seen some Salafi groups directing criticism toward some Sufi Muslims (Denoeux, 2002), whom they regard, in their practices of playing music or dancing,[6] as not living according to true Islamic principles. Studies have been devoted to understanding forms of Salafi Islam since the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States (Blanchard, 2006; Meijer, 2009). The concern has been that the reason for the attacks and hatred against the United States by violent Islamists (with a global agenda) has been due not just to their particular religious interpretation of Islam, but also within this, a particular Salafi interpretation. What must be remembered is that for quite a while, Salafis were often very reluctant to become involved in politics (Denoeux, 2002). And in fact, this attitude still exits in a number of cases. However, attempts to understand Salafi Islam and its relation with politics began to increase in the 1970s with new attention directed toward Wahhabi Islam, "one particular brand of Salafi ideology" (Denoeux, 2002: 60). Wahhabism, categorized as a type of Salafi Islam, was founded by Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, who lived from 1703 to 1791 in what is now known as Saudi Arabia (Denoeux, 2002). Al-Wahhab, frustrated with what he

saw as "deviations" from Islam (what he viewed as idol worshiping, revering individuals as saints, etc.), advocated a "strict, literal interpretation of the Quran and the Sunna [life of Muhammad]" (Denoeux, 2002: 60). Much of the attention paid to Wahhabism has been on its notion that morality laws need to be followed and adhered to, and that any nonliteral interpretations of Islam that are not found in the Quran should be ended (Denoeux, 2002: 60).

Wahhabism became popular first in Saudi Arabia, where al-Wahhab joined political forces with Abd al-Aziz Ibn Saud, the leader of the al-Saud family. As Abd al-Aziz Ibn Saud and the Saud family gained military victories in Arabia in the early 1800s, the influence of the Wahhabi interpretation of Islam followed (Denoeux, 2002). This continued into the early 1900s, when the Saud family and the Wahhabi movement attempted to take over the Hiyaz from the control of Hussein, the Amir of Mecca (Barr, 2009; Cleveland & Bunton, 2008). The al-Saud family was able to gain control of the entire Arabian Peninsula(Cleveland & Bunton, 2008; Denoeux, 2002). The influence of Wahhabi interpretations of Islam increased in the 1970s with the price of oil, as the Saudi government promoted Wahhabism internationally (Denoeux, 2002).

However, it is important to highlight differences between Salafi and non-Salafi Islamist groups, as well as differences among Salafi groups in order to understand different political threats to the government and different government responses. A main difference between Salafi organizations and Islamist organizations (groups that want Islam in politics) is the idea of becoming involved in politics itself. While this is the goal of Islamists, many Salafis have shown little interest in entering the political arena. While Islamists' main goal is implementing Islam in the political sphere, "Salafists usually refrain from challenging governments and are generally reluctant to become involved in the political fray. They shy away from raising the issue of the political and religious legitimacy (or illegitimacy), of the power-that-be, whereas that issue is perhaps the most prominent one on the Islamists' minds" (Denoeux, 2002: 63). Within this we find another distinction between "fundamentalists"[7] and Islamists. The Salafis, in their efforts to advocate a "true" Islam that all individuals should follow, believe that the emphasis on Shariah at the individual level will eventually influence the entire society (and politic), whereas many Islamists stress state structural changes as the beginning point of the overall "Islamic" transformation (Denoeux, 2002: 64). Other points of difference include, but are not limited to, attitudes toward women in public (and in politics), with Islamists being much more open to women in this sphere, whereas Salafi

Muslims "typically oppose the idea of women playing an active role in public life (arguing that it goes against Islamic teachings and that it will encourage moral corruption and laxity)" (Denoeux, 2002: 64).

The difference is further complicated when we find different Salafi groups operating in Algeria. There are three main types of Salafi groups in that country, which have been classified as "purist, political, and jihadi" Salafism (Wiktorowicz, 2006, in Reene & Sanford, 2010: 2). First, are Salafis, who have a goal of operating (and willingness to work) in the political arena. Salafis within this category (and the FIS as one of the major political Salafi organizations) use the current political system with the objective of coming to power. Thus, when Bouteflika allowed political parties to form, the FIS not only set up a political party but it was also successful in the 1990s elections. The second major distinction within the Salafi groups in Algeria are the jihadi Salafis, who have denounced the political structure, have turned their back on elections, and are open to using violence for their objective of bringing Islam into the state (Reene & Sanford, 2010: 5). The third category of Salafis in Algeria is the *dawa* Salafis, whose objective is to promote Islam, without their having an interest in politics. Therefore, individuals in this category are not concerned with violent or nonviolent political actions because they have little desire to become involved in politics (Reene & Sanford, 2010).

But even with these categorical distinctions, the differences are not always constant among individuals and groups (Reene & Sanford, 2010). For example, a number of Salafi groups (such as the Islamic Salvation Front) were very willing to run in elections prior to 1992. However, after the government cancelled the elections and restricted a number of FIS leaders from running, many Salafis changed their tactics toward the use of violent actions against the government (Reene & Sanford, 2010: 8). In terms of the Salafi influence in Algeria today, the majority of Salafis have not been active in fighting the government (Chikhi, 2010), and many of the jihadist and political groups have reduced their role in politics, although their presence in this realm is far from nonexistent (Reene & Sanford, 2010). For example, Bouteflika was successful in reducing the role of a number of violent Islamist groups such as "[t]he Armee Islamique du Salut (AIS) and the Groupe Islamique Arme (GIA)—[who] either disbanded or were largely eliminated . . ." (Roberts, 2007: 1). In addition, the government "security services co-opted their religious leaders over the past 10 years to issue 'fatwas', or religious instructions, telling the insurgents to lay down their arms" (Chikhi, 2010).

But while both such groups as the AIS and the GIA have retreated from their previous levels of activity, other jihadist groups such as Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC)—which has connections to Al Qaeda (and has changed its name to Al Qaeda in the Lands of the Maghreb [Roberts, 2007: 4] to reflect this change)—and is seen as "the main armed movement still active [in Algeria]" (Roberts, 2007: 2), are still highly active in Algeria, often targeting both government and civilian targets (Roberts, 2007). Bouteflika, when he installed a range of reforms, which included but were not limited to the amnesty program for former fighters, attempted to use the program to disarm the GSPC, but many within the group did not acquiesce and began carrying out attacks against civilians and also the Algerian police force (Roberts, 2007). Thus, such actions, along with calls by Salafis in 2010 promoting the notion of women continuing to wear the hijab when having their pictures taken for a passport (countering government actions to prohibit women from wearing the hijab when having such pictures taken), as well as critiques against "stand[ing] for the national anthem" (Chikhi, 2010), seem to have caused the government to increase their attention toward the Salafis in Algeria.

And because the government is still concerned about terror organizations within Algeria, they have often been controlling in terms of political power. However, despite the importance of going after violent extremist groups, this concern about countering violent Islamists has led the "government to limit the activities of numerous labor unions, to refuse licenses to various opposition parties (such as the Islamist party Wafa, led by Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi; the Union for Democracy and the Republic, led by Amara Benyounes; and the Democratic Front, led by Sidi Ahmed Ghozali)" (Boubekeur, 2008: 13). Many Algerians, furious with the terror attacks that have been committed in recent years, are also highly upset with Bouteflika and the lack of rights that citizens have under the government, and also the lack of economic development and of employment. Yet the government, being highly reliant on oil as well as gas rents, has had little interest in working on public grievances because it does not rely on citizens for income (Evans & Phillips, 2007: 297).

The Promotion of Sufism and the Algerian State

With this in mind, we should examine the use of Sufism as related to the government domestic policies of Bouteflika. Specifically, due to the prolonged conflict with Islamists in Algeria "since the early nineties of the last century, the authorities have found a different way of stemming the influence of the Salafi jihadist ideology which is espoused by

the armed hardliners" (BBC, 2009). Because of concern it has about Salafism and political Islam in Algeria, the government has attempted to fight these influences through control of the media in relation to issues of religion, as well as the restriction of messages from mosques. Targeting messages from the mosques began as early as the mid-1990s when the government attempted to control Islam through the Ministry of Religious Affairs. This ministry's goal was to promote an Islam that was in line with government interests, and to shift it away from any messages that might give support to the Islamists. In order to do this, they felt that they had to control the mosques. However, many of the mosques (about 2,600 out of 10,000) were outside of the oversight of the government (Echeverria Jesus, 2004: 5). This was a problem for the government, because without this influence, political messages in the mosques could not be stopped (Echeverria Jesus, 2004). This concern was coupled with an attack on a Sufi worship center, which was seen as a "growing dichotomy between the radical Islamists' quest for extreme Islamic orthodoxy and the more traditional, local form of belief and worship" (Echeverria Jesus, 2004: 6).

This concern about Salafi Islam is evident in the way in which the government is currently taking an interest in religion in Algeria. In 2010, it began to ban books being sent into the country that promoted notions of Islam that are counter to the interests of the government. The actions against Salafi books have not been limited to customs; the government has also sent police to ensure that Salafis are not able to operate at the yearly Algiers International Book Fair (Chikhi, 2010). These monitors make sure that books of which the government disproves are not made accessible to those interested in purchasing Salafi writings, and specifically go after anyone who aims to buy large quantities of the books, with the idea that their objectives are "to buy up religious literature in bulk to re-sell" (Chikhi, 2010). They have also attempted to reduce the number of books available at the international book fair by denying access to a number of publishers who in years past would come to Algeria to promote and sell such books (Chikhi, 2010).

However, the government has been more tolerant of Da'wa Salafism within Algeria. The Da'wa Salafism supported by the government "symboliz[es] the need to preach, purify, and re-Islamize society" (Boubekeur, 2008: 13). The people often focus on education, and in particular play an educational role in mosques. And because these positions are often funded by the state, there is a strong level of awareness of what activities are being encouraged, and the level of political statements and action against the state is severely restricted (Boubekeur,

2008). And thus while they are advocating the increase of Islam in society, "adherents of Da'wa Salafism are investing their effort in forming a network or organizations that help their members lead a pure life based on the original precepts of Islam and at the same time find their place in society" (Boubekeur, 2008: 14). However, it has been their dismissal of political activity that has led to the government's allowing their activities. A large number of younger Algerians are attracted to the Da'wa Salafi groups. And because such groups de-emphasize politics, and even in some cases formal education (at the expense of university studies), to instead find information about Islam online, they are moving younger people away from politics, which is very pleasing to the state. Furthermore, these individuals are receiving state support for establishing businesses, and thus, are playing a reduced political role in civil society (Boubekeur, 2008: 16). Summing up the support for Da'wa Salafism, Boubekeur (2008) explains that

> The adherents of Da'wa Salafism want above all to be left alone to practice their religion and way of life in peace, with their own schools, commercial networks, and style of dress. The movement is averse not only to violence but also to politics in general, thus giving the state a chance to bury the specter of radical political Salafism. By authorizing Wahhabi-inspired Salafi preachers to preach, the regime feels that it is encouraging the Islamic revival among the young without dissenting political demands. Just as in the 1970s, when the Algerian authorities encouraged the growth of Islamist groups to stifle the leftist opposition, the Algerian government now sees nonengaged, apolitical Da'wa Salafism, with its massive presence in mosques and universities, as an antidote to the influence of political Islam and the return of the FIS. Furthermore, this brand of Salafism also provides ready theological justification for the condemnation and repression of terrorism. (16)

In fact, the government has been active in encouraging Da'wa Salafi imams to lecture on topics of Islam, as well as to provide (with the government's publicizing of) fatwas or religious rulings that run contrary to the positions espoused by AQIM. But again, because of the increased power of such groups, and because the control of religion is thus not completely within the realm of the state, the government continues to monitor their activities (Boubekeur, 2008: 17).

But along with allowing certain (limited) strands of Salafism to operate, a major strategy used by the government has been to promote Sufism to counter any interpretation of Salafi Islam that has been seen as problematic to the state (Al Jazeera, 2008). The promotion of Sufism,

while strongly stressed by the current President of Algeria, Bouteflika, began earlier, during the time of Bendjedid.[8] In the early 1990s, during a period following the early electoral successes of the FIS, the government helped organized and promote a meeting of numerous Sufi leaders. This event's purpose was to begin promoting Sufi Islam as the "true" Islam of the country, serving as an opposition force to the FIS (Werenfels, 2011), which, as discussed earlier, was becoming a major political challenge to the government. Thus, the government's perception of the brotherhoods was shifting (Werenfels, 2011). Instead of the negative portrayal of Sufism as undeveloped, the new image of Sufism was "framed as the embodiment of the 'tolerant, peaceful, apolitical, traditional real Algerian Islam'" (Werenfels, 2011: 2).

Francois Burgat (2003) explains that a shift occurred regarding government policy toward Sufism, saying that

> [i]n 1990 and 1991, a number of analysts tried to pretend that the old guard of the Algerian Zawiyas, who had been erased from national history because of their alleged collaboration with the colonial authorities, would save the country from the growing threat of the FIS. From a Sufist perspective, the Islamists are regularly described as "foreign," excluding themselves form a "political system based on Sunni principles," which is itself a continuation of "Ottoman influence." The fact that brotherhoods would often ignore national boundaries is often conveniently forgotten, so that a "good," "endogenous" Sufism is promoted, as opposed to an imported Islamism. (66)

He goes on to explain how Sufism was seen as the "good" Islam in Algeria due the belief that Sufis had a political loyalty to the state as compared to Islamists, who were opposed to the state's authority, by saying,

> For Algeria, the picture of "good" Maliki Sufis, and "good" North Africans threatened by the bearded Wahhabis from faraway Arabia, is passed off as scientific observation. This type of political skullduggery is not always condemned. The author of a study on the (good) "religion of the people" was happy to note that "if such an amount of information and facts about the Algerian Zawiyas had been made available to the general public over a period of not more than three months (May to July 1991), it was only due to the "democratic wind" that was beginning to sweep the country." The Zawiyas' progra[m] seemed, unsurprisingly, to consist of "pledging allegiance to the President of the Republic" and "confronting anyone who, in the name of Wahhabism, or Shiism, or of any other imported rite, has attempted and is attempting to tamper with the Maliki rite, held in common by most of our population." (Burgat, 2003: 66)[9]

But along with the promotion of Sufism during the 1990s, similar policy approaches are taking place under the guise of Bouteflika, due to the rising concern about Al Qaeda (World Tribune, 2009). The government has taken a number of steps to promote Sufism as an attempt to counter extremist ideologies. Some tactics have included the reimplementation of land and other economic benefits to the brotherhoods, as well as allowing Sufi orders to re-establish schools of learning (Werenfels, 2011). The government adopted this approach after a rise in violent conflict with the Islamist groups that have challenged the government. In fact, the government has actually suggested that the *zawaya* increase their level of involvement in civil society by providing various social services (Chikhi, 2009b). An Algerian sheikh by the name of Belabes Lazhari was quoted in a report (Ramzi, Ali, Arfaoui, & Wedoud, 2010) as saying that "[t]he current wager rests on the ability of Sufis to give expression to Islam and present it in a sound manner, and the extent of their contribution to cultural exchanges and renounce violence, extremism and terrorism." Moreover, as Isabelle Werenfels (2011: 2) explains, the image of Sufism is a calculated one aimed at serving the government. Its "Official portrayal is remarkably simplistic and essentialist: the *zaouias* are portrayed as 'sanctuaries of peace', allegedly 'unchanged for centuries', 'remote from worldly affairs' and 'profoundly apolitical'. However, both the state's instrumentalization of the *zaouias* as well as the *zaouias*' proper interests and activities stand in stark contrast to such ascriptions."

Related to this, Bouteflika has also attempted to use the mosques in taking an approach against extremism, and has also looked to the help of Sufi groups such as the Tijāniyya (Porter, 2008) and Alaouia (Ghimrassa, 2009). In the case of the Tijaniyya, Geoff D. Porter (2008) argues that

> Algiers augments its projection of hard power with a comprehensive soft power campaign. In particular, it is building a large mosque complex on Tamanrasset's highest point. The mosque succinctly conveys the state's intention to exercise influence, if not outright control, over Islamic activity in the city. Beyond the mosque, the state also promotes the activities of Sufi religious orders. These orders have historically been powerful in the region and the Tijāniyya in particular has proven to be a valuable supporter of Bouteflika's National Liberation Front (FLN). (15)

In 2006, Abdelaziz Belkadem, who was the prime minister of Algeria, spoke at a colloquium held by the Tijāniyya order, saying that "he wanted 'to use this meeting and the [*zaouias*] (religious centre) both as

a centre of influence and as platforms from which the precepts of our religion can be propagated'" (Aflou, 2006). Along with the comments by the prime minister, Bouteflika also sent a message, part of which was a call to "emphasize the spiritual, human and aesthetic values of Islam when we explain it to non-Muslims and show them the true nature of this great religion" (Aflou, 2006). And in 2007, the government sponsored another event for the order (Werenfels, 2011). In 2009, during Bouteflika's time in power, the Alaouia set up a week of events related to Sufism and its application in Algerian society (Ghimrassa, 2009). It was said that over 5,000 individuals were in attendance, many of them from outside Algeria (Ghimrassa, 2009). The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) (2009) reported that the government of Algeria specifically organized such events that highlight the message of Sufism, in which individuals participated in "lectures and seminars calling for moderation and shunning hard line behavi[or]. . . ." In addition, "The Islamic Affairs Ministry was also prepared to allow Sufis to distribute literature, CDs and books to schools and mosques. Officials said the Sufis were expecting to appeal to young Muslims" (World Tribune, 2009). The aim was to increase the message of respect for others, ideas that are found in Islam (BBC, 2009). The government believes that these actions will appeal to the youth in Algeria (World Tribune, 2009).

The government has tried to make Sufism and Sufi orders a central part of Algerian society. They have attempted to do this by promoting the role of Sufism in a number of aspects of citizens' lives in Algeria, from helping set up marriages, to helping those in need, to educating society about Islam (Chikhi, 2009). The Algerian government, similar to the actions of the Moroccan monarchy, has also used the media to promote Sufi Islam. For example, "[t]he authorities have created a television and radio station to promote Sufism and the ['*zawais*'] or religious confraternities that preach and practi[c]e it, in addition to regular appearances by Sufi sheiks on the stations" (Chikhi, 2009). The government invites Sufi scholars to discuss Islam on the television shows, and uses the media to highlight what it sees as positive aspects of Sufi Islam. This is often done with the idea of attempting to suppress any appeal of Wahhabi Islam. Again, the material that airs is often regulated by the Algerian government (Chikhi, 2009).

But while much of Bouteflika's emphasis on Sufism has been to prevent radical Islam and jihadist Salafi groups from operating, we must also examine attempts to suppress nonviolent Islamist groups (and non-Islamist groups, for that matter). In term of the politics of Algeria, we find very little operating room for challengers to Bouteflika. On the

surface, it looks as if there are possibilities for individuals' political voices to be heard, since for example, elections have taken place for both local and national seats (Roberts, 2007). However, this can be deceiving since Bouteflika has maintained a tight grip on his power. Hugh Roberts (1995) of the International Crisis Group has explained the difficulty that parties have in posing a serious challenge to Bouteflika, because, according to Roberts, "Algerian parties are not really parties at all, they are pseudo parties. They are not capable of being alternative governments; that is the most important bottom line about them. They are either effectively state apparatuses . . . or they are parties that are basically nothing more than a vehicle for one or another conception of identity" (8). In fact, most of the power is concentrated in Bouteflika and the executive branch. The legislative and judicial branches have little influence compared to the president (Roberts, 2005: 8). Moreover, Roberts (2005) argues that

> In addition to what one may call the repressive aspect, there is a clear *dirigiste* aspect in the current government's approach to the promotion of reform. This has been particularly clear in its approach towards local and regional government, empowering the representatives of the Administration, the *walis*, the people appointed by the Ministry of the Interior, as its representatives at the regional level, at the expense of elected institutions, the regional and municipal assemblies. It is an authoritarian approach that empowers and relies on the Administration at the expense of elected representatives. This *dirigisme* is also clear in the approach taken towards the promotion of reform, notably with respect to reform of the judiciary, educational reform, and for that matter, economic structural reform. Top-down initiatives are the common characteristic. (4)

Along with this, the Algerian leadership has engaged in a number of acts to limit political challenges that include, but are not limited to, imprisoning journalists (Roberts, 2007). In addition, Bouteflika also put in place a state of emergency in 1992 (Roberts, 2007) that allowed him to take further steps to suppress any opposition (the state of emergency was removed following 2011 protests in Algeria (Human Rights Watch, 2012). Bouteflika recognizes the political challenge that the Islamists pose, and thus has attempted to emphasize the role of Sufi groups, both as those who are opposite to the Islamists, but also with the goal of winning their electoral support. Thus, Sufi parties and shrines have been an important part of electoral campaigns for candidates, with some arguing that some may have received economic benefits

by supporting a government party (Werenfels, 2011). Thus, along the lines of past approaches by leaders emphasizing Sufism against political Islamist groups because of a belief that the Sufis would be a counterforce to Islamism—and loyal adherents to government authority—the Algerian government more recently has continued to operate under this assumption that Sufi parties might be a possible ally. But as we have examined, the goal of the government is not solely to counter extremism, but rather also to employ strategies that will ultimately reduce any political threat to their hold on power by supporting the president in his political objectives domestically, as well as in terms of foreign policy with other Muslim-majority states (Khemissi, Laremont, & Eddine, 2012).

And because of this perceived manipulation of the Sufi religion, many have been highly upset with Bouteflika's approach and use of Sufism, as well as his continued neglect for the protections of human rights. Regarding the concern citizens have for the government's approach toward Sufism, McDougall (2007) explains that

> The recovery of a certain legitimacy for Sufism after its long marginalization by official doctrine and state-sponsored culture has meant a return to respectability for practices and ideas that certainly have a real religious and cultural content: the *hadra* of the students at the *zawiya* of Sidi Marouf is evidently an experience as real as it is esoteric. At the same time, the orders' overt investment in the state, and the state's ostentatious investment in the *zawiyas*—the magnificent mosque of Sidi Marouf, at which local dignitaries attend Friday prayer is widely recognized as the creation of well-connected munificence—also creates suspicion, hostility, or distaste toward *les zawaya du pouvoir* ("the *zawiyas* of the ruling party").

He goes on to say that

> Much of Algerian society is deeply attached to the dignity of its religion, and as deeply distrustful of *le pouvoir*, the ruling system, as it is effectively divorced from the nominal sovereignty of the "popular and democratic" republic. To many Algerians, the official patronage recently accorded the *zawiyas* like President Abdulaziz Bouteflika's project for a new and record-breakingly monumental Grand Mosque on the Algers waterfront, is at best wasteful clientilist largesse, at worst an affront on the dignity of both religion and politics (the mosque is planned to be the second or third largest mosque in the world, with a minaret over 300m high and space for 120,000 people. The Canadian engineering firm Dessau-Soprin was awarded the contract in April 2007).

Thus, the government is using Sufism as a multilayered political strategy. They are first supporting a group that they paint as "apolitical," thus hoping to reduce challenge to their power. Moreover, they are using such groups to help counter political Islamist groups that pose the largest threat to the state and to Bouteflika. But in addition to this, as Isabelle Werenfels (2011) argues in the case of Algeria, the government is dividing Algerians, which can ultimately serve to the government's benefit, while continuing to repress the rights of citizens. Thus, in addition to the government's attempting to use Sufism as a mechanism to stop political challengers in an already restricted political system, while also helping bring about splits in the population, in the case of Algeria, the government, being highly concerned about the challenge Islamists pose to its rule, has attempted to adopt Sufism as a potential tool against both puritanical interpretations of Islam.

Interestingly, recent work by Khemissi et al. (2012) examines how the public has responded to the role (and image) of Sufism. Their work shows public attitudes not only toward Sufism in general but also regarding their perceptions of the government's actions toward Sufi organizations. Surveying over 2,000 Algerian youth, they examine just how effective citizens believe Bouteflika's approach toward Sufism has been in regard to his objectives of countering Islamist groups (including violent Islamist groups). They find that while many of those surveyed did not identify themselves as Sufi, they "mildly agreed with state support for Sufism" (Khemissi et al., 2012: 10). Those surveyed cited a number of reasons as to their thoughts on Sufism in society. The findings show that 53.47 percent thought that Sufism provided knowledge on matters of spirituality; 52.75 percent thought Sufism "helps resolve social problems"; 52.71 percent thought Sufism "deters crime"; 58.33 percent felt that Sufism "encourages the values of tolerance"; and 55.65 felt that Sufism "is an important component of identity" (10). Along with these views, the youth had additional perceptions of Sufism, and although the support for these questions was less overall, they seem to be far from insignificant. In the study, 46.26 percent believed that Sufis groups are "[n]ot interested in politics." Furthermore, 45.59 percent felt that Sufi groups are "[s]upportive of the existing regime"; 42.99 percent believed that Sufi groups "[d]eterred extremism"; and 40.98 percent believed that Sufi orders "[s]aved people from drug addiction" (10).

In terms of questions on politics in Algeria, many of the youth surveyed were disheartened with the political system, seeing little possibility for actual change in the leadership. Furthermore, the youth surveyed were also turned off by the nongovernmental Islamist and Sufi groups

in Algeria, as they believed that neither could help their specific situations.[10] Khemissi et al. (2012) explain that "[d]isillusion seems to reign among youth. Even though the Algeria survey revealed that youth were quite proud of identifying with being Muslim, the survey also revealed that youth in Algeria have lost confidence in religious institutions—whether they are of the Salafist or Sufi strains—and in the state's ability to produce results" (7). Overall, the authors argue that while "[t]hese data and accompanying interviews reveal that there is modest support among Algerian youth regarding the State's policy of supporting Sufism as an alternative to jihadist oriented Salafism, while at the same time there is considerable public distrust of this sudden marriage between the State and Sufism. Many respondents believe that the State is supporting Sufism only in an instrumentalist attempt to legitimize its rule" (10). Thus, we are able to see just how the public in Algeria receives such policies.

CHAPTER 3

Morocco: King Mohammed VI, Sufism, and the Islamist Challengers

In the political and religious history of Morocco, there has been a strong Sufi influence in the realm of politics, both in terms of Sufi saints (Cornell, 1998: 114–115) and Sufi orders. Sufism seemed first to be present in Morocco in "the beginning of the eleventh century" (Cornell, 1998: 4). Throughout the centuries, Sufi orders were very much involved in religious, political, and economic issues, at times becoming major threats to religious and political leaders. For example, Sufi orders in Morocco, such as the Nāsiriyya and Dilā'iyya, played a critical role in local trade issues in Morocco in the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. The level of Sufi influence became a major issue for these various ruling political leaders during this time period. As Gutelius (2002) explains, the Sufis

> Challenged the legitimacy of the emerging 'Alawi family as the true leaders of the faithful, which 'Alawi leaders responded with force. In 1668, Sultan Mulay Rashid forced the leaders of the Dilā'iyya into exile in Fez and destroyed the *zāwiya* of Sīdī Ahmed ū Mūsā in 1670, the center of one of the most powerful religious families south of the Atlas mountains. He also repeatedly threatened the Nāsiriyya, though he did not live long enough to carry out these threats. (31)

However, state leaders well before this time not only took notice of how influential Sufi orders were but also "courted urban and rural [S]ufi orders,

hoping to gain their allegiance to an otherwise politically fragmented state, and they relied on populist Sufi movements in organizing jihads against the Portuguese" (Gutelius, 2002: 31). And while it was not always the case that Sufis were involved in such activities,[1] many orders in fact participated in politics (Gutelius, 2002).

In the case of the Nāsiriyya, the order was popular for spiritual reasons, as well as for the economic benefits that the order could deliver for individuals. For example, as the order expanded, they had connections to "Credit and to its property holdings, including land, water resources, [and] *zawāyā* and granaries" (Gutelius, 2002: 32). Their economic influence expanded to the point that such leaders became "mediators" (Gutelius, 2002: 33) for the society. Nāsiri leaders also aided individuals in trade. For example, they would often collect a tax called the *zattāt* (passage toll or protection toll) (Gutelius, 2002: 34) that was used to help the traders make it to their destination without issue. And because of this role, the Nāsiri leaders worked to establish political clout within the broader community. However, "[t]his political influence spread far beyond local affairs. . . . The 'Alawi sultans themselves occasionally relied on Nāsiri leaders to solve political difficulties and recognized the order's wide appeal" (Gutelius, 2002: 38–39). For this reason, many members of the government made sure that the Sufi leaders were not bothered. It must be noted, however, that the role of the Nāsiri Sufi order was not always as influential politically as it was in the late 1600s and early 1700s. The reason for this is that during the mid-1700s, Morocco began to increase trade with outside actors, and this had an impact on the Nāsiriyya. New agreements with Europe, as well as increased roles by a whole host of other Sufi orders (such as the Darqāwiyya, the Wazzāniyya, the Kunta-led Qādiriyya and the Tijāniyya) altered the weight of the Nāsiriyya in society (Gutelius, 2002: 40).

In the 1800s and 1900s, Salafi and Wahhabi Islam began to take hold in Morocco. And it was during this time that Wahhabi leaders were looking to have the government move away from what they saw as the "shirk" or "polytheism" of Sufism (Zeghal, 2008: 17). This attitude toward Sufi orders was taken up by leaders such as Mawlay Sulaymān who

> Denounced aspects of the conduct of some brotherhoods but did not reject Sufism in principle. The doctrine turned out to be politically useful to him because it enabled him to criticize the brotherhoods threatening his authority, such as the Sharqawiyya and the Tayyibiyya—allied to Berber tribes that the [*Makhzen*] could not control—and the Darqawiyya, which represented a real challenge to the Sultan. (Zeghal, 2008: 17)

Salafi Islam began to alter leaders' decisions about Islam, which ultimately affected the treatment of Sufi orders (Zeghal, 2008: 18).[2] But while Salafi beliefs gained support among many religious and political leaders, many Sufi orders were still active in Morocco in the 1900s (Geertz, 1979: 155). In fact, Sufi orders not only continued to exist but also maintained a presence in the political sphere, often challenging colonialism as well as the domestic political leadership. For example, Sufi sheikh Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Kabīr al-Kattānī was a major challenger to not only French colonialism but also to the Sultan (Bazzaz, 2010). Because of his stance against the Moroccan leaders—who were threatened by his influence—al-Kattānī was accused of heresy in 1896, and in 1909 was arrested, and eventually died under custody. In addition, the Sultan also went after the Kattāniyya order that remained (Bazzaz, 2010). One reason why this order was seen as a major threat to the political authority in Morocco was because it claimed to be "descendants of the Prophet Muhammad" (Bazzaz, 2010: 11), of "which the Khattāniyya leadership deployed to articulate its sense of political legitimacy in its efforts to reassert the leadership role of *shurafa* lineage . . . " (Bazzaz, 2010: 11). However, it would be incorrect to suggest that the Moroccan political leadership, or the *makhzan*, always took such a contrary approach with al-Kattānī. In fact, at one point, they attempted to establish an "alliance" with al-Kattānī (Bazzaz, 2010: 66). Sahar Bazzaz (2010) explains that "[f]rom the state's perspective, an alliance with the sheikh of an active and expanding Sufi movement held many possibilities. By drawing on Muhammad al-Kattānī's gaining spiritual and social authority among the people in Fez, the *makhzan* stood to bolster its waning legitimacy there" (66). This ultimately affected their influence negatively, with al-Kattānī gaining further support in Morocco (Bazzaz, 2010).

In addition to the role Sufi orders played in religious issues at this time, they also functioned in the economic and political sectors as well (Geertz, 1979). For example, Sufi *zawāyā* were key in political (Bazzaz, 2010) and economic activity in relation to local trade in Morocco, exerting significant influence in the marketplace (Geertz, 1979). But along with this major presence in the markets, the *zawāyā* were also involved in a number of political actions during the French colonial period (Geertz, 1979). They began to lose power, however, with the rise of the Istiqlal party, which saw itself as "opposed to the existing zawias" (Geertz, 1979: 162–163). In fact, the postindependence leaders of Morocco wanted "simultaneously to divide its representatives to weaken them and also gather them around the throne to control them" (Zeghal, 2009: 31).

They aimed to dictate and monitor religious action by controlling funding in many cases, or the supervision of the *zawāyā*. They also attempted to monitor religious activity by placing the Ministry of Religious Affairs under the watch of the top leaders (Zeghal, 2009).

Thus, leaders throughout the history of Morocco have had to compete with Sufi sheikhs in terms of religious legitimacy. Thus, historically (and presently) the Moroccan leadership has emphasized their role as "Commander of the Faithful" (a religious title), as well as the Sharifian *baraka* of the King, which, while often translated as "divine blessing," is much more than that (Ghoulaichi, 2005). Both the king and the sheikhs are seen as having *baraka*, but the forms of *baraka* differ. For the king, this is often viewed as the ability to exert political and military influence and strength, whereas this is less political and more spiritual for the sheikhs (Ghoulaichi, 2005: 12). Thus, kings have often been judged based on their ability to protect citizens, while also ensuring a strong harvest, whereas for the sheikhs, expectations of their *baraka* often translate into forms of miracles that can help citizens (Ghoulaichi, 2005: 12). However, not only have sheikhs been able to build political influence due to their religious support but they have also had a history of helping citizens with any issues that they have with the state (Ghoulaichi, 2005).

However, even though *baraka* is predicated on notions of spirituality for sheikhs, there is also a religious element to *baraka* for the king, due to the commander of the faithful being viewed as a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad. Thus, in the case of the Moroccan political leaders, they are seen as having acquired their *baraka* based on family lineage (Ghoulaichi, 2005). But despite this, to assume that *baraka* is always guaranteed is problematic. Therefore, the king has often been aware of ensuring support, while dealing with different increased political and religious actors. And because of this, leaders have taken different responses toward Sufi sheikhs, who at times have challenged the power of the political leader. Kings have been aware of the levels and fluctuations of *baraka*, and have attempted to challenge Sufi sheikhs' *baraka* in comparison to their own. Evidence from Moroccan history supports the point that kings were highly aware of alternative individual power centers of *baraka* (Ghoulaichi, 2005).[3]

Islamism, Sufism, and the Moroccan State

Similar to Algeria, the concern about terrorism in Morocco, coupled with the threat of political Islam to the monarchy have led to a history

of government attempts to establish control over religion. Such actions were first evident during the early years after independence (Zeghal, 2009), and then continued in later decades, as the rulers attempted to figure out how to handle what they saw as the rise of political Islam. Government interest in controlling religion was quite evident as early as the regime of Hassan II, who came to power in 1961. With hopes of gaining religious legitimacy, he stipulated in the constitution that the leader of the state would be seen as the "Commander of the Faithful" (Zeghal, 2009: 44). Hassan II also showed an interest in speaking on matters of religion (Zeghal, 2009). But while the government under Hassan II historically had a strong control over religion in Morocco, the presence of Islamists was not completely absent (Howe, 2005). For example, Hassan II continued to enforce his commitment to Islam through the support of Islamic family law, which showed the power of nongovernmental religious groups in relation to the king's policies on religion (Howe, 2005).

But despite some earlier influence, Islamists generally took a back seat to secular and modernization policies up until the 1980s (Howe, 2005). Islamist groups in Morocco became more active during Gamal Abdel Nasser's reign in Egypt, and in the attempt to counter Nasser's policy of socialism, the Moroccan government of Hassan II allowed Islamists to operate, with the help of the Saudi Arabian government (Howe, 2005), which funded these groups. It was during the 1970s that Morocco began to see an increase in the number of educators who were advocating Salafi Islam (Pruzan-Jorgensen, 2010), as well as a rise in the number of Islamist groups, which included the violent Chabiba Islamiyya (Islamic Youth) (Pruzan-Jorgensen, 2010: 8). This organization, which began in 1969, emphasized the changing of societal values from *jahiliya*, or a condition of "ignorance," to one embedded in ideas of Islam. As alluded to, Islamist organizations such as the Islamic Youth were allowed to operate in the 1960s and early 1970s (Maghraoui, 2012).

However, "[b]y the mid-1980s, the palace had realized that Islamic radicals were a potential threat. King Hassan II openly encouraged so-called moderate Islamists, that is, those who recognized his authority as Commander of the Faithful, and tightened controls on the others" (Howe, 2005: 126), which included groups such as the Islamic Youth (as well as later, the Justice and Development Party [PJD]) (Pruzen-Jorgensen, 2010: 8). In fact, this emphasis on the king's relation to the Prophet Muhammad and thus his claim as the highest religious authority in Morocco is not something that the monarchy takes lightly,

which is further evident in the way in which Mohammed VI emphasizes this position. Julie Pruzen-Jorgensen (2010) of the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS) explains the importance of this, saying that the "[r]ecognition and acceptance of the religious role and authority of the King and the ruling family constitutes one of the fundamental 'rules of the game' for both religious and/or political actors in Morocco, who need to accept this religious role of the authoritarian regime in order to participate in the formal public sphere . . . " (7). Thus, harsh penalties exist for individuals who speak out against this "authority" (Pruzan-Jorgensen, 2010: 7). As a result of such responses, some, such as Abdelilah Benkirane, who was once a member of the Islamic Youth, left the group to form another Muslim organization, al Islah wa Tajdid (Reform and Renewal) (Maghrouai, 2012: 92–93). Then, with the inclusion of additional groups, Reform and Renewal in 1996 became Harakat al Tawhi wal Islah, or the Movement of Unity and Reform (MUR) (Maghrouai, 2012: 93). Along with the MUR, similar threats by both extremist and also nonviolent Islamists continued into the 1990s with the establishment of the PJD in 1997 (Howe, 2005), a group that included the former MUR (Maghouai, 2012). The PJD, with its emphasis on nonviolence and claims to want to "Work within the system . . . " (Howe, 2005: 134), as well as its goal of establishing sharia or Islamic law as a political system of Morocco, was seen as a challenge to Hassan II (Howe, 2005).

Initially, the PJD was not a primary electoral threat, as it only placed 14 members in the government after the post-1997 elections (Maghraoui, 2012). However, the worrying by some intensified when the PJD, running in less than the full list of districts, managed to place third in the 2002 elections (Howe, 2005), with 42 seats (Amghar, 2007). While they are a major challenge to the power of the king, they do not, however, question the political system. Thus, they work within the system to advocate for Islamic issues, and are quite vocal on any positions or laws that reduce Islam's role in government (Amghar, 2007). But even though this is the case, they have been careful in calculating the level of attention raised for Islamic issues in government. In the case of the PJD, "[p]olitical pragmatism takes precedence over the clear definition of a recognizable ideology" (Amghar, 2007: 16). They have been quick to allow for variation in stances toward the king's policies so that they have political room to maneuver, being at times appeasing and at other times acting as the opposition, depending on their political interests (Amghar, 2007). Samir Amghar (2007) refers to their approach toward the states as "constructive opposition," in which their opposition can

help with those to the right and other voting and actor blocks, while maintaining political ties for religious issues of importance to them.

But while the PJD has posed a nonviolent political threat to the current leadership of Mohammed VI—who in 1999 took power after the death of his father Hassan II—violent Islamist groups have also been active in Morocco. In 2002, individuals with ties to Al Qaeda were found to be operating in Casablanca (Howe, 2005). And on May 16, 2003, Morocco experienced a major attack of terrorism "in which 14 suicide bombers identified as Salafiya Jihadiya adherents with links to the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group (GICM) and Al Qaeda attacked five Western and Jewish targets in Casablanca, killing 45 and injuring more than 100" (Migdalovitz, 2010: 2). Another terror attack was carried out "[i]n April 2007, [when] two suicide attacks occurred near the U.S. Consulate and the American Language Center in Casablanca; the bombers killed only themselves" (Migdalovitz, 2010: 3).

In response to the 2003 terror attacks in Casablanca, Morocco, Mohammed VI has implemented policies related both to legislation against such acts and toward improving individuals' access to socioeconomic rights, while also taking particular approaches toward promoting particular forms of religion (Kalpakian, 2011). Almost immediately after the attacks in Casablanca, the Moroccan government passed Law 03.03. This law addressed the issue of terrorism, and potential terror activity, and the penalties associated with such actions (Kalpakian, 2011). Some highlights of the law include the provision that anyone found guilty of any ties to terror intent or activities must be given "a minimum 10-year [prison] sentence" (Kalpakian, 2011: 2). Furthermore, any individual who is found guilty of committing an act of terror that causes any injury to another person will serve a life sentence. Moreover, any person who has killed another individual will receive the death penalty (Kalpakian, 2011; UNCHR, 2010).

The *Law to Combat Terror* (03.03 Law) has received significant attention in Morocco. The opinions about this law range from those who have argued its effectiveness, to others who say that the legislation has hurt the protection of human rights and the civil liberties of individuals. In terms of whether this legislation has been a useful tool, while this can be debated, some have pointed out that the law has been helpful in preventing future terror activity. For example, Jack Kalpakian (2011) argues that

> The law played a vital role in dissolving many cells since its establishment. The wire-tapping provisions were essential in containing the AQIM cells

> that had survived the crackdown after the May 16, 2003, attacks. In March and April 2007, the state and AQIM played a very dangerous cat-and-mouse game in the popular neighborhoods of Casablanca and many deaths were prevented through the ability of the government to rapidly tap the cell-phones of suspects; the cell's collapse began with a chance arrest of a suspect and the rapid tapping of his cell-phone communications. The law allowed the state to seize the initiative and bring the fight to the AQIM branches in Morocco, and there have been no direct AQIM attacks since April 2007, while many cells have been dismantled. (3)

However, many human rights organizations in Morocco have continued to be highly vocal against this legislation as it relates to the human rights of individuals in the country (Kalpakian, 2011). And it was the PJD that suffered as a result of the 2003 attacks, and the subsequent law. While they themselves did not carry out the attacks, "[s]tate authorities held the PJD to be 'morally responsible' for the bombing and sought to undermine the party by preventing it from fielding candidates at more than 18 percent of the 1,544 municipalities in elections held during October 2003" (Cohen & Jaida, 2006, in Bekkaoui & Laremont, 2011: 32).

The Promotion of Sufism and the Moroccan State

Mohammed VI's promotion of religion stems partly from the terror attacks that have occurred in Morocco. Mohammed VI has been a major ally of the US government and supported its "war on terror" by going after violent extremist organizations in Morocco, and by sharing information with other states about terrorist groups in the attempt to halt their activities (Migdalovitz, 2010). Mohammed VI has also taken a number of steps specifically to influence the role of religion in Morocco because of concerns about potential attacks, and more specifically the government's view about the role religion can play in motivating and/or reducing attacks. And because of this, the government has a multipronged approach toward religion in Moroccan society. Carol Migdalovitz (2010) explains that

> To counter radical Islamism, Morocco also has exerted greater control over religious leaders and councils, created new theological councils, retrained imams, deployed supervisors to oversee their sermons, closed unregulated mosques, retrained and rehabilitated some individuals convicted of terror-related crimes to correct their understanding of Islam, and launched radio and television stations and a website to transmit

> "Moroccan religious values" of tolerance. In 2005, the king launched a $1.2 billion National Initiative for Human Development to redress socioeconomic conditions extremists exploit for recruitment. (3)

According to Abdelsalam Blaji (in a 2009 *Al Jazeera* report), the Moroccan government aimed to reduce "[s]ymptoms of religiosity, such as Koran schools, the hijab and Islamic banking [which] have been subjected to restrictions while encouraging all what keep people away from religion." Furthermore, the government has actually stated that "[m]osques are now the only officially sanctioned places of worship and are controlled directly by the [Ministry of Religious Affairs] . . . " (Chowdhury Fink & El-Said, 2011: 12). In fact, the Ministry of Religious Affairs has complete control over any contributions that the mosque receives from outside actors. Along with accounting for who gives to the mosques, this ministry also monitors, and often approves, the messages that are being given by imams during *jummah*, or Friday congregational prayers (Chowdhury Fink & El-Said, 2011). Moreover, the Moroccan government (and specifically the Ministry of International Affairs) has published a guide to educate individuals on Islam. The uses of this book extend beyond direct education; the book has also been shared with religious leaders in Morocco (Rausch, 2009). The contents of the book emphasize Islam as the government desires to see it, with an overall goal that religious leaders will highlight moderate Islam. The objective is for individuals to live according to the book's principles (Rausch, 2009). The government has also based television programs on the book, in which the contents of the book are taught on air. Overall, the government has "licensed twenty-eight new religious radio stations, both private and public, including the popular government-owned-and-run King Mohammed VI Radio Station" (Chowdhury Fink & El-Said, 2011: 12). They have been active in promoting such "moderate" interpretations of Islam through the use of media publications (such as books, as mentioned), as well as magazines, in order emphasize the state's position on what the role of Islam should be in Morocco (Chowdhury Fink & El-Said, 2011). Along with this, the government has allowed religious groups and leaders who are sympathetic to the government's position on Islam to set up their own media outlets. For example, websites (such as one led by the popular Al-Muhammadiya Foundation) not only contain information but they also allow a platform at which individuals can ask questions of religious leaders (Chowdhury Fink & El-Said, 2011). Thus, not only has the government encouraged religious leaders to speak for a particular interpretation of Islam but it has also supported travel for

Moroccan religious leaders to speak to Moroccans living abroad about the importance of moderate Islam (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2010). It seems that the interpretations of Islam supported by the government have been to "promote moderate and peaceful religious viewpoints" (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2010). In fact, in this new focus on Islam following the 2003 attacks, the government recognized Sufi Islam as one of the foundational "cornerstones" of Islamic identity in Morocco (Bekkaoui & Laremont, 2011), thus highlighting the importance of the tradition to the government.

Thus, not only has Morocco emphasized a more "moderate" Islam but the government has also invested resources to specifically promote Sufism, or "mystical Islam." Authorities have advocated Sufism in order to counter unwanted religious activists (Al Jazeera, 2008). Specifically, because the attacks were "perpetrated by Jihadist groups inspired by the literalist interpretations of Salafi Islam, the Moroccan regime closed dozens of Quranic schools that were believed to be the cent[er]s of Salafist preaching and pushed to kindle public interest in Sufism" (Habboush, 2009). The Moroccan government has showed an interest in using Sufism in its domestic religious policies because of what its sees as Sufism's "flexibility, clearly in comparison here with the rigidity of radical forms of religious interpretations" (Maghraoui, 2009: 206). In fact, even some Sufis themselves blame the increase in Islamic extremism in Morocco on the fact that Sufism has not played a larger role in society (Habboush, 2009). In discussing the use of Sufism in Morocco before and after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, Mohammad Zarif explains that "The significance of Sufism is determined by the nature of religious activists. This means that before the September 11 attacks in 2001, Sufism had a limited role to play. . . . But after September 11, the state became aware of the danger of the Salafi movement and started to make use of Sufism to create the desired balance" (Al Jazeera, 2008).

In terms of his specific support for Sufism, Mohammed VI has "brought together local Sufi leaders [in Morocco] and offered millions of dollars in aid to use as a bulwark against radical fundamentalism" (US News and World Report, 2005). The king has provided extensive financial support through donations to Sufi orders (Al-Ashraf, 2010). He has funded various Sufi *zawaya* in order to continue make visible this approach to Islam (Al-Ashraf, 2010). Sufism has been given a spotlight in Morocco, in which the government has helped highlight Sufi groups' ability to teach others about their beliefs (Al-Ashraf, 2010). The idea behind this promotion of Sufism is that Sufi "teaching can provide

a remedy for problems currently faced by states, such as terrorism and extremism" (Touahri, 2009).

One of the main Sufi orders with which Mohammed VI has worked has been the Bushishiyya order. The Bushishiyya, which came out of the Qādiriyya order (Zeghal, 2009), was "first established among the Berber tribes of the Beni Snassen Maasif (Northeast Morocco) in about 1942 by Abū Madyan ib Munawar al-Budshish . . . " (Sedwick, 2004: 133). The order's numbers have risen since the 1960s, with overall membership said to be around 15,000 persons (Zeghal, 2009: 89). Meanwhile, others have suggested that "[b]y 2009, the number has risen to 100,000, according to media estimates of adepts who attended the Mawlud ceremony" (As-Sabah, 2009, in Bekkaoui & Laremont, 2011: 36). In addition, the Bushishiyya are said to have a rising membership among "elites" in Morocco (Sedwick, 2004), as well as to have also more recently increased the attention they pay to youth education and youth recruitment in Morocco[4] (Bekkaoui & Laremont, 2011). Regarding Mohammed VI's reaching out to the Bushishiyya Sufi order, in an interview with *Al Jazeera* (2008), Mohamed Zarif explains that

> In 2002, the government appointed a member of the Buchachiya order—the strongest Sufi order in the country [,] as the minister in charge of Islamic endowments. More importantly, before 2002, we used to say that Morocco's Islamic identity was made up of two components: the Ash'ari creed and the Maliki Islamic doctrine. But since 2002, a third component has been added to our Islamic identity, that is, Sunni Sufism of Al-Junaid al-Salik order. Thus Sufism has become an integral part of the religious identity. (Al Jazeera, 2008)

In fact, Mohammed VI has also promoted Sufi Islam directly through government institutions. For example, the government branches of the Ministry of Endowments as well as Islamic Affairs (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2010) (Pruzan-Jorgensen, 2010) have both been given increased resources to emphasize moderate Islam. In fact, the ministry "has become a key player in official efforts to counter the attraction of the Islamists and to prevent religious radicalization" (Pruzan-Jorgensen, 2010). The importance of this ministry and the role that it plays in the promotion of Sufism against the Islamists is even evident with Mohammed VI's appointments of individuals to government positions. For example, the current head of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs is Ahmad Tawfiq, who was appointed by Mohammad VI. Tawfiq is a "religious scholar and adherent of the most influential

Sufi brotherhood in Morocco, the Qadiri-Boutchici (Rausch, 2009), or *Boutchichiyya zawiyya* (Pruzan-Jorgensen, 2010). This is a shift from the previous minister, Abdelkebir Alaoui M'Daghri. Julie Pruzan-Jorgensen (2010) explains about this move in the leadership that

> [t]his replacement was very symbolic of a new, reforming line in regime policies towards the religious sphere, indicating a will to change from a staunchly doctrinal stance towards one officially promoting (and controlling) a new and moderate "Moroccan" Islam, which increasingly relies on and promotes the Sufi heritage (promoted as a national heritage and a key source of moderation and tolerance). (19)

Tawfiq has been one of the major officials in promoting religion in Morocco (Rausch, 2009). In fact, "Tawfiq issued a communiqué urging the ulama and preachers to invoke Sufi saints and celebrate their achievements in their sermons and lectures" (Bekkaoui & Laremont, 2011: 37). Furthermore, he has often referenced Sufism in his own novels (Bekkaoui & Laremont, 2011).

The different Moroccan religious leaders are organized within the Islamic Affairs Ministry (Pruzan-Jorgensen, 2010), and within this, there are programs that specifically increase the role of women religious leaders in society. Some have argued that part of the reason for the government's strong interest in recruiting females to fill religious positions is because Mohammed VI is conscious of the international attention with regards to gender rights that is present (Rausch, 2009). Margaret Rausch explains the thinking behind this by saying that "[a]dding mourchidate as women representatives of the state to the mix sends a message that [Mohammad VI] is an advocate of gender equality, and that Islam, in particular the approach to it that is at the basis of Morocco's cultural heritage and political system, promotes democratic values further enhances this image and reputation" (11). In fact, the Budshishi Sufi order has been instrumental in Mohammed VI's initiative of promoting the Islamic education of women, and in particular, women from historically "less privileged groups" (Rausch, 2009: 12). The Qadiri-Budshishi order has continued to go into secondary and tertiary schools—in an attempt to increase enrollment numbers in their order (Rausch, 2009). Part of the reason for the emphasis on the universities is that this is where students are most likely to become involved in politics, and so, by promoting this "nonpolitical" message of Sufism, they aim to thwart any drive that individuals may have toward politics (Langlois, 2009). They have devoted a significant amount of attention

to bringing women into the order, setting up "the annual camp help in Brikan in Auguste where they meet other young female members like themselves, and intensify their knowledge of Islam, Sufism, and praise poetry chanced into the women's Dhikr held in the order's zawiyas throughout the country" (Rausch, 2009: 12), as well as placing some women in educational positions within the order (Rausch, 2009). Moreover, the government often sends "Female religious advisors to many mosques . . . " (Charai, 2011). The idea behind such government initiatives "is ultimately part of a much more extensive strategy intended to systematize, monitor, and ensure uniformity in religious practice and religious educational activities throughout the country" (Rausch, 2009: 4). What is interesting behind the government's institutional support for the Budshishi, however, is the argument by some that Bushishiyya Sufism does not see "the function of the *shaykh* as patron and intermediary in political and economic affairs (though it remains to be seen how well this will resist the pressures created by increasing Budshishi presence in government)" (Sedwick, 2004: 139). This allows political leaders to continue to maintain their authority without being challenged by Sufi leaders.

Thus, overall, the Budshishi order has been critical of the king's policies toward Islam in Morocco. As alluded to, the Budshishi "has offered many advantages to the state, including[:] Wide membership, nationally and internationally[;] Recruits from middle-class and high-profile intellectuals and social elite[;] Influence in both rural and urban areas throughout the country[;] Stricter adherence to the Sharia and Sunni Islam [;] [as well as] [i]ts youth membership" (Bekkaoui & Laremont, 2011: 35). Moreover, the order's more lax positions on clothing and appearance for females (such as veiling) and males (such as not requiring a beard) "coincides perfectly with the state's cultural modernization policy as part of the project to reform theology" (Bekkaoui & Laremont, 2011: 36). Along with the support of the Budshishi, as well as the promotion of Sufism through government ministries, Mohammed VI has also taken other steps to promote this religion. Within the government-promoted book on Islam discussed earlier, there are a number of specific references to Sufism, as well as the benefits that Sufi thought has for overall Islamic belief (Rausch, 2009). The government has also supported a number of different Sufi music events and festivals. These festivals have brought together a host of academics and performers "around a variety of themes such as Sufism, human rights, intercultural dialogue, religious tolerance and human development" (Maghraoui, 2009: 207). One of the most influential events used by the

government to promote Sufism is the organization of the Fez Festival of Sacred Music. This festival is a week-long event in which Sufi singers, thinkers, and followers head to Morocco for a week of prayer and discussion on topics related to Sufism. The event itself has political undertones, particularly when examined within the context of terrorism after September 11, 2001. This festival, which has the backing of the government, emphasizes "exotic representations of an Islam that is inclusive, diverse, and unthreatening. Musical, 'cultured' and even 'new age', the Fes Festival presents the West with images and sounds which counter more frightening discourses" (Langlois, 2009: 2). And "Fawzi Skalli, former director of the Fez Sacred Music festival and director of the Fez Culture Festival, is a member of the Boutchichiyya order" (Bekkaoui & Laremont, 2011: 37), and views Sufism as "a form of spirituality that harmoniously combines cultural authenticity with the requirements of modernity" (Bekkaoui & Laremont, 2011: 37).

Along with the Fez music festival, the government has also supported what is known as the Sidi Chiker National Gatherings of Sufi Partisans. In a 2008 speech that Mohammed VI gave to the Sidi Chiker National Gatherings of Sufi Partisans (Agence Maghreb Arabe Presse, 2008), he seemed to continue the message that Sufism refrains from politics by saying:

> Although mysticism is mostly about communion and spiritual refinement, it also impacts society in several ways; for example, through acts of solidarity, mutual assistance, by wanting good things for others, through forgiveness and tolerance, and by addressing the minds and the hearts to cleanse them. It is important to stress, in this respect, that Sufi zawiyas should seek to remain true to the concept of purity upon which they are based. They should forego earthly pursuits. Sufi disciples should steer away from acts and attitudes which do not become them, give up any quest for worldly rewards and, instead, seek higher, loftier goals. (Agence Maghreb Arabe Presse, 2008)

He highlights the importance of Sufism to Moroccan culture by further saying

> As for service to the nation, it is accomplished through the observance of your duties and obligations towards the ultimate Imamate, namely the Commandership of the Faithful, and the keen desire to preserve the cultural specificities of Morocco and protect them against alien trends and influences. (Agence Maghreb Arabe Presse, 2008)

In 2009, the government under Mohammed VI also backed the Second World Sid Chiker Gathering (Sidi Chiker, 2011) in Marrakech, Morocco, which over 1,000 Sufi Muslims attended. A letter written by Mohammed VI was presented at this event. The letter emphasized the historical relationship between Moroccan leaders and Sufi sheiks. In his remarks, read at the event by the Moroccan Minister of Religious Affairs (Sidi Chiker, 2011), Mohammed VI stated that

> This gathering is being held under my patronage to show how deeply I care for Sunni Sufism in my capacity as Amir Al-Muminin and Guardian of the Faith. Sufism is indeed one of the characteristic spiritual and ethnical components of the Moroccan identity; it is fully consistent with the blessed Sunnah and the pristine Islamic Shariah. (Sidi Chiker, 2011)

He went on to say that

> You are all aware of the symbolic relationship which has always existed between Imarate Al Muminin (Commandership of the Faithful) in this nation and the chief Sufi leaders. They have endeav[or]ed together to preserve the country's Sunni creed and its doctrinal orientations. (Sidi Chiker, 2011)[5]

Margaret Rausch (2009) explains the history and importance of the title Commander of the Faithful to the King, and the relationship to Sufi Islam when she says that

> The parameters defining the monarchy and maintaining its legitimacy have been in place since the founding of the current 'Alawite dynasty in the 17th century. Like his predecessors, Mohammed VI bears the title of *amir al-mu'minin*, or the Commander of the Faithful, *sharif*, or descendant of the Prophet Muhammad, and caliph, or successor of the Prophet as head of the Muslim community. These titles underscore the status of Islam, and in particular the state's approach to it, as the official national religion. The practices constituting the annual ceremonial renewal of these titles, besides ensuring the absolute authority of the kind and the unconditional obedience of the Moroccan population to him, are replete with symbolic references to Sufi elements inherent in its roots and underpinnings. These ceremonies represent the relationship between the king and his subjects as parallel to that of the master-disciple relationship in the Sufi context, and the king's role mirrors that of the Sufi saint with intercessory powers in particular with regards to his status, authority and role vis-à-vis the parliament (Tozy, 1999). These

> titles, and their ceremonial renewal, contribute to the state's strategies to encourage Sufi affiliation. It is within this deeply engrained structure for power maintenance that Mohammed VI has distinguished himself through his political actions as being democratic, liberal, and even on occasion a feminist. (7)

Also in Mohammed VI's letter, he continued to iterate the importance of Sufism in regard to issues in Morocco, specifically stating that "[i]n addition to their ability to identify the roots of the problem and propose solutions, . . . the great perspicacity of the Sufis has helped them to identify a way forward whenever the interests of our community have been at stake" (Touahri, 2009). In another speech that Mohammed VI wrote for the Sidi Chiker International Sufi Conference (Dar Sirr, 2012), speaking of past Sufi orders, he stated that "they helped to abolish the many manifestations of social seclusion by urging people to compete for charitable causes, and to renounce the material for the spiritual."

But while this relationship between the Boutchichi and the government at first glance may seem only to benefit the state, Sufi groups also gain by working with the government. In the king's approach to Sufi Islam, the Boutchichi have been able to present Sufism to the entire public in a manner that challenges prior assumptions about Sufism and gives them increased political and cultural power. Furthermore, since "Moroccan Islam" is emphasized as a "Sufi-inspired Islam," religious orders are now openly present throughout the state's messages of religion, not only providing them with increased exposure but also doing so with a state that is willing to back their activities. Thus, the Boutchichi order is able to promote the faith with state resources, and all the while, religious political parties such at the PJD and JC are either banned (as in the case of JC) or treated with some suspicion. Such political and financial backing serves the order well in terms of promoting its faith to youth, as well as those who have previously questioned Sufi practices. Furthermore, Boutchichi leaders themselves say that the meetings, events, and religious festivals allow one to "go beyond the stereotyped ideas about Sufism by projecting it as a progressive movement able of coping positively with contemporary and intellectual issues" (Bekkaoui & Laremont, 2010: 37).

And it seems that the order's approach is working. In a 2010 public opinion study directed toward Moroccan youth and their attitudes toward Sufism, Bekkaoui, Laremont, and Rddad (2011) found that Moroccan youth attitudes toward Sufi orders were rather positive, with many moving toward Sufism.[6] Bekkaoui, Laremont, and Rddad (2010)

argue that part of this may be due the government attention to promoting Sufi orders in a positive light. Thus, this evidence seems to suggest that by supporting Sufism, both the state and the Boutchichiyya order are fulfilling their objectives. The state benefits by being tied to a religious organization that it sees as either nonpolitical or in line with its policies, and it reduces the power of the Islamist challengers. In turn, the Sufi order benefits by increasing awareness of its name, reputation, and activities, all the while bringing in more youth to the order, which not only helps its numbers but can also make recruitment more difficult for political parties.

Overall, the Moroccan government has promoted a specific Islamic agenda, one with strong Sufi overtones, in order to combat any other interpretation of Islam. But with this increased interest in Islam, and namely Sufi Islam, the Moroccan government has not been consistent in its policy toward religion, as it has advocated the role of the mosque, while at the same time establishing other policies that are seen as against religion (Mostapha El-Khalfi, Director of the Moroccan Centre of Contemporary Studies and Religion, cited in Al Jazeera, 2009). Thus, it seems as if the government is treating Sufism differently. Abbas Boughanem, in an interview with Al-Arabiya (with Hassan Al-Ashraf), emphasizes the idea that Mohammed VI has promoted Sufism not just to combat religious extremism but also because of the belief that Sufis will teach others "who follow them some kind of political passivity" (Al-Ashraf, 2010). Maghraoui (2009) explains this dual use of Sufism in Morocco, saying that

> [t]hrough the organization of the famous Fez spiritual festival as well as through special TV and radio programmes, Sufism is now experiencing a significant revival in the Moroccan public sphere as part of a religiosity that encourages interfaith dialogue, universalism, tolerance, love, peace, harmony through a language that is effectively depoliticized. (206)

Because Sufism is often perceived as being nonviolent, and thus preferred by the government, this "[a]bsence of political ambition among Sufi groups has made them the Moroccan government's way of choice to fight extremism" (Al-Ashraf, 2010). It is within this approach that Mohammed VI has been attempting to use Sufism as part of his domestic policy to counter Islamist groups (and specifically Salafi Islam) (Al Jazeera, 2009), although the level of "success" in such policies is unclear (Mostapha El Khalifi, in Al Jazeera, 2009). Sufism has therefore been used as a critical tool by the Moroccan government because the

leadership seems to want individuals to practice a religion that does not emphasize becoming involved in the political system, and their belief seems to suggest that Sufism falls under this structure of not emphasizing political action (Al Jazeera, 2008). The government's interest in Sufi Islam is not solely due to some increased interest in Sufism for the sake of itself, but rather, such promotion of Sufi Islam have been an underlying attempt by the monarchy to further consolidate its political and cultural influence, partly to stress the depoliticized role of Sufism (as the government aims to pitch the faith), and partly as a tool against political challengers. Throughout its history, the monarchy has "managed religious and ethnic movements lest they become a political threat to their authority and current state approval of this development is no different in that regard" (Langlois, 2009: 4). Again, the reason for the promotion of Sufism seems to have very little to do with a personal belief in Sufism, but rather, due to the political value that this brings to the monarchy, at "both national and international levels" (Langlois, 2009: 4). Thus, the government is attempting to emphasize a "moderate" and "nonpolitical" Islam (Langlois, 2009: 4), in the hopes of maintaining political control, and in particular in the hopes of preventing the rise and additional political strength of Islamist groups. In a working paper, Margaret Rausch (2009) explains the overall intention of the government, saying that "[t]he entire program can be assessed . . . [partially] as an act of authoritarianism, a move to strengthen the ability of the king and his government to influence the ideas and actions of the Moroccans living throughout the country, as well as those residing abroad as temporary emigrates or expatriates" (6). In an interview with *Al-Arabiya* (with Hassan al-Ashraf, 2010), Dr. Rashid Moqtader spoke about the government's motivations behind this strategy of supporting one group in the attempt to reduce the power of other religious groups, saying that "[t]he state uses one power against another whether directly through financial, legal, or moral support or indirectly through facilitating legal or judicial procedures or even overlooking certain violations."

As mentioned, these actions are used as counterbalances against the rising influence of Islamist organizations in Morocco. Mohammed VI has employed Sufism to counter challenging political parties such as the Islamist PJD (al-Ashraf, 2010), which is seen as "a major political force" (McFaul & Wittes, 2008: 22), and the biggest political threat to his regime. In fact, "Islamist parties and organizations [operating within the political system] pose the most serious challenge to the king's power. They could inject a new dynamic into Moroccan politics, possibly leading to political reform" (Ottaway & Riley, 2006: 14). The PJD

has gained in popularity by running on an anticorruption platform, all the while being an active provider of a range of social services in the state (McFaul & Wittes, 2008).[7] This popularity became further evident with its recent 2011 electoral success. The party's victory at the polls has allowed it to hold the position of prime minister. This poses a challenge to Mohammed VI, as the king has had to give up what some see as significant control (even though he still maintains enormous amounts of power). Moreover, along with the king's having to relinquish some additional power to a PJD-led government that has gained part of its popularity through its emphasis on social programs, the PJD's allowing religious leaders to debate and decide on issues related to Islamic law and Islamic interpretations could pose another threat to the king's historical claim as the top religious leader (Maghraoui, 2012). Lastly, the PJD's increased institutional power may make Morocco's (and the king's) ties with allies in Europe and the United States more of an issue (Maghraoui, 2012). What is interesting is that the PJD has been so popular that secular parties in the past have joined together to support Mohammed VI in order to counter any Islamist challenge, and some suggest that such parties could either side with the Islamists against the king or become part of the government, in order to gain some political power, but at the expense of not advancing a democratic system against the political repression of the king (Ottaway & Riley, 2006). However, for the PJD, not being aligned with the undemocratic leadership of Mohammed VI has helped bring it political success (McFaul & Wittes, 2008).

But while the PJD's recent electoral success has solidified it as a serious electoral challenger to the monarchy of Mohammed VI, it is not the only Islamist group to have strong popular backing. Another political Islamist organization that poses a serious threat to Mohammed VI is *Jamiat* (Cavatorta, 2006), also known as *Al adl wal Ihsan* (Pruzan-Jorgensen, 2010), or Justice and Charity (JC). JC, formed in 1985 (Cavatorta, 2006: 212), "is technically illegal . . ." (Cavatorta, 2006: 212) in Morocco, and has been so since 1990, although since the reign of Mohammed VI, it has attempted to become recognized (Amghar, 2007). This inability to declare itself as a party has made it difficult to know the exact number of supporters the organization has (Cavatorta, 2006), although numbers as high as 100,000 (Thorne, 2010) and even 200,000 have been reported (Reuters, in MSNBC, 2011). The organization has a large base among lower socioeconomic groups in Morocco, as well as strong support in the universities of Morocco (Reuters, in MSNBC, 2011).[8] The organization was formed by Abdelsalam Yassine, who

became well known for his public criticism of the policies of Hassan II. It was in 1974 that a letter written by Yassine criticizing Hassan II, along with further criticism, landed him in "internment" (Pruzan-Jorgensen, 2010: 15). After he served this term (which lasted three years), he began to form JC (Thorne, 2010). Since its creation, JC has been highly critical of the monarchy for a lack of civil, political rights, and socioeconomic rights in the country. The organization increased its popularity among student and labor groups in the 1980s. Because of the overall threat by JC to the monarchy, Hassan II proposed to Yassine to set up an official party. However, Yassine declined (Pruzan-Jorgensen, 2010). The reason for this is again the concern that when a group gets pulled into the system, it will, through agreeing to form a party, have to accept the idea that the king is indeed the "Commander of the Faithful," a major issue with the JC (Pruzan-Jorgensen, 2010). In 1989, Yassine was again placed under house arrest. Yassine was released in 2000 under the regime of Mohammed VI (Thorne, 2010).

This criticism of the monarchy by the JC has not been limited to comments from Yassine. One of the most current public members is Nadia Yassine, the spokesperson for the JC (Cavatora, 2006: 215) (and daughter of Abdelsalam Yassine), was arrested in 2005 for criticizing the government structure in Morocco, "for saying that she would prefer a republican system to Morocco's hereditary monarchy" (Abdelhadi, 2005). The reason for her arrest stems from the idea that attacking the monarchy "has been a taboo for a long time in Morocco" (Cavatorta, 2006: 218). Her criticism of the state has not stopped there. In fact, she has said that "the monarchy is not made for Morocco" (Amghar, 2007: 17), and that "the Constitution deserves to be thrown upon the garbage heap of history" (Amghar, 2007: 17). She has also traveled throughout Europe to speak against the brutality resulting from actions by police, as well as to criticize the political system in Morocco (Amghar, 2007). While making such comments against the monarchy could (and often has) get members of the group in trouble, leaders of the JC have continued to advocate removing the current system of power, "although [the position has been that] change should not occur through violence but through civil society activism" (Cavatorta, 2006: 213). However, the party has done this not through advocating violence, but rather through nonviolent actions. The group has distanced itself from the violence used decades ago (Amghar, 2007).

This point about shunning the current political system is important. Unlike the PJD, the JC has no interest in the electoral system, although it is highly critical of Mohammed VI and his claim of "legitimacy." The

JC has argued that becoming involved in elections will just play into the hands of the monarchy, in that the groups will be brought into the system without being given real political concessions (Cavatorta, 2006). And thus, they have been active in speaking out against Mohammed VI, and have had no interest in being officially included in the political system with which they take issue. In particular, they have found both Article 19 (the notion that the king is the Commander of the Faithful) and Article 21 (that "the King is sacred and inviolate" (Economist, 2009a) problematic, and have wanted these articles removed from the constitution (Economist, 2009a).

One interesting point about the JC that is worth noting and which adds further complexity to the regime's strategy of promoting Sufism, is that the JC sees itself as a Sufi-based political party, suggesting that its objective is "to Islamicise society non-violently through education" (Amghar, 2007: 17). Thus, the organization's religious affiliation seems to complicate this "good Muslim bad Muslim" dichotomy in which the Sufi falls into the "good," politically disinterested, materially distant individual. In an interview with John Thorne (2010) of the *National*, Mohamed Darif explains the relationship between Sheikh Yassin's Sufism and politics, saying that "Sheikh Yassine is a Sufi par excellence[,]" "[b]ut he has politicized Sufism." Thus, a group that emphasized Sufi spiritual techniques to reach God (Thorne, 2010) is clearly not outside of an interest in politics, nor is the group submitting to the government through intimidation or through moving itself away from politics. In 2010, a trial began for seven members of the group who were detained by the government and accused of carrying out a kidnapping of an individual. They were also accused of torturing that person. Thus, the government has clearly found issues related to the organization. Along with this, the government is even attempting to "divide" religious groups in Morocco (Cavatorta, 2007). In fact, the king has been able to pin two major Sufi-influenced religious groups—Jamait al-Adl and the Bushishiyya order—against one another. Cavatorta (2007) explains that, because of not only the popularity of Jamait al-Adl (led by Sheikh Abdelsalam Yassine) but also due to their strong protest against the political system within Morocco,

> The monarchy entertains privileged relations with the *Tarīqa* and its leaders. This alliance is possible because the *Tarīqa* does not challenge the *imarat al mouminine* and does not believe that the association should be directly engaged in politics, but should instead only be concerned with the betterment of the individual members. The King therefore

> supports the *Tarīqa* in order to strengthen his religious legitimacy and to have privileged access to the religious bourgeoisie that the association represents. In exchange, the *Tarīqa* enjoys freedom from scrutiny and, occasionally, obtains political [favors] like the royal appointment of the leader's son to the post of governor of the Berkane province. (Jamai, 2005, in Cavatorta, 2007)

But despite such government actions, the JC not only continues to be one of the major Islamist groups but is even seen by some as "Morocco's biggest Islamist organization" (Abdelhadi, 2005). It has had large success in organizing support for events. In an interview with Avi Spiegel (2011), in 2005, a protester was quoted as saying, "[w]e can bring thousands to the streets at the press of a button. No one else can do that here." In a 2006 interview with Kyle McEneaney of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, when asked about the goals of the JC, Nadia Yassine explained that its emphasis is on promoting Islam in society through nonviolence. When asked about how it is able to make an impact on Moroccan society without becoming involved in politics, Yassine responded by saying that "[They] are practicing something like guerrilla warfare against the regime—not in a bloody sense, but rather symbolically with hit-and-run tactics. We try to spread political and intellectual awareness, which weakens the regime's grip on power. Justice and Charity has been made possible by the emboldening of a civil society founded by the regime, but which has not moved beyond its control . . . " (in McEneaney, 2006).[9]

In addition to the party's ability to organize, it has also been able to attract and maintain a large support system partially because of its emphasis on a number of social programs in Morocco (Abdelhadi, 2005; Amghar, 2007). Citizens, including many of the youth, have been strongly supportive of the work that the JC carries out in Morocco (Bekkaoui & Laremont, 2010: 56). This approach is not out of the ordinary for both nonviolent and violent Islamist groups in the Middle East and North Africa. For example, one of the major Islamist organizations in the Middle East, namely the Muslim Brotherhood, made social services a key part of its organization. Hassan Al-Bannah founded the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt in 1928. It gained much of its support because of a number of factors, one of which was the "political opportunity structure" (Munson, 2001) during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. Namely, the Muslim Brotherhood was speaking out against the British presence in Egypt, was critical of the Wafd Party—which once was a main anti-colonialist voice—only to be made part of the government by

Britain before World War II, and was an outspoken critic of Israel. But this was not the only reason for its success.

The Muslim Brotherhood was officially banned after a failed assassination attempt against Gamal Abdel Nasser. However, Anwar Sadat later allowed the Muslim Brotherhood to operate, and Hosni Mubarak similarly allowed the organization to engage in social service activities, so long as it was not a political threat to his government. However, starting in the early to mid-1990s, a crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood and its candidates occurred, and this continued well into the December 2010 elections in Egypt (Amnesty International, 2010). But even though the Muslim Brotherhood had a difficult time running in elections (as it continued to be banned and thus its members ran as independents), it was able to survive and still maintain domestic credibility among large segments of civil society because of its demonstration of support for programs for citizens in Egypt. Throughout the years of the Muslim Brotherhood, it has continued to build its social service activity. In fact, it is so much a part of society in Egypt, that Shadi Hamid, Director of the Brookings Doha Center, has described the Muslim Brotherhood as "opera[ting] as a kind of state-within-a-state, with its own set of parallel institutions, including hospitals, schools, banks, cooperatives, daycare centers, thrift shops, social clubs, facilities for the disabled, and even Boy Scout troops" (Hamid, 2011: 72). Hamid (2011) goes on to explain the vast presence of the Muslim Brotherhood by saying that "[m]illions depend on this vast social infrastructure for everything from access to jobs and affordable healthcare to small grants for starting businesses and even financial support to get married" (72).

Thus, by taking similar approaches to supporting social programs, the PJD and the JC have become visible and popular organizations in Morocco. Even non-Islamist organizations that take issue with the Islamist groups have recognized their influence in the promotion of social services, so much so that they have tried to counter such influence themselves, although a number of non-Islamist groups have had trouble providing services on the same level, due to a lack of comparable finances (Cavatorta, 2006). In fact, such Islamist groups are much more focused on socioeconomic as well as cultural issues in Morocco. In the case of the PJD, it

> remains a culturally, socially and religiously conservative organization, focusing much of its energy on social justice and of combating corruption as well as on highly symbolic issues within the socio-cultural domain (combating alcohol, prostitution, homosexuality etc.)—while remaining

> fundamentally complacent when it comes to the political prerogatives and religious legitimacy of the regime. (Pruzan-Jorgensen, 2010: 12)

Furthermore, they actually have a "parallel institution" with the "Harakat al-Islah wa at-Tawhid, Movement of Unity and Form, MUR" (Pruzan-Jorgensen, 2010: 11) that is more focused on the religious message of the organization, whereas the PJD emphasizes more its political role (Pruzan-Jorgensen, 2010).

The 2011 Moroccan Protests

Following the "Arab Spring," which began in 2010 and went into 2011, a number of protesters took to the streets in Morocco on February 20, 2011, to demand increased rights from Mohammed VI. In response, the king said that he would organize a commission to look into changing the constitution in a way that would give more independence to judges and provide more power to other branches of government, as well as increase the role of the prime minister (Hussein, 2011). Along with the February 20 protest, another protest on March 20—in which over 4,000 persons were said to have demonstrated against the monarchy—was actually organized by "the youth organization of the Justice and Charity Association [,]" in addition to a number of human rights organizations (Hussein, 2011). As we know, the JC has been highly critical of the monarchy and has said that the protests in North Africa "left no place today for distortions . . . and empty, false promises" (Reuters, in MSNBC, 2011). Furthermore, the JC has been one of the major organizations organizing the protests against Mohammed VI in Morocco. The Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED) (2011) explains that the JC specifically "called for 'autocracy' to be 'swept away' and that the government should undertake 'deep democratic reform'."

In response to these protests, "[i]n a March 9 speech, King Mohammed VI announced major political changes to increase judicial independence and the separation of powers. The next day, he established a commission tasked with proposing changes to the constitution by June" (Agence France-Presse, 2011). Some of the major concessions by Mohammed VI in March 2011 included releasing many political prisoners, a number of whom were members of Salafist Jihad as well as other Islamist groups whom human rights groups saw as not having been given due process (Agence France-Presse, 2011). Another protest was organized on April 3, 2011, at which a number of groups from February 20 were present, including JC (AfricaReview, 2011). As a response to these protests,

Mohammed VI in the early part of 2011 took what seemed to be further measures to calm protesters. In his response to them, he called for a number of constitutional changes. Some of these included changing the constitutional language referencing the king; the language was changed from "sacred" to "inviolable." In addition, the parliament was given additional "oversight of civil rights, electoral and nationality issues" (BBC, 2011c). Moreover, the constitutional reforms called for additional rights for women within the constitution, with specific references to "'civic and social' equality with men" as opposed to the previous language, which merely referenced "'political' equality" (BBC, 2011c). Also, some additional rights protections were proposed for the Berber population, such as including Berber within the set of state-recognized languages (BBC, 2011c). One of the other major changes to the constitution was allowing the position of prime minister to go to the party that came out victorious in the parliamentary elections. This differs from past law, which permitted the king to select anyone for the position. The role of prime minister has also been given additional power, as whoever holds the position is also the leader of the government, as opposed to Mohammed VI. Moreover, the prime minister has "the power to dissolve the lower house of parliament[,]" as well as having the top position in the Government Council, a group that sets up the proposed legislation before submitting it to government cabinet members (BBC, 2011c). The king put these changes up to a referendum vote at the beginning of July 2011. According to the Interior Minister of Morocco, these changes were passed with 98.49 percent support (CNN, 2011). In the 2011 parliamentary elections, the PJD was victorious, winning 107 of the total seats (out of 395), the most of any one party, although less than half of Moroccans who could vote actually did so (with about 45.4% voting) (BBC, 2011d). As a result, Mohammed VI chose Abdelilah Benkirane from the PJD to serve as prime minister (Maghraoui, 2012).

But despite these alterations and developments, as well as some support for the referendums (CNN, 2011), many others have still been highly critical of the king, continuing to protest, as they argue that the reforms have done very little with regard to implementing legitimate political changes (BBC, 2011d). For example, the king still has substantial power within that state. His position continues to be one that is unelected, and he continues to control the Upper House of Parliament, the more influential of the two houses, as positions there are appointed (often by those who support the king), instead of by a public vote (McFaul & Wittes, 2008). Maghraoui (2001) explains the difference (and higher importance) of the Upper House compared to the Lower house by saying that

> The parliament's powers remain limited. A 1996 constitutional amendment provides for the direct election of the entire lower house, the Chamber of Representatives, thus doing away with the indirectly elected "socioprofessional" representatives who once made up one-third of its members and were often used by the central administration to block serious reforms. The same amendment, however, gives representatives in the upper house, the Chamber of Councilors, unparalleled legislative powers to check the lower house and to censure the government. Moreover, a whole battery of constitutional provisions (Articles 45, 46, 55, and 58) allows nonelected entities to enact laws or veto inconvenient texts emanating from the parliament. Thus, even if a government emerges from a clear majority in the Chamber of Representatives, the Moroccan constitution gives it no solid protection from royal prerogatives and administrative maneuvers. (79)

In addition to the control the king maintains regarding the upper house, he can still terminate the government (although now he must in theory "consult" with the prime minister) (CNN, 2011). Moreover, he has control of security issues, foreign affairs, and policies related to religion (BBC, 2011c). Specifically, the king has continued to be portrayed as the top religious figure (BBC, 2011b). Thus, because of this level of authoritarian control, a number of organizations, including the JC Party, have spoken out against the king, saying that these changes do very little to alter the political system. Such a system allows the king to maintain power without legitimate democratic reform (BBC, 2011c).[10] And because of the people's frustrations with the lack of full-scale political reform, protests in Morocco have continued, although not nearly at the level that existed before the constitutional referendum.

In fact, this is not the first time that Mohammed VI has carried out a set of government reforms. After coming to power in 1999, he put in place the first set of reforms that included a commission to examine human rights violations during the reign of his father, Hassan II. Moreover, he released political prisoners (McFaul & Wittes, 2008). However, until 2011, he picked his own prime minister, which was different from a 1997 act by Hassan II, in which he decided to include the opposition in the government (McFaul & Wittes, 2008). But similar to the recent forms, the past sets of changes were also not without criticism. For example, writing in 2001, Abdelsalam Maghraoui (2001) explained that despite the numerous reforms, the king still continued to hold extensive powers. In his analysis in which he examines the constitution, it becomes evident that the powers were still written within the law. In Article 19, the king is seen as "supreme representative of the

nation," which in effect gives him primary control. Moreover, the king can remove the cabinet from power, and until recently, in the summer of 2011, the king could do the same to the prime minster. The king can also call for "states of emergency," end parliament, and make law while the legislators are adjourned (Maghraoui, 2001: 79). In addition, separation between judges and the executive branch is virtually nonexistent, as rulings have often favored the state against individuals who have challenged the state (Freedom House, 2011a).

In addition, Articles 23 and 28 of the constitution make it against the law to speak negatively about the king's actions. Moreover, in other places in the constitution, this extends to members of the government, who "can lose their parliamentary immunity for expressing opinions that may be considered disrespectful to the king" (Maghraoui, 2001: 79). And because of this, many have been careful in their speech (Maghraoui, 2001). Thus, elections in Morocco's political system have historically done little to challenge the king's power. While the actual voting itself has been seen as contested, the true independence of parties outside of the influence of the king is highly limited. The king has supported parties that have backed his policies, while making it extremely difficult for those who are outside of his control and influence (Maghraoui, 2001).

In terms of the freedom of the press, while the government allows presses that fall outside of the control of government access to reports, they have still repressed the rights of journalists through other measures. For example, the editor of the *Akhbar al-Youm* newspaper was jailed for half a year on false charges (Freedom House, 2011a). In addition, the *Nichane* as well as the *Le Journal Hebdomadaire* outlets ended their operations due to "heavy financial pressure from a government-linked advertising boycott and a defamation penalty, respectively" (Freedom House, 2011a). But these were not the only news outlets affected. For example, *Al Jazeera* was also targeted. Employees of the company who were based in Morocco were unable to work in the country due to what the government saw as harsh treatment of their work on the conflict in the Western Sahara. In fact, other international journalists in Morocco also reported being interfered with while they worked on this issue (Freedom House, 2011a) (as the Western Sahara has been a critical issue for the Moroccan government)[11] (Dunbar & Malley-Morrison, 2009; Zoubir, 2007). The government has also gone after bloggers who have spoken out against the government. One in particular, Boubekeur al-Yadib, was arrested and jailed for calling for individuals to protest on behalf of speech rights (Freedom House, 2011a). Such actions echo the literature on the actions of liberal autocracies.

This has led to many citizens within Morocco becoming frustrated with the electoral system, often leading many to either not vote or to spoil ballots (Maghraoui, 2001). Citizens view the lack of democracy and human rights as a problem, and yet, the Moroccan government receives great support from outside states. In addition, we find a government that clearly is not a "liberal democracy," abuses citizen human rights, and yet seems to promote religion—and namely Sufism—not because it is truly committed to notions of human rights, but rather, because it sees a clear political benefit from emphasizing Sufism. As the government becomes involved in championing certain religious perspectives, it seems to do so with the intent to maintain power. The Islamists (both the PJD, as well as JC) and other citizens who take issue with the authoritarianism of the monarchy are challenges to the state. Thus, Sufism serves as a tool for the government to reduce such threats to the state. But along with the benefit of countering challengers such as the Islamists, it seems that Mohammed VI also views Sufism as apolitical. And by attempting to frame Sufism in this manner, he seems to be calling for spiritual movements that lack political interest, which again serve his interest.

So, the issue moves away from examining the contributions of Sufism to human rights. We are not talking about nongovernmental organizations promoting understandings of Sufism. What I am critical of is a leader who has suppressed the rights of millions both in Morocco as well as the Sahrawi, and yet attempts to suggest he is concerned about the positive contributions of Sufism to society, when his policies show very little in the way of sufficient and complete transformation toward a full human rights paradigm. Thus, the government is attempting to manipulate Sufism for political interest. As discussed earlier, the Moroccan government has been critical of the JC group and its operations in Morocco. For example, in 2010, a trial began for seven members of the group who were detained by the government and accused of carrying out a kidnapping of an individual. They were also accused of torturing that person. Thus, the government has clearly found issues with the organization. However, as mentioned, this group does not fall within the projected framework of a "Sufi" versus "Islamist" dichotomy. The group is influenced by Sufism, and also is highly political, with its primary interest being the removal of the king from power.

To conclude this chapter, the government of Morocco under Mohammed VI has either taken an approach in favor of activities that are either seen as more distant from Islam or, more specifically, has promoted a particular type of Islam, namely Sufi Islam, as opposed to

other interpretations of Islam (BBC, 2009). Specifically, after the 2003 attacks, Mohammed VI made it a point to re-emphasize Islam, not only the faith in general, but rather how Islam "should" be practiced, and how it has traditionally been practiced in Morocco, namely through Sufism (Ghoulaichi, 2005). As Fatima Ghoulaichi (2005) has argued, through his speeches, "Mohamed VI valorizes the mystic Sufi as an exemplary figure, and opposes him to the politically engaged Islamist whom he indirectly denigrates as the Sufi's antithesis—an epitome of bigotry, fanaticism, and grudge. He implicitly blames the attacks upon the waning of the Sufi spirit in Moroccan society, and encourages the participants in the conference to revive the spirit as a counter-measure against extremism and intolerance" (41).

However, he has done this by really choosing a "selective history" (Ghoulaichi, 2005) toward Sufi leaders, by highlighting various contributions of Sufi sheiks in Morocco's history. However, he does this in a manner that allows him to promote his own position. As Ghoulaichi mentions, "[d]epicting the saint as a traditional supporter of the sharifian monarchy would promote the image of Moroccan society as a peaceful one in which the icons of temporal and spiritual power are allied in their joined effort to serve the Muslim community. On the other hand, asserting the traditional support of the saint for the king legitimizes the authority of the latter" (42). This connection is particularly important for him, because not only does he gain religious credibility (where the notion of possessing *Baraka* is losing support by Moroccans) but he is also helping to promote a form of Islam that he sees as apolitical (Ghoulaichi, 2005).

CHAPTER 4

Appealing to Sufi Orders and Shrines: The Case of Government Sufi Advocacy in Pakistan

The history of Sufism in the Indian subcontinent spans centuries, and continues to be influential both in the spiritual and the political realm of society. Historically, as well as today, various groups are vying for "political authority" in the state (Rozehnal, 2007: 21). These political differences have also extended to the religious groups. For example, three of the main historical influences of most modern-day religious groups in Pakistan are the Deoband, the Ahl-e-Hadith, and the Sufis (Lieven, 2011). Anatol Lieven (2011) explains that "all the Sunni Islamist groups . . . are drawn from one of two traditions: the Deobandi, named after a famous madrasa founded in Deoband (now in Uttar Pradesh, India) in 1866, and the Ahl-e-Hadith ('People of the *hadiths*', or tradition attributed to the Prophet), a branch of the international Salafi . . . tradition, heavily influenced by Wahhabism, and with particularly close links to Arabia dating back to the original foundations of this tendency in the sixteenth century CE" (128). The Deoband message often rests on a notion of "a return to the pure teaching of the Quran and the Prophet" (Lieven, 2011: 128). Its influence can be seen with the Tablighi Jamaat and with Jamaat-Islami (JI) (Lieven, 2011: 129–130). The Ahl-e-Hadith (or the "Salafis"), while they also desire a return to the conditions that existed during the time of the Prophet Muhammad, do not have a major following in Pakistan, even though they trace their history back to the late 1900s (Zahab, 2009). Regarding their religious approach and foundation, the group solely emphasizes the Quran, the Hadith of Muhammad, and *qiyas*

(analogy), as well as *ijma* (consensus), which are four key aspects of sharia, or Islamic law (Cleveland & Bunton, 2008). Furthermore, they stress the role of *ijtihad*, or personal interpretation (for those who have sufficient qualifications to do so), viewing the concept as being of critical importance to their group, and they are generally less likely to be direct adherents of a particular Islamic school of thought (Reetz, 2006, in Zahab, 2009: 127) (rejecting any schools such as Hanafi, Hanbali, Shafi, Maliki, etc.), whereas the Deoband were based originally on the Hanafi school (Zahab, 2009). They also differ from the Deoband in that the Ahl-e-Hadith groups "are more extreme than the Deobandis, and less concerned with questions of modern social justice and development" (Lieven, 2001: 128). For example, out of the seventeen different Ahl-e-Hadith groups in Pakistan, six of the groups are active in the political arena, and three are active in physical jihad. The others focus more on spreading the message of Islam.[1]

Other differences also exist between the two groups. For example, they differ strongly in their approach to Sufism. The Deoband are more tolerant of Sufism, and are at least somewhat open to the role of the saint, even though they may take issue with how some Sufis go about approaching the notion of the saint. The Alh-e-Hadith, however, are far more critical of Sufis and the idea of sainthood (Lieven, 2011: 128–129). And because of the closer proximity of the Deoband to Sufis (and particularly to saints), the Ahl-e-Hadith often view the Deobandis as individuals who do not solely place their worship in God alone (Zahab, 2009: 129). Furthermore, the Ahl-e-Hadith believe that Sufi groups (such as the Barelvis) in Pakistan practice *shirk* (or the assigning of importance to other ideas besides God alone). This is an issue for the Ahl-e-Hadith, as they do want to worship anything besides God. They are also against any reference to Muhammad in prayers (Zahab, 2009). Thus, they take major issue with the Sufis because they "place emphasis on Sufi saints as intermediaries, have cults centered on shrines and holy relics, and venerate the Prophet as being made of light (*nur*) and have supernatural powers . . . " (128).

But while such groups may have a somewhat strong presence in Pakistan, many Pakistanis do not subscribe to groups associated with messages from the Deobandi or Ahl-e-Hadith, but rather, are connected to Sufi groups, and in particular the Barelvi order.[2] The Barelvi order was "named after a madrasah founded in 1880 in the town of Bareilly—also now in Uttar Pradesh, India" (Lieven, 2011: 129). Many of the beliefs and practices of the Barelvi order center around the role of the saint (Lieven, 2011). Politically, the Barelvis have expressed their

voice "through the Jamiat-ul-Ulema i-Pakistan (JUP)" Party (Talbot, 1988: 29), and have been played a role in the Mutahidda Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) alliance in the early twenty-first century. But while this is the case, they have not been strongly organized into a continuous political party (Lieven, 2011). In order to examine the dynamics between the range of political actors in Pakistan, and particularly looking at the government relationship with Sufi orders, we must first begin with a brief history of Sufism in Pakistan and Southeast Asia.

History of Sufism in Southeast Asia

In order to understand the historical influence of Sufism in Pakistan, one must begin by looking at the first introduction of Sufism to India (Hassan, 1987). Sufism was said to have arrived in India starting in the 1000s (ace), with the Chishti order taking hold toward the end of the 1100s (Ernst, 1992: 62), and to have further increased its areas of influence in the 1300s, along with other orders such as the Suhrawardiyya (Hassan, 1987: 554).[3] Looking at the development of Sufism in India, many of the initial orders had connections to orders in other states. But while this was the case, these new Sufi groups did not interact with the first established groups, but rather developed individual specific identities (Trimingham, 1971: 22).[4] The Sufi groups in India gained followers partly due to the influence of individual religious leaders within the orders. In the case of Sufism in India, Sufi groups took a couple of different forms. John Spencer Trimingham (1971) explains that "[t]here were two categories of Sufism, those associated with *khanaqahs* and the wanderers. The *khanaqahs* were in a special sense focal points of Islam—centres of holiness, fervour, ascetic exercises, and Sufi training. Contrary to the Arab-world institutions bearing the same Persian name, the Indian *khanaqahs* grew up around a holy man and became associated with his *tariqa* and method of discipline and exercises" (22). These Sufi leaders held a great deal of power, and their followers believed that their leaders had a close connection with the Divine. This belief extended well after the death of a Sufi leader. Often leaders' tombs were established as shrines for followers who believed that the deceased Sufi sheikh had the ability to "mediate with God" (Buehler, 1997). Arthur Buehler (1997) explains this relationship when he says that

> [i]n the mind of many Indian Muslims, both rural and urban, Sufi sheikhs (Arabic li. Elder, in Persian *pir*), whether dead or alive, derive their palpable worldly authority from their closeness to an utterly transcendent

> and distant God. Such connections to God enable Sufis to intercede on behalf of the believer in the same way that political and social relationships and interactions in northern India society require the use of mediators between various levels of the sociopolitical hierarchy.

Because of the influence of these individuals in India, political leaders took notice, and Sufi leaders in turn established relationships with the political leaders (Trimingham, 1971: 22–23). In a number of instances, government officials came to see the Sufi sheikhs (Ernst, 1992: 192). And while the reasons for the meetings varied, it is evident that the Sufi leaders (such as Burhan al-Din Ghraib, a leader of the Khuldabad Chishti Sufi order) had support from the members of the government (Ernst, 1992: 192). In fact, many adherents to the sheikh often saw the ties the sheikh had with the political leaders, and thus at times attempted to provide gifts, with the objective of receiving help from the religious leader in relation to the authorities (Ernst, 1992: 193).[5] Moreover, some Sufi leaders (such as Burhan al-Din Gharib) "often encouraged disciples to retain government posts, even when the disciples showed signs of wanting to renounce the world" (Ernst, 1992: 196).[6] Carl Ernst (1992) cites another situation that existed between the political and the spiritual leader (in this case Burhan al-Din Gharib) to further illustrate how Sufi leaders sometimes dealt with political leaders, and vice versa. The case reads as follows:

> The hagiographer Majd al-Din Kashani relates that Sultan Muhammad ibn Tughluq once came to Daulatabad and asked to see all the "*ulama*" and sheikhs. The noble Ahmad Ayaz Khwaja-i-Jahan informed him that he had seen all the religious leaders except Burhan al-Din Gharib. The sultan did not even want to hear the name of this shaykh, as in his youth he had met Burhan al-Din Gharib, but he later had proved to be so independent (*kamal-I istighna'*) that he paid no attention to the future king. But then the sultan decided that he wished to see Burhan al-Din Gharib anyway, and on a Friday after leading prayers he asked to go to the shaykh's house. Amir Khusraw's son Malik Mubarak ran ahead to tell the shaykh. The noise of the procession reached the house and alarmed Burhan al-Din Gharib, so he prayed that the sultan would not come. As it happened, the sultan suddenly had a change of heart and turned back. At this time, however, the sultan had some problems, and he sent three thousand *tankas* with Malik Na'ib Barbak and Firuz Shah as a gift to the shaykh. The sum was conveyed with the express wish that the shaykh give his blessing and help solve the problem. Burhan al-Din Gharib replied that he had no power to do this, so he returned the gift. The sultan realized that he infringed upon the customs of the Chishtis,

> so he sent the money back with the stipulation that it was only a gift for Burhan al-Din Gharib's attendants. This time it was accepted. Kaka Shad Bakhsh suggested that it be sent to the shaykh's house where there were already twenty *tankas* kept. Burhan al-Din Ghraib told him instead to bring that money and distribute it, together with the sultan's gift, at once. Majd al-Din was present and took part in this distribution. Malik Na'ib Barbak also witnessed this, and Burhan al-Din Gharib recited to him some admonitory verses about sowing what one reaps. He also sent the sultan a prayer carpet and some dates. (197–198)

The role and power of the Sufi *pir* was essential in regard to the government attitudes and approaches to the Sufis. Katherine Ewing (1983) explains the importance of *pirs* when she says,

> Though, according to Islamic doctrine, there can be no more prophets, the world and human society will still require spiritual guides and guardians. For this purpose, God has chosen *walis* ("friends" of God) and assigned each a specific territory of the world to watch over. In a theory that has evolved from the thirteenth century, these *walis*, commonly known in Pakistan as *pirs*, are organized in a hierarchy of authority. At the top is the *qutb* ("pole" or "axis"), who is responsible for the smooth operation of the entire world. (254)

She goes on to say that

> The saints of Pakistan, in contrast, are identified with the areas in which their shrines are situated. In rural areas many tribes are associated traditionally with a particular saint, who is thought to have originally converted that tribe to Islam The tribe usually retains memory of the conversion as a focus for maintaining the traditional tie with the shrine. (Ewing, 1983: 255)

Thus, the Sufi *pir* was (and is) seen as an influential figure for individuals and groups. In fact, the *pir* has a number of roles that include "act[ing] as a mediator between them [(the citizens)] and God" (Ewing, 1983: 255). The belief is that these *pirs*, through a spiritual "chain of authority," can bless individuals in society (Ewing, 1983: 255).

Thus, it is evident when looking at the history of Sufi leaders and orders in India and modern-day Pakistan, that Sufism has had a strong influence on Islam and received a high level of attention (and often respect) from political leaders. But while such Sufi leaders possessed such power during their lifetimes, Sufi spiritual authority continued to exist well after Sufi leaders passed. Riaz Hassan (1987) explains that

> [w]ith the passage of time the *khanqahs*, as a socioreligious organization, evolved and changed. The spirituality of the mystic and knowledge of mysticism shifted from a *learned* process to [a] *hereditary* one. The spiritual power of the founder of the *khanqah* came to be transmitted through his descendents who became the center of the devotion of followers of the Sufi saints who, after their death, were usually buried in the *khanqah*. (557)

In fact, the transfer of authority in this manner still exists today, with leaders being called *sajjada-nishins*, *gaddinashins*, or *walis* (Hassan, 1987: 557) (the term *sajjada-nishins* refers to a Sufi leader, translated as "he who sits on the prayer rug") (Ewing, 1983: 255).

David Gilmartin (1979) explains that "[t]he role of the *sajjada nashin* as religious intermediary was commonly formalized by the tie of *pir* and *murid*, or master and disciple, between the *sajjadi nashin* of a shrine and the worshipper" (486–487).

This influence of Sufi orders brought about attention from political leaders who, "for spiritual as well as for political reasons, sought cooperation from the *khanqah* organizations in maintaining political stability in the country" (Hassan, 1987: 558). Specifically, Riaz Hassan (1987) explains that

> The dominant, but by no means the sole, mechanism through which the *khanqah*s were co-opted by the state was through the granting of substantial land grants (*jagirs*) to maintain the *khanqah* shrines and their permanent residents. By the time the Sufi cult associations, led by descendents of the Sufi saints, had evolved from the early *khanqas*, their spiritual leaders (i.e., sajjada-nishins) were granted substantial *jagirs* by the state not only to obtain their co-operation in maintaining political and social stability, but also to use their influence and power over their disciples to provide military recruits for the state at short notice. (558)

Because of this land ownership, the Sufi orders were quite active throughout the region. In fact, political leaders throughout the centuries continued to consider the power of Sufi leaders because of their desire to maintain influence in these regions outside of their immediate sphere of influence (Hassan, 1987). For example, during the Mughal Empire, political leaders of the empire established ties with the *sajjadi nashin* (Gilmartin, 1979). This was beneficial for both the political leadership as well as the Sufi leaders. However, as the Mughal authority declined in the region, so did the influence of the *sajjadi nashins*. For as the power of the state declined, so did the ties with local Sufi

leaders. Specifically, many of these Sufi leaders lost much of their religious influence, and "were transformed into petty local chieftains, were increasingly isolated from any connection with the larger Islamic community" (Gilmartin, 1979: 489).[7]

Even after the end of the Mughal Empire, this connection between the state and Sufi leaders continued from the eighteenth into the nineteenth (Lieven, 2011: 48) and the twentieth centuries. Colonial powers such as Britain were aware of the popularity of Sufis, and thus attempted to influence the orders (Hassan, 1987) (although Britain was much less involved in religious groups in the rural settings compared to urban centers (Lieven, 2011: 130). As Robert Rozehnal (2007) explains,

> In South Asia, the British Raj attempted to appropriate and manipulate Sufi tradition—its sacred sites and heroes—for political gain. Recognizing the importance of Sufi shrines as loci of regional identity and the power of hereditary Sufi leaders as moral exemplars and mediators, the British colonial administration actively incorporated Sufism into its system of local politics and patronage. (23)

One example of this was the activities of the government in relation to the Pir Pagaro group from the Sindh area, who on two occasions attempted to fight the British presence in the region (at the end of the nineteenth century, and in the 1940s). In fact, it was during the rebellion in the 1943 (Ewing, 1983: 256) that Britain, concerned about the leadership of Pir Pagaro (who at the time was Pir Sabghatullah Shah), killed him (Ewing, 1983).

However, because the British still recognized the overall power (religious, political, and economic influence) of Sufi groups, they often aimed to ensure Sufi support. In order for this to take place, Britain administered a policy in which they would "try to maintain the traditional social structure intact, securing the loyalty of the *pirs*, landlords, and chiefs by reinforcing their economic positions and educating them in the British tradition" (Gilmartin, 1979, in Ewing, 1983). In 1900, Britain put in place the *Alienation of Land Act*, "which, stated in general terms, barred the non-agricultural population from acquiring land in the rural areas" (Gilmartin, 1979: 493). As a result, many individuals organized political parties (namely the Unionist Party) based on interests related to agriculture (Gilmartin, 1979). In fact, the *sajjadi nashins* "were recognized as belonging to the agricultural classes [which received] protection under the Act" (Gilmartin, 1979: 494), and would therefore be supported by the British government, allowing them to

ensure their interests in terms of land and local issues, in exchange for backing the British Empire. In the case of some Sufi leaders, in order for them to maintain control of their land, they received backing by the British in order for them to continue their power and authority as landowners (Buehler, 1997). Thus, the British were able to ensure some support by allowing a sheikh to continue serving as the local leader, and in turn, the British government would not challenge the local system (Buehler, 1997).[8]

In some instances, Sufi leaders who were expected to speak out on behalf of Muslims might not have done so on account of their reliance on the British government (Buehler, 1997).[9] For example, Muslims called upon Jama'at 'Ali to put pressure on the British government to place the Shahidganj Mosque back under Muslim control after it was destroyed in 1935 by a group of Sikhs. However, despite Britain's ability to do this, Jama'at 'Ali did not speak up on this issue because his family was aliged with the Britsh and thus could not have openly challenge them Many Muslims were very upset with the response, and some started asking how effective Jama'at 'Ali really was (Buehler, 1997).

Because of this spiritual authority of Sufi leaders that has existed throughout the history of India and Pakistan, along with the British attempts to establish ties with Sufi groups, historically the government of Pakistan—and particularly since the establishment of the state of Pakistan—has also attempted to deal with Sufis politically. In fact, a major challenge to the monopolization of power by the political leaders has been due to the role of Sufi leaders within Pakistan (Ewing, 1983). Katherine Ewing (1983) explains that since the creation of Pakistan in 1947, various state leaders have taken different approaches when it came to Sufi shrines and *pirs*. While the leaders had different political goals, each was open to approaching Sufism for political purposes. In terms of political objectives, Ayub Khan, who was the leader of Pakistan from 1958 to 1969 (Ewing, 1983: 251), aimed to bring about a "strong central government [that] would be reinforced by the bond of Islam and by rapid economic growth" (Sayeed, 1980, in Ewing, 1983). Zulfikar Ali Bhutto implemented a program of nationalization in Pakistan (Ewing, 1983). Zia ul-Haq emphasized more of an Islamic emphasis in state and society. But with these varied goals, it is evident that leaders were aware of Sufi leaders, and often attempted to align the Sufis with their political objectives (Ewing, 1983). In fact, "[t]he Muslim rulers, realizing the political importance of the saints, tried to bring the *sajjada-nishins* under their control by granting them large properties and contributing to the building of the shrines" (Eaton, 1978, in Ewing, 1983).[10]

Part of the reason for courting Sufis had to do with the level of power held by non-Sufi religious leaders in the region. Even before the establishment of Pakistan, the *ulama* were more than religious leaders; they were beginning to have a political voice (Ewing, 1983). The top leaders of Pakistan (such as Ayub Khan and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto), "though different in fundamental ways, both wanted to avoid direct participation of the '*ulema* in politics'" (Ewing, 1983: 253). But while this is the case, "They also wanted to identify their governments with Islam" (Ewing, 1983: 253). Concerned about the direction in which the religious leaders would take Pakistan (namely, they were concerned about a move to a more literal interpretation of Islam) (Ewing, 1983: 253), Ayub Khan, as well as Bhutto, "chose to identify themselves with the doctrines of Sufism in order to create for themselves a link with religious authority" (Ewing, 1983: 253). Thus, supporting Sufis served their objectives, as they were able to claim they were speaking in the interests of Islam when they governed, while choosing "an Islam" with which they were politically and religiously comfortable. And thus, Sufism often served this role, partly due to the understanding that some Sufis made, namely distinguishing between "political leadership" and "spiritual authority" (Ewing, 1983: 253).

For example, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, during his tenure, made it a point to seek Sufi support for his leadership (Talbot, 1988: 37). He "sometimes presented himself to his followers as a divinely inspired guide and teacher" (Lieven, 2011: 136). In addition, "[h]e attended the important *urs* ceremonies of leading Sufi shrines and adorned the shrine of Data Ganj Bakhsh in Lahore and Shahbaz Qalander of Sehwan in Sindh . . . " (Talbot, 1988: 37). (His mausoleum is built after the look of a Sufi saint shrine.) (Lieven, 2011: 136). Because of the importance of Shahbaz Qalander to the Bhutto family, they had much more backing by Sufis (Schmidle, 2008). Furthermore, Bhutto, attempting to gain the support of Pakistanis, wanted to do so by "tr[ying] to avoid the support of the large landowners and *pirs* when constituting the Pakistan Peoples' Party" (Ewing, 1983: 257). However, the Sufi leaders were far too influential to be ignored. Thus, any attempt to limit the amount of land anyone could own by the political leaders was often not realized, because, in the case of landowners, "many found ways of evading the legal ceilings on land ownership [,]" (Ewing, 1983: 258), whereas in the case of Sufi leaders, it would have been difficult to remove their influence on controlling land because they were "either . . . holders of *waqf* properties (religious endowments . . .) or as religious and political mediators who supported the traditional economic and social structure"

(Ewing, 1983: 258). Furthermore, in the case of Ayub Khan—through the "West Pakistan Waqf Properties Ordinance of 1959" (All Pakistan Legal Decisions, 1959, in Ewing, 1983), and under Bhutto—with the "West Pakistan Waqf Properties Ordinance of 1961" (Government of West Pakistan, 1961–1962, in Ewing, 1983), the leaders tried to implement governmental control over religious places of worship (Ewing, 1983). But despite these actions, Sufi leaders were still able to maintain their authority on account of their role as "political" and "religious mediators" (Ewing, 1983: 258). Thus, because of this, leaders such as Ayub Khan tried other approaches to limit Sufi influence in Pakistan. For example, Khan set up an Auquf Department that would have control over various religious properties (Ewing, 1983: 259). In addition, Khan, influenced by the writings of Muhamad Ibqal and Javid Ibqal, started to speak out against the *sajjada-nishin* and their role as "spiritual mediators" for individuals. Specifically, Khan argued that Sufi belief in Ibn' Arabi's *wahdat al-wujud*, "unity of being," was actually a form of pantheism (Ewing 1983: 261). The government made this argument to suggest that Sufi leaders were not needed in order for individuals to connect with the Divine (Ewing, 1983). Furthermore, literature published by the state downplayed stories of conversions by Sufi leaders, while also often choosing not to talk about the Sufi miracle stories of such leaders (Ewing, 1983: 260).

Moreover, they also focused on increasing their control of shrines. They did this in a number of manners. For example, the government started to use shrines for providing social services, thus moving their role from purely religious to having a state influence (Ewing, 1983). They also began placing religious literature in the shrines (Khaliq, 1969, in Ewing, 1983) "[t]o encourage a scholarly rather than what was regarded as a superstitious approach to the shrines and Sufism . . . " (Ewing, 1983: 262). They started taking an increased role in the physical upkeep of the shrines (Ewing, 1983). In fact, Bhutto not only adopted a similar approach toward the shrines, but "[h]is officials [also] maintained a high profile at the annual death anniversary ('urs) ceremony by performing the principal rituals of washing the grave and laying on a new cloth, chaddar, to cover the grave, tasks usually performed by the chief religious specialist at the shrine, the sajjada-nishin . . . " (Buehler, 1997). These *urs* (wedding) ceremonies (which represent the day the individual returns back to her/his origin [God]) are significant for the current *sajjada nashin*, as it was often this individual who "normally had to perform prescribed ceremonial duties which underscored his special links

to the original saint as the inheritor of *baraka* [blessings], and thus defined his effectiveness as religious intermediary" (Gilmartin, 1979: 486). Arthur Buehler (1997) says that

> Ayub Khan and Bhutto, as secularists, linked themselves with Sufi shrines to identify themselves with religious authority and thereby legitimize their political power. While promoting shrines and Sufi doctrines associated with these shrines for the glory of Pakistan and Islam, they were consciously attempting to coopt the personal authority of the pirs" (311).

Carl Ernst (2003), citing Katherine Ewing (1983), further explains that

> The attempt to control Sufi orders and institutions by the state should be seen in the context of nationalism. In Pakistan, political leaders such as Ayyub Khan and Z.A. Bhutto attempted to redefine Sufi shrines in terms of a national ideology. Festivals at the tombs of important Sufi saints are regularly graced by provincial governors and even the prime minister, who give speeches describing how these saints were forerunners of the Islamic state of Pakistan. On the bureaucratic level, this relationship is paralleled by assertion of the authority of the Department of Charitable Trusts over the operations and finances of major Sufi shrines. This same bureau is also responsible for a series of publications of official biographies of popular saints as well as devotional manuals, in this way indicating what constitutes officially approved forms of Sufism. (Ewing, 1983, in Ernst, 2003, 117)

General Muhammad Zia ul Haq's approach to Sufism was a bit different from his predecessors, for Zia allowed more influence from non-Sufi Muslim religious leaders (Ewing, 1983: 253–254). Having established power in 1977, Zia emphasized the role of Islam in Pakistani society. In fact, "[b]y making a hegemonic Islamic ideology the pillar of the state, Zia sought to solve at a stroke the identity problems which had beset [Pakistan] since 1947" (Talbot, 1998: 245). He aimed to increase the influence of Islam, and in 1981, "announced the formation of a 350-member nominated assembly, the Majlis-i-Shura[,]" which was responsible for setting up "an Islamic democracy," along with other matters (Talbot, 1998: 259). However, while Zia advocated a state Islam, this brought about a number of problems in Pakistan, namely divisions within a host of groups that had their own understanding of Islam and the role they each felt it should play in society. Thus while he tried to bring Pakistanis together through Islam, "[t]he state-sponsored process

of Islamisation dramatically increased sectarian divisions not only between Sunnis and Shias . . . but also between Deobandis and Berelvis" (Talbot, 1998: 251). In 1984, violence occurred between the two groups over legislation regarding the state's control over religious institutions. Concerning the overall issues that resulted from Zia's emphasis on Islam through the state, Ian Talbot (1998) explains that

> [t]he greatest tension of all was between the state's legalistic imposition of Islam and the humanist traditions of Sufism. This was particularly explosive in Sindh where Sufism had always been an integral component of regional cultural identity. Significantly the *pirs* of Sindh played a leading role in the MRD agitation of August and September 1983. 50,000 disciples of the Makhdum of Hala successfully blocked the national highway on one occasion. (251)

The goal of the government was not merely to control Sufi and Islamist groups, as the objective was more than this. For Zia, part of this approach was intended to solidify his political support. In fact, Zia called on a number of Sufi leaders to meet with him for a convention. What is interesting is that in his comments to the Sufi leaders, he argued that their agreement and presence at such a meeting suggested that they recognized his political power (Buehler, 1997). Furthermore, he made it a point to ask for their thoughts on governance, which was viewed as a political move in order to establish additional political power and backing by the Sufis, since he recognized their influential role in society (Buehler, 1997). Like Zia, many Pakistani administrations aimed to use Sufism to promote a specific type of Islam, namely a "moderate" message.

And thus because of the important role of the *pir* and saints in Pakistan, this is just one reason why Pakistani administrations have made it a point to promote Sufism and Sufi shrines, as well as highlight the contributions of historical Sufi masters in Pakistani society (Rozehnal, 2007), even though, as mentioned, the governments have attempted to find ways to advocate Islam while reducing the role of the sheikh (Buehler, 1997). It is therefore this "shift" away from the "personal" to the "impersonal" advocacy of Islam that altered the relationship with the sheikh, as well as the significance of the Sufi shrine in this altered advocacy of Islam (Buehler, 1997). But while leaders attempted to reduce the role of Sufis in order to increase their hold on power, groups such as the Chisti Sabiri Sufi have still been able to operate in the spiritual and political realm, "beyond the gaze of the nation and

outside the machinery of the state" (Rozehnal, 2007: 228). In addition to the Chisti Sabiri, Sufi *pirs* have still maintained their clout in society. Anatol Lieven (2011) explains that "[t]hese *pir* families remain of immense political importance in much of Pakistan, and especially the PPP [Pakistan People's Party]; as witness the fact that, as of 2010, the prime minister, Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani; deputy prime minister, Makhdoom Amin Fahim; foreign minister, Syed Mahmood Qureshi; and minister for religion, Syed Ahmed Qazmi are all from *pir* lineages, as are leading party supporters like Syeda Abida Husain" (137). He goes on to point out that other parties have leaders who have ties to Sufi *pir* families. In fact, some politicians have highlighted their links to these families. Lieven (2011) tells of an interview with Syed Parvez Jillani of the PPP, who descended from the Hadda *pir* family (from the Sindh region), where "he recounted to [Lieven] the legends of Hadda including one which he told how the fish of the River Indus would come to worship his cousin the *pir*. . . . He described the absolute, unquestioning devotion of the *murids* of Hadda to the *pir* and his family" (138). These Sufi leaders have had the ability (in some cases) to attract a large following (Levian, 2011). And Sufi leaders often use their political ties to continue to maintain their own support and power, while helping those who adhere to their teachings (Lieven, 2011: 142–143). In fact, modern-day connections between Sufi leaders with politicians are still prevalent. In fact,

> [o]ften a key step in the rise of a newly emerged urban *pir* is when he gains a local politician as a follower—just as in the past, a saint's reputation would be made by the public respect of a local prince, or even—in the greatest cases—the sultan himself. Thereafter, the politician and the saint rise (and to a lesser extent fall) together, each contributing to the alliance from their respective spheres. (143)

In 2008, the PPP that came to power was also said to be highly active in the promotion of Sufism, and in particular the Barelwi Sufis (Philippon, 2009). The government in Pakistan stresses the relationship between the PPP and the Sufi leaders. In the Sindh area, the PPP has looked to Sufi leaders to help fight terrorism. While attending the Sakhi Lal Shahbaz Qalandar Sufi Conference held in Sehwan—a conference that brought together politicians, writers, and those who looked after Sufi shrines, Sindh senior minister Pir Mazharul Haq called for yearly conferences on such matters (Khaskheli, 2011). He highlighted the relationship between the PPP and Sufis in the region by saying that

"[T]he PPP is the party of the Sufis . . . [,]" while commenting that the reason that the PPP was able to be successful was due to the support of Sufis and Sufi religious backing of Sufi saints (Khaskheli, 2011). Other leaders have echoed the support of Sufi saints. For example, Jan Khaskheli (2011) of *The News International* reported that "Minister Sadiq Umrani from Balochistan said that their party had always served Sufi saints . . . " and that "[h]e appealed to the followers of Sufi saints to come together to fight evils destabilizing the nation and bringing a bad name to the country." Along this line, Minister Mazharul called for a "Sufi council" to be established that would be able to work on deploying Sufism against radicalism (Khaskheli, 2011). Further highlighting the importance of Sufism and namely the Sufi saints, in the same report by Khaskheli (2011), Mazharul went on to explain that "[w]e are not from 'barud walas' (bombers), but of 'Darud walas'. Faqirs (saints) are not bombers but preachers of peace and harmony."

Thus, while the government has attempted to find ways to reduce the influence of Sufi leaders—partly because of a concern that the government leaders' authority will be challenged, Sufi groups (and *pirs*) have also been targeted by violent Islamist groups such as the Taliban, along with "Jaish-e-Mohammad, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Sipah-e-Sahaba and other groups" (Lieven, 2011: 132–133), who view such groups with disdain. For example, the Taliban in Pakistan have not only spoken out against Sufi groups such as the Barelvi but have also targeted Sufi shrines and family members connected to the *pirs* (Lieven, 2011: 133). Lieven (2011) cites examples such as an assassination attempt on Mufti Safraz Maeemi, "who had spoken out against them, and in 2005 had issued an edict against suicide bombings[,]" as well as a suicide bombing at the "shrine of the saint Data Ganj Baksh in Lahore" (133). While much of the animosity stems from religious differences on the "permissibility" of revering individuals (such as saints), another more political reason lies in these attacks. Because of the political and social influence of Sufi *pirs* and their families in local communities, the Taliban, in the attempt to gain political power, have tried to eliminate such individuals in order to increase their own authority (Lieven, 2011: 133). Many extremists are worried about the threat Sufism poses to their positions (Murshed, 2011). However, this tactic has backfired, as "these attacks have in fact alienated large numbers of people who were initially attracted to the Pakistani [Taliban] . . . " (133). In Anatol Lieven's (2011) interviews, he found that the Taliban lost a great deal of influence after a bomb hit "the Peshawar shrine of the Pathan saint Pir Rahman Baba" (Abdur Rahman Mohamand, 1653–1711 CE). The *pirs* and Barelvi Sufism are a

major challenge to the spread of Taliban influence in Pakistan. This is partly due to their more encompassing position of a number of Muslim sects (both Sunni and Shia)—which is often a point of contention with some puritanical Islamist groups.[11] But in addition, and similar to the conditions of the *pirs* historically in Pakistan in relation to land control, a number of ties exist between Sufi leaders, landowners, and powerful business persons in Pakistan (Lieven, 2011). Again, attacking Sufism in Pakistan is attacking a major part of individuals' lives. The saints are major religious figures, and in many cases, play a role in other aspects of society. As mentioned earlier, the sheikh has historically been an important member of the community. Historically, the sheikhs had a key role in promoting the message of Islam to traditionally non-Muslim areas (Lieven, 2011). Similar to the picture of the saint in other Muslim (Sufi) communities, the role of miracles in Pakistan became a part of how individuals understood the sheikhs. Furthermore, many continue to believe that the "deceased" shakyh (and her/his shrine) has the power of intercession for individuals (Lieven, 2011). And because of the Taliban's actions, a number of Sufi organizations and leaders have ben upset with the increased attacks by the Taliban on Sufi shrines, so much so that some believe that while an internal conflict is not preferred, the likelihood is quite possible. For example, Mufit Sarfraz Naeemi, who was one of the head figures of the Barelvi Sufi order, in an interview with Reuters in 2009, was quoted as saying that "[t]hey [the Taliban] want people to fight one another, that's why we have kept silent and endured their oppression. . . . We don't want civil war. . . . But God forbid, if the government fails to stop them, then we will confront them ourselves" (Reuters, 2009). Naeemi was killed by a suicide bomber in June 2009, who detonated the bomb in his workplace (Reuters, 2009). Rania Abouzeid (2010) explains that the majority of Sufis in Pakistan have not resorted to violent methods. In an interview with Rania Abouzeid of *Time Magazine* (2010), a student by the name of Salman Ali was quoted as saying that "[e]veryone knows that definitely something bad will happen in the long march, but we are going. . . . And if we have to go to God, we will go. But now we have to fight for our country, for the peaceful face of our religion. We are ready for it."

In fact, the tensions between the Taliban (and other extremist groups that stem from Deoband and Ahl-e-Hadith influences) and Sufi groups in Pakistan has heightened significantly since 2005, when extremists targeted a number of Sufi shrines and places of worship with bombings (Abouzeid, 2010).[12] Rania Abouzeid (2010) reports that it was the suicide attacks in the Data Darbar shrine, in which 42 people were

killed, that resulted in a concentrated effort by Sufi groups to challenge such actions. From 2005 to 2009, there were nine attacks against Sufi shrines (and 81 deaths from these attacks) (Imtiaz & Buchen, 2011). Many make it a point not to use violence to counter extremist groups (Abouzeid, 2010). In May of 2009, the Sufi groups formed what was known as the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC). This group, now numbering more than 60 different parties, is attempting to voice its concerns with groups that are carrying out actions against Sufis, as well as other groups that may not fit their ideology or belief system. They see themselves as a group dedicated to "'fight[ing] the growing Talibanization' of Pakistan" (Abouzeid, 2010). In terms of specific actors who are a part of this organization, it

> [includes] some important *Barelvi* groups and political parties like Jamiat-e Ulema-e Pakistan Markazi (JUP-Markazi) led by Haji Fazle Karim, Jamaat Ahl-e Sunnat (JAS) led by Mazhar Saeed Kazmi (the elder brother of former Federal Minister of Religious Affairs, Syed Hamid Saeed Kazmi), Sunni Tehrik (ST) led by Sarwat Ijaz Qadri, Almi Tanzeem-e Ahl-e Sunnat led by Peer Afzal Qadri, Nizam-e Mustafa Party led by Haji Hanif Tayyab, Markazi Jamaat Ahl-e Sunnat led by Syed irfan Mashhadi, Zia-ul-Ummat Foundation led by Peer Amin-ul-Hasnat Shah, Halqa-e Saifiya led by Mian Mohammad Hanafi Saifi, Anjuman-e Tulaba-e-Islam (a *Barelvi* student organization), Tanzeem-ul-Madris (the *Barelvi Wafaq* that issues degrees to the graduates of madrassahs) led by Mufti Muneeb-ur-Rehman and represented at SIC by Ghulam Mohammad Sialvi (its Secretary General and former chairman of Pakistan Baitul Mall), Anjuman-e Asaatza-e Pakistan led by Peer Athar-ul-Haq, and several others. Currently, Haji Fezl-e Karim—leader of JUP-Markazi, a firebrand *Barelvi* leader, and a member of the National Assembly (MNA) on a Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) ticket—is the Chairman of the SIC. (Khan, 2011: 4)

What is interesting to note about the members of this organization is that many of the Barelvi members who have in the past turned away from politics, now have accepted the importance of forming such a group in order to be influential politically in Pakistan (Abouzeid, 2010). Within this organization, they hope to influence public sentiment on the Taliban. This group has specifically spoken out against the Taliban, whom they believe are behind a number of attacks on groups and also individuals who have spoken out against them (Abouzeid, 2010). Moreover, they have been critical of Wahhabi influence in Pakistan, which some see as the problem. Some positions of the SIC include

> A ban on incendiary Deobandi literature, a clampdown on banned extremist groups that have merely changed their names but continue operating unmolested by the authorities, and the monitoring of Pakistanis who have fought in Afghanistan. It also wants stronger police and judicial action against terror suspects, and the establishment of a police unit to root out officers suspected of helping terrorists evade security measures at shrines and other places. (Abouzeid, 2010)

Moreover, they have aimed to affect policy directly by running in elections, even though some within Pakistan have argued that the likelihood of religious parties receiving large percentages of vote shares has not usually been as high as other parties (Abouzeid, 2010).

Furthermore, they have organized a number of marches and protests at which they spoke out against the actions of extremist groups and also voiced their support for the military that is fighting such groups (Khan, 2011). After this march (which 10,000 persons were said to have attended), in October of 2010 the SIC also convened in the capital city of Islamabad to further speak out against extremist groups (Khan, 2011), and on November 27, 2010, staged a march between Islamabad and Lahore, where many of the protesters were confronted (and some arrested) by police (Khan, 2011: 4). Moreover, another SIC conference was organized in Lahore, Pakistan. This conference "gathered around 1000 *muftis* from 55 different countries to give a joint *fatwa* against suicide bombing and condemn attacks on shrines" (Khan, 2011: 4).

But despite the formation and numerous successes of the SIC, attacks against the Sufi shrines have continued. In 2010 alone, five Sufi shrines were attacked (with 61 individuals dying as a result of the attacks) (Imtiaz & Buchen, 2011), and on April 3, 2011, another Sufi shrine in the Punjab region was attacked (killing at least 41 individuals) (BBC, 2011a).[13] Amir Rana (who is the director of the Pak Institute for Peace Studies) is cited in a report by Huma Imtiaz and Charlotte Buchen (2011) explaining that the reasons for the rise in attacks on Sufis include increases in actions by extremist groups within Pakistan, as well as more attention to "soft targets" in order to retain support from individuals who are supportive of their cause. These attacks have led people to call for increased security at Sufi events (Imtiaz & Buchen, 2011). In terms of why these groups are specifically attacking Sufi shrines, some observers believe that the violent extremists are focusing more on domestic attacks compared to those outside of Pakistan (Imtiaz & Buchen, 2011). Others suggest that because a number of politicians (such as Yusuf Raza Gilani, as well as Shah Mahmood Qureshi, who is the foreign minister

of Pakistan) claim to have a lineage with those individuals who have been maintaining Sufi tombs, Sufis are now viewed by some as having ties to the government, and have the ability to influence people's political support (Imtiaz & Buchen, 2011).

Khan (2011) argues that the SIC faces a number of challenges in order to be more effective against extremist groups. For one, not all Barelvi groups are a part of the SIC. For example, Dawat-e Islami and Minhaj-ul Quran (who have a strong media presence in Pakistan) do not belong to the SIC. Related to this, even organizations that have come together to form the SIC have their own primary objectives and interests (Khan, 2011). Thus, we have to keep in mind that decisions made as an umbrella organization are often still filtered through what is best for each individual group.[14] Other challenges include the need for a clarified platform as an organization. For example, some contrary messages have been given by members of the organization as to whether the SIC will be a political or nonpolitical organization (Khan, 2011). Moreover, the SIC, because of its emphasis on Sufism (and Barelvi Sufism), is seen as "anti-*Deobandi* and devisive" (Khan, 2011: 6). Khan (2011) suggests that little has been done to reach out to other groups. He believes this may be due to SIC members' being upset with the limited actions taken by some Deobandi groups against terror. Another challenge includes the need for the SIC to be proactive, as opposed to being "reactionary," although the organization has recently become more active (Khan, 2011: 6). Lastly, Khan (2011) argues that many of the actions of the SIC—and those whom they influence to become involved in their agenda—stem from society's "anger on the emotive religious issues" (6). However, he explains the problem with this, namely saying that "[w]hen emotions run high, organizing platforms can be hijacked by more violent elements" (6). For example, "[t]he Sunni Tehreek (ST), one of the constituent parties of the SIC, has a violent track record and is on the watch-list of the Interior Ministry for banned outfits. If there is any serious untoward activity involving ST in the future—there have been some not very serious ones in the past—and the Interior Ministry bans ST, it could become very problematic for the SIC to have an organization among its ranks that is declared a terrorist organization by the government" (Khan, 2011: 6).

Musharraf, Sufism, and the Promotion of the National Sufi Council

Because of the concern about the Taliban and other religious extremists, the government's approach toward Sufism (as a response to the

violent actions) has continued, with recent leaders such as General Pervez Musharraf and the current president, Asif Zardari, both carrying out pro-Sufi policies. In the case of General Musharraf, "[i]n 2006, as Musharaf faced political and military challenges from the resurgent Taliban, he established a National Sufi Council [an organization thought up by Youssaf Salahuddin, the grandson of Mohammad Iqbal (Philippon, 2009)] to promote Sufi poetry and music" (Philippon, 2009; Schmidle, 2008). When Musharraf set up this group, he emphasized how Sufis focused on a world community and embraced notions of love (Schmidle, 2008). At the ceremony in Lahore (where the announcement of the organization's formation took place), a number of political leaders were in attendance. During this meeting, the chairman, Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, was also given a turban the Sufi *pir* "to highlight a symbolic bid to promote himself as a 'Sufi'..." (Philippon, 2009). The objective of the organization was to promote Sufism through various meetings, as well as music concerts, with the goal of emphasizing notions of "love, tolerance, and universal brotherhood" (Religioscope, 2006). The organization was intended to promote Sufi saints throughout Pakistan. Moreover, Musharraf believed that Pakistan had a public relations problem, and that this organization would help promote a better perception of the country (Religioscope, 2006).[15] Nevertheless, the organization was not viewed as very effective (or active) other than the in the creation of calendars, and the organizing of a musical event (Eteraz, 2009), and did not last very long (Schmidle, 2008). However, in 2009, the National Sufi Council was renamed the Sufi Advisory Council. The stated goals of this council include

I. To bring forth the soft image of Islam through spreading the Sufi message of love, tolerance and universal brotherhood across the world and amongst the masses of the area by holding meetings, seminars, workshops and conferences of Ulama, Researchers, Teachers Students and [Intellectuals] of Pakistan, Afghanistan and other neighboring countries.
II. To propose steps to free religious thought from the rigidity imposed by some ulama.
III. To emphasize in the Islamic teachings the element of God's love and mercy for His creation rather than His wrath and retribution.
IV. To determine the ways of practice what one professes and not merely indulges in slogans and soliloquist stress the essence of faith rather than mere observance of formalities.

V. To establish Sufi Centers of excellence and patronize research activities on various facets of Sufism, to confer national and international scholarships for research work on Sufism, recommend annual awards for promotion of Sufism and achievements in the related fields.
VI. To glorify the revered Sufi Saints and their mausoleums not just as Centers of holiness but also as centers of learning and teaching.
VII. To demolish the edifice of false values based on pelf and power and restore morality to its proper place in the niche of Muslim society.
VIII. To combat the fissiparous tendencies and centrifugal forces which were spreading their tentacles in the Muslim world
IX. To discourage parochial feelings and eliminate racial pride which had assumed primary importance in Muslim thinking relegating the ideal of brotherhood to a secondary place. (Government of Pakistan: Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2010)

But despite debates regarding how effective such organizations have been, what is important is that governments are attempting to promote religion for political objectives. And while Musharraf sponsored the 2006 Sufi National Council, he has not been the last political leader of Pakistan to have an interest in the promotion of Sufism. Benazir Bhutto, aimed to receive support from the Sufis. When Bhutto was running in the national elections, she had strong backing from Sufis. In fact, as Nicholas Schmidle (2008) explains, some individuals would call out *Benazir Bhutto mast Qalandar* ("Benazir Bhutto, the ecstasy of Qalander"), a Sufi reference to the deceased Sufi saint Lal Shabaz Qalandar. In addition, she continued to highlight her connections to Sufism, such that when she "made her first visit to Lahore as Pakistan Primer Minister on 25 December 1988, she went straight from the airport to the shrine of Data Ganj Bakhsh to pay homage to Hazrat Ali Hajveri" (Talbot, 1988: 37). Furthermore, based on a desire of the late Benazir Bhutto, in 2010 a conference entitled "International Writers Conference on Sufism and Peace" was organized (Balochistan Times, 2011). This connection between the Bhutto family and Sufism has had some believing that the Bhuttos have a special connection to Qalandar, with some expecting Asif Ali Zardari, who was married to Benazir, or their son Bilawal to embody the essence of Qalandar (Schmidle, 2008).[16] Ali Eteraz (2009) argues that Bhutto attempted to align herself with Sufi groups in order "to use religious forces to her political advantage."

Along with Musharraf and Bhutto, there have also been other examples of current and former officials who have also spread the message of Sufism. For example, Muhammad Tahir ul-Qadri, who served as a minister in the Pakistani government, and was a colleague of Bhutto, has been on speaking tours promoting a message of peace within Sufism, and has founded an organization that promotes such messages (Baker, 2009). And while the difference between ul-Qadri and others is that he is currently not promoting Sufism in an official state capacity (but rather, as a nongovernment actor[17]), many other government officials have taken the approach of sponsoring Sufism as a government strategy. For example, in 2009, two organizations—the Shahanshah Hazrat Budhai Society and Daira-e-Islamabad—set up a meeting concerning the publication of poems by the Sufi Budhal Faqir. At this meeting, participants also discussed Sufism in regard to its place in society, as well as in relation to terrorist attacks that occurred in Pakistan. Government figures were not only in attendance but they also spoke about the positive attributes of Sufism and how its application could help tensions in Pakistan. For example, Mir Ijaz Hussain Jakhrani, who is the federal minister of health, commented that he believes that particular extremist positions exist in Pakistan because Sufism is not understood, and that individuals should commit themselves to reflecting on such Sufi writings and teachings. He also gave credit to Sufis (as opposed to political leaders) for the advancement of Islam in the history of Pakistan (Khalid, 2009). Jakhrani was not the only government official in attendance. The federal minister of railway, Ghulam Ahmed Bilour, was also at the meeting, and he spoke highly of Sufis. He commented on the positive character of Sufis, saying that they do not differ (in their actions) from their message and that Pakistan would not have religious divisions if everyone practiced Sufism (Khalid, 2009). Along with Jakhrani and Bilour, the federal minister of religious affairs, Allama Hamid Saeed Kazmi, also spoke about the virtues of Sufism, and about spreading the lessons taught in Sufi writings (Khalid, 2009).

In February 2010, Syed Sumsam Bukhari, who is the minister of the state for information in Pakistan, spoke on the importance of Sufi Islam in fighting extremism in Pakistan (Associated Press of Pakistan, 2010). Also, on March 17, 2011, *News One Pakistan* (2011) reported that Pir Mazhar-ul-Haq, the Sindh senior minister for education continued to advocate this notion of Sufis as peaceful, while also expressing his desire to have such Sufi influences in Pakistan. And on July 24, 2011, the *Pakistan Observer* (2011) reported that Sassui Palejo, the Sindh minister for culture, said that the government is working on highlighting

Sufism with proposed legislation for a Sufi university in Bhit Shah, as well as establishing an infrastructure in Sehwan Sharif (Balochistan Times, 2011). The *Pakistan Observer* (2011) stated that Sufism is being advanced by the government in order to challenge extremist interpretations of Islam. Palejo, speaking at the National Adabi Conference, went on to express the importance of promoting Sufism in order to counter extremist ideologies. She felt that it was the responsibility of the entire community to come together and promote Sufism, to write, publish, and teach o research related to Sufism, and to challenge views by extremist groups regarding matters such as suicide attacks against places of worship. Furthermore, by promoting Sufism, the hope is that young Pakistanis will be dissuaded from being influenced by extremist groups. Moreover, funds have been set aside by the provincial culture department to help those who have undertaken research and artistic endeavors (such as music and writing) to promote Sufism (Balochistan Times, 2011).

Moreover, in January of 2012, the president of Azad Kashmir, Sardar Muhammad Yaqoob Khan, speaking at a conference at Punjab University (which was sponsored by both the university and the provincial ministry of religious affairs and auquf) (Yaseen, 2012), commented on the importance of promoting Sufism to young Pakistanis as a way of fighting extremism. He also highlighted what he saw as the historical contributions of Sufis in the promotion in Islam in the region (Yaseen, 2012). Moreover, he continued to praise what he sees as exemplary character traits of Sufis by saying that those who want to hurt Pakistan will be unable to do so, on account of the Sufis (Yaseen, 2012). Professor Dr. Mujahid Kamran, who also addressed the audience, gave high praise to Sufis by saying that they are the ones under the messengers of God who guide individuals toward the Divine (Yaseen, 2012). The vice chancellor of Punjab University highlighted the significance of these kinds of meetings, saying that they can be helpful in promoting Sufism to the younger generation of Pakistanis (Yaseen, 2012). Also in 2012, the chief minister of the Sindh region, Syed Qaim Ali Shah, promoted Sufism as a way to bring peace to Pakistan. While at the 268th Urs ceremony, he spoke highly of Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai, a revered historical Sufi mystic in Pakistan, and observe that the Sufi ideas spread by Bhitai can be applied to Pakistani society today (Dawn, 2012).

Such sentiments toward Sufism were also evident in Asif Zardari, the president of Pakistan from 2008 to 2013. Zardari also used Sufi symbolism in his political messages and actions. For example, in April of 2012, Zardari, along with his son Bilawal Bhutto (who is serving

as chief of the PPP (News Track India (ANI), 2012b), made a visit to Ajmer, India, where Zardari visited the Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti Sufi tomb and carried out the rituals while at the site (News Track India (ANI), 2012a). This marked one of the more recent official visits by the Pakistani head of state since 2005, when he and Benazir Bhutto also went to the location (News Track India (ANI), 2012a). In fact, earlier in 2003, Bhutto visited the site, where she prayed for Zardari to be freed from jail (New Track India (ANI), 2012a). But these were not the only times the family paid a visit to this specific Sufi site. They also went to this particular shrine "in 1991, 2001, 2003 and 2005" (Ali, 2012). It was also reported that during this most recent visit, Zardari contributed one million dollars to the shrine (News Track India (ANI), 2012b). This stop in Ajmer was just part of his trip, as he also met with Indian prime minister Manmohan Singh (News Track India (ANI), 2012a). This meeting between the two leaders was viewed as highly important, as the meeting was seen as an opportunity for both sides to attempt to mend diplomatic relations between the two states, particularly since the 2008 acts of terrorism that were carried out in Mumbai, India (News Track India (ANI), 2012a).

Some have questioned why Zardari would make a trip specifically to the Sufi shrine. It has been said that Bhutto, when she asked for his release, promised to bring him to the shrine if he in fact would eventually be freed (News Track India (ANI), 2012a). It has also been said that Zardari himself made a commitment to visiting the shrine while in jail. Thus, some have suggested that his intentions were to provide *mannat*, which can be some sort of gift or, in this case, a visit to the tomb of the saint in relation to this specific tomb (Ali, 2012). Others have suggested that this was a politically calculated move to emphasize—to Pakistan, and in particular Wahhabis—the government's political support for Sufism (Suresh, 2012). Nevertheless, this was not the only time that Zardari referenced the role of the government in promoting Sufism against extremist elements. For example, in 2010, Zardari spoke at the International Conference on Sufism and Peace, which roughly hundreds of representatives from both inside and outside of Pakistan attended (Pakistan Times, 2010). In his discussion, he challenged extremism, arguing that religion was a tool being used by some, all the while placing blame on outside states that used such groups for their own political interests and then paid little interest to such groups after they were no longer needed (Pakistan Times, 2010). It is within this framework that Zardari has argued that Sufi masters can help. He sees them as offering the ability to change how the extremists act, from what he sees as hate

to more useful actions. He has advocated Sufism because he believes that its message is one of peace and of the promotion of a lifestyle that involves refining one's internal being (Pakistan Times, 2010). Related to this, Zardari argued that Islam does not promote violence in any struggle, and that Pakistan itself is historically home to Sufi *pirs* who espoused notions of peace and a common humanity (Pakistan Times, 2010). It was also at this conference that Sardar Assef Ahmed Ali, a government adviser on education, reminded individuals that extremism and Sufism differ, because Sufis emphasize the oneness of humanity (Pakistan Times, 2010)

Having examined the levels that the government has taken to promote Sufism, the reaction toward some of the initiatives (such as the Sufi National Council, as well as the overall promotion of Sufism in Pakistan) has been mixed. There have been many individuals who have been highly upset with the rise of "puritan" or "extremist" interpretations of Islam, and thus have welcomed the promotion of Sufism as a counter to what they perceive as an increased role and presence of the Taliban and its interpretation of Islam (Philippon, 2009). However, while fighting terrorism is, of course, important, many have been critical of the government's approach to Sufism and very skeptical regarding its motives for promoting Sufism. In an interview with Nicholas Schmidle of *Smithsonian Magazine*, Hamid Akhund, who was "a former secretary of tourism and culture in the Sindh government" (Schmidle, 2008), explained that "[t]he generals hoped that since Sufism and devotion to shrines is a common factor of rural life, they would exploit it . . . " even though "[t]hey couldn't." Many have felt that this has been just another attempt to use religion not for good intentions, but rather as a way for the military to highlight its form of government by showing itself as having religious connections, whereas others have felt that these actions have been a "bid to use . . . Sufism as a neo-colonialist tool, providing a toothless content to an Islam acceptable to western powers" (Philippon, 2009). In an interview with Alix Philippon, an individual who helped set up a 2006 Sufi conference in Punjab felt that the "Sufis are being projected as subservient goodie-goodie Muslims." Others have made similar comments, namely believing that outside states (such as the United States) have taken an interest in promoting Sufism because of the belief that it will remove the hostilities and conflict that exists in Pakistan. In fact, one person interviewed by Philippon—who self-identified as a Sufi—felt that this is problematic, that Sufism will not necessarily make one "liberal" or "modern" and that Sufism could move someone to have more "fundamentalist" viewpoints (Philippon, 2009).

Alix Philippon (2009) echoes the nuanced point that one cannot judge an individual just because s/he claims to be a Sufi, that s/he advocates certain positions, such as nonviolence, saying that

> Belonging to a Sufi order and indulging in Sufi practices under the guidance of a sheikh does not presuppose any given position in the political arena. As a matter of fact, *pirs* can be found in all Pakistani parties. Some even head their own, like Ajmal Qadri, head of a Sufi order and leader of a faction of the *deobandi* Jamiyyat-e Ulama-e Islam close to sectarian and jihadi outfits; or Pir of Pagero, who heads his own faction of the semi-secular Pakistan Muslim League and is renowned for his support for the military establishment and for the devotion of his disciples, ready to die for him. Even those who abstain from directly participating in politics do have political clout, as they can ask their disciples to support one specific candidate in electoral races. Each political campaign ushers in massive bargaining between political parties and the popular *pirs*. One can thus better understand what is politically at stake in [the] *pir-muridi* institution.

Speaking specifically in regard to the formation of the Sufi Advisory Council, Eteraz (2009) argues that "[t]he creation of the Sufi Advisory Council . . . signals an increase in the politicization of Islam in Pakistan—if a higher level is even possible. Now, even the pietist and welfare-oriented groups that have traditionally abstained from overindulging in government affairs will be tempted to become mouthpieces for corrupt political actors." He goes on to suggest that advocates of the Sufi Advisory Council believe that this is the most effective way to counter the growing presence and influence of Islamist groups, but that ultimately this is a problem, saying that instead of the government removing itself from becoming involved in religious matters—which could help tensions in Pakistan—it is making matters worse by promoting Sufism, as "[t]he SAC will undoubtedly embolden extremists by giving them ideological motivation: They have evidence to provide young recruits and foot soldiers that the war they are fighting is, in fact, about the integrity of Islam. Far from reducing extremists' influence, the SAC is doing them a favor" (Eteraz, 2009). The concern of many, and one of the arguments of this book, is that governments that promote religious movements, and in this case Sufism, are often further complicating an intricate and delicate situation. By governments placing themselves at the center of the discussion of religion, groups may become more upset with the government as well, while at the same time ignoring other serious issues that may be facing a country, which in the

case of Pakistan could be high poverty and unemployment rates, which are affecting people's attitudes toward the government (Tharoor, 2009). Moreover, one must always wonder whether the government—instead of civil society—should take an active role in promoting religion, particularly when there exist levels of distrust in the society.

And even some who are warmer to the idea of the promotion of Sufism in society as a counter to Wahhabism question the motivations behind the actions, as some have shown skepticism regarding what they see as the role of outside states, such as the United States, in aiding this process, despite the lack of open evidence for this belief. For example, one individual, Ayeda Naqvi, speaking about the role of Western actors in regard to promoting Sufism, was quoted in a BBC article written by Barbara Plett (2009) as saying, "I think it it's done it has to be done very quietly because a lot of people here are allergic to the West interfering." She went on to say, "[s]o even if its something good they're doing, they need to be discreet because you don't want Sufism to be labeled as a movement which is being pushed by the West to drown out the real puritanical Islam" (Plett, 2009). Others have been equally critical, arguing that the causes of extremism have much less to do with religion, and much more to do with politics (Plett, 2009). Thus, even though people are speaking out against extremism and terrorist attacks—as they should, one has to be careful when states are promoting religion for political gain or interest. And again, even if such arguments are not true (namely that outside states are not sponsoring such programs or activities), when a government gets involved in such affairs, citizens will start to question its motivations.

Again, this is not to say that ideas within Sufi philosophy cannot contribute to positive notions of the human rights discourse (in fact, quite the opposite), or that one should not be actively working against extremism. But the issue becomes one of when citizens and government officials view Sufism as an idealized theoretical model that is unable to be interpreted by someone to include conflict of conflict, violence, and so forth. Individuals can have very different characteristics associated with Sufism. Furthermore, this becomes even more problematic when the government is using Sufism partly to counter any opposition groups that pose a challenge to the government, a government that may not be a fully liberal democracy. One should question why Sufism is being promoted by a government (instead of solely by civil society). Furthermore, we should be mindful of the multifaceted characteristics that make up and drive human behavior (namely, just because one claims a specific

religious position, does not necessarily make one more or less peaceful, or political, for that matter). Moreover, this poses another issue when one interprets Sufism as the only possibility for reaching the universal values of love and peace. By the governments' promoting Sufism, one has to question whether this promotion indirectly (and possibly unintentionally) diminishes the role of other Muslim and non-Muslim approaches, which themselves surely have similar ideas about acceptance and love.

CHAPTER 5

Promoting Sufism in Russia, Chechnya, and Uzbekistan

Similar to the other cases examined in this book, Sufism has played an important role in the politics of Russia and former Soviet states, from anticolonial movements in the North Caucasus region, to attempts at state control of the faith, as well as government desires to promote Sufism in an effort to combat religious extremism. But in order to understand the role of Sufism in Russia and the former and Soviet states, we must first examine the history of Islam in the region, and within this Sufism's place in the history of Russia. According to 2010 figures, there are roughly 16,379 million Muslims in Russia (Pew, 2011), with many residing "in the eight autonomous republics of Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Adyghea, Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachay-Cherkessia, Ingushetia, Dagestan, and Chechnya." But millions of Muslims live outside of those areas. For example, the Muslim population in Moscow exceeds two million persons, making Moscow a major Muslim-populated city (Qobil, 2012).

Islam was said to first appear in the Dagestan region of what is now Russia in the 600s ace, while Sufism was said to first have a presence in the Dagestan region beginning in the 1000s ace (Yemelianova, 2001). Sufi *khanaqas* (buildings in which orders meet) were established in the next two centuries, and played an invaluable role in Islamic education in the region (although Sufism came to the Dagestan region later than other regions in Russia) (Bennigsen & Wimbush, 1985). Yet, more orders were being established. Some of the most prominent orders in the region at the time included Naqsbandi, Qadiriya, and Yasawiya (Yemelianova, 2001). This time period differs greatly for other regions

in Russia (such as Chechnya, as well as Ingushetia), where Sufism developed much later, namely starting in the 1700s. Regarding this area, Bennigsen and Wimbush (1985) explain that during this time, the development of Sufism "Followed three different patterns. In some areas, such as the Emirate of Bukhara and Khanates of Kokand and Kiva, where the Islamic charter of society was not under immediate threat, not even from Russian conquest, Sufi orders became part of the ruling establishment" (3). This varied from the Tatar areas. "Where the Muslim community was challenged and threatened in all fields by an overwhelmingly superior presence, the Sufi orders assumed the leading role in the intellectual renaissance of the late nineteenth century" (3). And then, in the North Caucus region, the Sufis countered the Russian occupation (3). Overall, from the 1700s onward Sufism became a predominant interpretation of Islam within the North Caucasus region (Yemelianova, 2001), with many orders present in the region, such as the Naqshbandi, the Qadiriya, the Yasawiya, and the Kubrawiya orders (Bennigsen & Wimbush, 1985).

As mentioned above, Sufi orders had different political reactions to colonialism at the time. Some Sufi orders gained an additional political role in the 1700s when the Russian government invaded the North Caucasus region; it was at this time that Sufi sheikhs organized military campaigns against the invaders. The Sufi orders played a role in organizing different groups in the region. In some instances, they were even successful in establishing control over specific local territories (Yemelianova, 2001). One such Sufi was Mansur Ushurma, who was said to be a member of the Naqbandi order. Ushurma fought against and beat Russian forces at the Zunzha River in 1785, and continued to bring locals together against this army (Bennigsen & Wimbush, 1985). The overall conflict between the Russian forces and the local Muslim community served to increase the popularity and presence of the Sufi orders, in which a number of individuals supported the political Sufi groups.[1] In the 1700s and later, a number of antigovernment leaders were influenced by Naqshbandi Sufi thought. For example, some of the major political figures include Sufis such as Sheikh Mansur, Imam Shamil, Najmuttin of Hotso, Sheikh Uzun Haji, and Kunta Haji (who, even though he advocated nonviolence, was eventually arrested and exiled due to his increased support for the resistance) (Fuller & Doukaev, 2007).[2] In the 1830–1859 conflict, Sufi leaders, namely "three Dagestani *imams* Ghazi Muhammad, Hamza(t) Bek and Shamil (Shamwil)" (Knysh, 2002: 145–146), played a central role in fighting state forces. Thus in the 1860s, there was a concern by the government

that Sufi groups would become increasingly political and thus challenge the state. What was happening was that the Naqsbandiya and the Qadiriya orders were helping to fight the army in Dagestan and Chechnya (Bennigsen & Wimbush, 1985).

Thus, the Russian government took a number of measures to limit Sufi influence. They were worried about the potential power that Sufi sheikhs could have over what they saw as the unknowing subjects, and in particular the ability to frustrate their colonialism (Knysh, 2002: 148). Therefore, many Naqshbandi Sufis were exiled out of the region to Siberia or to the Ottoman Empire (Yemelianova, 2001: 664). For those who stayed in the region, the government ensured that they were persecuted and punished, with some imprisoned, while others were killed (Bennigsen & Wimbush, 1985). Others could not operate in their original *tariqas* (Yemelianova, 2001). Furthermore, government actions also included economic limitations. For example, the government reduced the amount of *waqf* land available (land controlled by religious leaders [and often not taxed]). In addition, the government placed restrictions on Sufi leaders to gain control of additional property. These measures intensified at the turn of the century, when the government began to take additional land away from Sufi orders. The objective of the state was to limit the economic (and in turn) political influence of these orders. This was beneficial for the state, as it limited the role of Sufi groups, as well as specific Sufi sheikhs, whose power was often tied to their economic influence. Thus, many of the sheikhs who were initially in power lost some of their clout in the region due to the state's action. Even those who stayed eventually succumb to government control (Yemelianova, 2001).

Due to this level of control in the late 1800s and into the early 1900s, as the Bolshevik revolution approached, because the power of Sufi leaders was reduced, their movements became more dispersed (Olcott, 2007: 14), although Sufis still led resistance movements (Bennigsen & Wimbush, 1985). Yet while the diffusion of the orders did not entirely signal an end to Sufi influence (in fact, some leaders, through lineage, were able to maintain control of their respective orders [Olcott, 2007]), nevertheless, after the revolution, and specifically in the 1920s, the government further consolidated not only its power, but also land, which led to additional problems for Sufi leaders (Olcott, 2007). For example, Sufi leaders challenged the Bolshevik leaders by supporting opponents of the regime. As a result, the government then went after Naqshbandi Sufis, who were sympathetic to those aiming to overthrow the government[3] (Yemelianova, 2001). Similar to previous measures against Sufi groups, the government took over *waqf* land, which in turn often

affected the viability of Sufi *zawiyas* to survive. Furthermore, the government shut down mosques and Sufi religious tombs (Ferguson, 2007). As a result of these actions by the government, Sufi leaders either left, or if they stayed, they were often targeted and punished by the government (Olcott, 2007). Moreover, in 1927, the government tried to carry out what was known as "the *hajum*, a campaign designed to eliminate what they perceived as the most visible marker of Islam and the influence of the religious elite—the veil" (McGlinchey, 2006: 128). While women continued to wear the veil, the government's intentions in doing this seemed to be that with such a program, they could divide religious leaders, thus ensuring that an organized and unified challenge to the state would not exist (McGlinchey, 2006: 128).

It was during Joseph Stalin's reign that religion in general, which included Islam and Sufism, felt even more government pressure. Galina Yemelianova (2001) explains the policies of Stalin's government toward Sufis, saying that

> 38 Naqshbandi and Kadiri shaykhs were executed. Shariat courts were abolished; mosques and *medresses* were demolished or turned into various secular premises. Islamic clerics, many of whom belonged to the Kadiri *tariqa*, were persecuted and sent to exile. Most Sufi books were destroyed and the Sufi tradition was subjected to various distortions and accretions from popular oral myths and fantasies. (665)

Thus, because of the range of oppressive actions, for decades, "[o]nly a handful of individuals with formal learning of Sufism survived the Soviet period, and each learned person produced only a limited number of students" (Olcott, 2007: 19). Thus, even though many still identified themselves as Sufi, such organizations were few and far between. As a result, many of the orders also purposely went underground for fear of government reprisal (Bennigsen & Wimbush, 1985). But even when underground gatherings took place, authorities often attempted to shut them down, and continued to target Sufi orders in the 1940s and 1950s (Bennigsen & Wimbush, 1985). In fact, the government often had KGB members working undercover in Sufi orders in Chechnya (Zelkina, 1993). Thus, while some have suggested that this private practicing of Sufism may have had a role in Sufism's becoming more popular (Ferguson, 2007: 15), it was difficult for Sufis to practice their faith publically or privately (Olcott, 2007). And yet, they continued to do so.

What happened was that the Muslims were undeterred by Russian efforts to clamp down on their activities in the mosques. In fact, Bennigsen and Wimbush (1985) explain the Sufi underground movements in the

context of state control by saying that "where mosques have been closed, an extensive and complex—but largely uncoordinated—unofficial network of 'parallel' and or 'unofficial' Islam has gained sufficient strength and dynamism in the last forty years to outdistance the official Islamic establishment, which is represented by the four Muslim Spiritual Directorates. Within parallel Islam, Sufis play an important, perhaps determinant role" (17).[4] Again, the government—during these two decades before the fall of the Soviet Union—was concerned about Sufi groups, and in particular Naqshbandi Sufism (Goble, 2000), because of a belief that this order may be harmful to the Soviet state. They worried about these groups because of the difficulty in monitoring their actions(Goble, 2000). Therefore, they monitored and restricted Sufi activities, all the while limiting the distribution Sufi literature in Russian society (Bennigsen & Wimbush, 1985).

All of this began to change, however, when Mikhail Gorbachev came to power. Taking a new approach toward religion, his redirected policies allowed many people throughout Russia to re-establish their religious traditions. It has been argued that this was particularly the case in now-Muslim republics of the former Soviet Union (Olcott, 2007). The Sufis began to carry out traditions that were restricted decades earlier. For example, they began to openly visit tombs of deceased Sufi individuals. Moreover, they increased their involvement in local affairs. They, along with a number of Islamist groups, advocated a limited role for the national government in the North Caucasus region, which included speaking out against the national organization that was in charge of Muslim affairs in Dagestan (the Muftiyat of the North Caucasus) (D.U.M.S.K), which they viewed as being too close to the state (Yemelianova, 2001: 666). This organization fractured into different bodies for the territories within the North Caucasus region, and within the various leadership positions, the Sufis were able to establish control. Upon this development, tensions between the different religious organizations arose after they dissolved their ties (Yemelianova, 2001: 667). Nevertheless, the influence of Sufi groups—with their control over the D.U.M.D. (or the Spiritual Board of Muslims of Dagestan) (Yemelianova, 2001: 667) increased during the tenure of Boris Yeltsin, all the while coordinating a number of programs to bring more Islamic-based programs into civil society. Such items included Islamic education (such as a state-backed Islamic university to educate future religious leaders and Muslim nursery programs), as well as calls for additional sharia (in how animals were killed, prohibitions on alcohol, and specific clothing requirements for women) (Yemelianova, 2001: 670).

However, even though Sufi (as well as other religious) practices were becoming more tolerated during these years, Sufism was perceived primarily as "a cult of saints" (Olcott, 2007: 24). Authorities and other Muslim religious figures were particularly critical of the *mazar*s—a practice in which individuals went to graves and brought offerings in hope of having their prayers answered. And thus, in the 1950s, for example, the government targeted these places of worship, often by shutting them down, destroying them, or "turn[ing] [them] into anti-religious museums, clubs, or 'parks of culture,'" although their efforts to reduce the influence of these spiritual places was not always effective (Bennigsen & Wimbush, 1985: 95–97). The state saw these visits to the shrines as much more than a religious issue; it tied these pilgrimages to notions of power and influence in society. Furthermore, it supported the non-Muslim leaders' position, believing that any movement away from the state-approved Muslim groups would merely shift support and adherence toward Sufi sheikhs (Bennigsen & Wimbush, 1985: 42). The non-Sufi Muslim leaders themselves saw the pilgrimages as taking some power away from them, as "it was not in the official Islamic establishment's interests to allow the diffusion of popular support for Islam in general. Each holy place represents a focal point for Islamic faith that is not only directed away from those mechanisms by which the official Islamic authorities guide and control Islam in the Soviet Union, but moreover might be seen as implicitly against them" (Bennigsen & Wimbush, 1985: 43). Because the Sufis had an essential monopoly in this sphere of saint shrines, this troubled the non-Muslim leaders and the state (Bennigsen & Wimbush, 1985). But despite their concerns with such a practice, the gifts that were being offered often helped serve as a form of income for those in charge of religious issues in the Soviet Union. The main benefactor of this income was "SADUM, (the government's Spiritual Board of Muslims in Central Asia and Kazakhstan), under whose purview all *mazars* and virtually all architecture complexes associated with religion were placed in 1991)" (Olcott, 2007: 24). However, other Muslim leaders continued to be critical of the practice, viewing it as harmful to the teaching of sharia. Yet because of the increased openness of religious practice, many Sufi orders began to become re-established.[5]

What is interesting is that this negative perception of Sufism is not new, but rather has been in existence for centuries. Russian leaders, as well as authors who wrote on the issue of Sufism in Russia, commented on what they saw as problematic sheikhs and Sufi groups. Alexander Knysh (2002) explains Russian government attitudes toward Sufi *ihsans* (spiritual mentors) when he says that, "[w]hile Russian colonial

administrators acknowledged the contributions of some *ishans* to the spiritual and material well-being of local populations and especially efforts to educate the illiterate masses, they still considered them to be a major impediment for the Russian 'civilizing' mission in the area" (149–150). In another example, he explains the attitudes held by some toward Sufi anticolonialist movements, particularly during the Caucasus War, when he says that during this conflict, some believed that one of the primary reasons for the negative reaction toward government forces was "A result of the allegedly fanatic nature of *miuridizm*. Leaders of the *miurid* movement were portrayed as calculating military commanders who unscrupulously used their status and spiritual guides of the mountaineer tribes to secure the loyalty of their followers. The latter were seen as helpless puppets in the hands of their leaders, who were ready to sacrifice them to achieve their ulterior ends" (150). However, he argues that this perception of Sufi leaders has continued in some cases for decades, and even following the fall of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) (Knysh, 2002).

Islamism and the Russian State

But despite the negative perception of Sufism as a "backward" group comprised of "fanatical" leaders, a view that the orders served as places in which antistate attitudes flourished (Bennigsen & Wimbush, 1985), the government's attitude toward Sufism began to change in recent decades, particularly with the rise of Wahhabi Islam. Wahhabi influences were first noted in the region in the 1980s, and "[b]y the end of 1990 *Wahhabis* already made up between 7% and 9% of Dagestani Muslims" (Yemelianova, 2001: 676). Tensions between Wahhabi and Sufi groups then began to develop in Russia. Similar to other conflicts between Wahhabi and Sufi actors, Wahhabis in Russia viewed Sufism as heretical. Worship at shrines, the highlighting of the role of saints as providing blessings and acting as intercessors, and belief in esoteric knowledge that can only be reached by those who attain the highest state—often "saints" as well as "Sufi sheikhs"—were problematic (Yemelianova, 2001: 676–677). Moreover, different interpretations and uses of jihad have also caused tension. For example,

> Wahhabis accuse Sufis of distorting Islamic teaching on the *jihad* and of effectively consigning the *jihad* to oblivion. *Wahhabis* perceive the *jihad* as the core of Islam, without which it is like a "lifeless corpse." Unlike the *tariqatists*, who interpret the *jihad* predominantly in terms of the

> spiritual self-perfection of a Muslim, *Wahhabis* believe that the *jihad* also implies a campaign to spread Islam all over the world. Moreover, Wahhabi radicals view the jihad as a preventive armed advance in order to overcome those obstacles which the enemies of Islam place in the path of its peaceful proliferation. This approach opens up the possibility of declaring a *jihad* against the present government which allegedly resists the effective *ad-da'wa al-Islamiyya* (summons for an Islamic way of life) in Dagestan. (Yemelianova, 2001: 677)

But while this is the case, as mentioned earlier, it must also be noted that both worked together on a number of issues against the state in the late 1980s and early 1990s,[6] until the *tariqas* gained political strength by controlling many of the different mufti positions throughout the North Caucasus (Yemelianova, 2001).

Both regional and, in particular, national Russian government leaders have long been worried about the role of Wahhabism and the rise of Islamic extremist groups in the country.[7] Thus in 1997, Wahhabism was officially prohibited. The government in Dagestan viewed these groups as "religious extremists" (Yemelianova, 2001: 679). This was at a time when the regional government focused more directly on limiting Wahhabism, namely because some Wahhabis not only would not deal with Sufi leaders but also stated that their primary objective was a unified Islamic state. The government has been concerned about Wahhabi-inspired extremist groups that take controversial political positions, such as some that sympathize with the Taliban in Afghanistan (Yemelianova, 2001).

Some observers even suggest that Dagestan, in which roughly five million Muslims reside (and with roughly 90% of the entire region is Muslim) (Dannreuther & March, 2011), is the region of most concern to national government leaders in terms of violent Islamist extremism. This has been here the place where the government, as well as some local individuals have expressed concern about what they see as the threat of "Wahhabi" interpretations of Islam, compared to Sufi identities and approaches to Islam (Dannreuther & March, 2011). The increase in outside influences to the region took place after the fall of the Soviet Union, when, in the 1990s, the national government had less authority over the various regions. This, coupled with socioeconomic issues, "Encouraged the absorption of foreign, radical ideas to fill the post-communist vacuum" (Dannreuther & March, 2011: 16–17). The public role of Islam in the region increased, becoming more visible in community religious organization, schools, mosques, and in the greater presence of Islamic written works (Dannreuther & March, 2011). Furthermore, in 1999, Islamists, under Bagautdin, Shamil' Basaev, as well as Ibn

Al-Khattab went into Dagestan, with the goal of liberating the region, all the while setting up an Islamic government (Dannreuther & March, 2011). In Russia, a Wahhabi group known as Wahhabi Jamaat called for the overthrow of the government in Dagestan, and attacked the region shortly thereafter, in 1999. However, this effort was unsuccessful as thousands within Dagestan fought against Bagautdin, Shamil' Basaev, Ibn Al-Khattab, and their fighters. While many were reliant on the state for economic resources and support—and thus this was part of the reason for their fighting against the invasion—there was a belief that the interpretation of Islam being advocated by the incoming fighters was counter to the Sufi interpretations of Islam. Moreover, it has been argued that the Tariqatist Sufis group "Is enmeshed with a strong sense of tradition and national identity (be it Dagestani, Ingushetian or Chechen) which rejects 'Wahhabism' as foreign and alien" (Dannreuther & March, 2011: 17).

But while the attack was stopped, there have still been increased levels of violence in the region (and particularly toward police and political leaders) since the late 1990s, possibly as a result of concerns about corruption, as well as frustrations with government politicians. Despite these issues, the government has been hesitant to state these factors as causal mechanisms, as compared to socioeconomic problems, coupled with outside actors influencing these actions (Dannreuther & March, 2011). Nevertheless, the rise of Wahhabi Islam has been seen as threatening to leaders, many of whom identify with Sufi Islam. This concern is more than religious. There are clear political challenges to the current leaders in Dagestan. Explaining this, Roland Dannreuther and Luke March have said,

> Radical anti-Sufi Islam challenged the position of religious and political elites alike: the former because it emphasized new scriptural interpretations and questioned the closed, hierarchical Sufi orders with their emphasis on subordination to the religious authorities, the latter because its emphasis on personal asceticism, equality and personal responsibility explicitly challenged the endemic corruption and self-interest of the local elite, many of whom had been in power since the Soviet era. Only in the late 1990s did the religious elite begin to oppose the political one, on the grounds of both its insufficient promotion of Islam and insufficiently rigorous opposition to "Wahhabism." Nevertheless, the Tariqatist clerics supported the political elite's post-1997 anti-"Wahhabi" campaign. (18)

In response, the regional government was even more restrictive toward Wahhabism, disallowing any such parties from existing (Matsuzato & Ibragimov, 2005). Moreover, citizen support Dagestan was much more

in favor of Sufi orders compared to the Wahhabi groups (Yemelianova, 2001).

However, in addition to the Wahhabi influence in Dagestan, it has also had a presence in Chechnya, which took hold mostly during the war in the mid-1990s. Many of the Wahhabis came from outside of Russia to fight with other Islamists and Muslims (including Sufis) against the Russian army. However, actors from the two groups later diverged, with Sufis supporting government policies, in contrast to Wahhabis who "Allied with the irreconcilable Chechen radical nationalists who refused any dialogue with Moscow" (Yemelianova, 2001: 681). The war in Chechnya brought together various Islamists who fought against the Russian government (Fuller & Doukaev, 2007). In response, the government began its campaign against the different Islamist groups. And while government leaders like Vladimir Putin have on many occasions attempted to stress the importance of Islam as part of Russia, the state reaction to the terror attacks by groups operating in the name of Islam that have been carried out in Russia, as well as the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States, has nevertheless been one of increased security measures (Dannreuther & March, 2011). However, many observers have questioned the approaches taken by Putin and other officials within his government. Namely, some have been critical of what they observe as a lack of clarity on definitions of who exactly is a "terrorist." Roland Dannreuther and Luke March (2011) illustrate this when they say that "The definition of terrorism in Russia['s] 2006 law against terrorism . . . excludes mention of acts conducted for a political or ideological goal and focuses on an 'ideology of violence'" (4). They go on to remark that "[t]his is a vague and catch-all formulation which potentially blurs the distinction between protesters, extremists and terrorists, while granting government agencies extremely broad powers in fighting terror . . . " (4). But this is not the only issue with the government's security approach. Some individuals have also been critical of its handling of Muslims within the country. For example, some Islamic written works that are not within the confines of state-supported works have been prohibited from being distributed. Moreover, some argue that Muslims who are seen as having "a higher degree of religiosity" are often labeled as "extremist" or sometimes viewed as followers of Wahhabism (Dannreuther & March, 2011: 4). Lastly, many people within the region do not want outside influence or support from either Wahhabi groups or the government. In fact, many have argued that the citizens themselves have been teaching Islam without outside interference or financial support, and are continuing to do this (Nemtsova, 2010).

The Promotion of Sufism In Russia and Former Soviet States

Nevertheless, despite accusations of civil liberty abuses by the state, the concern about religious extremism continues to play a prominent role in terms of state policy in Russia. Due to these concerns, some government leaders have begun to support the promotion of Sufi Islam in the hope that such initiatives will be a counterforce against extremism. What is interesting about this approach is the shift in government feelings toward Sufism, given the past historical distrust the government has demonstrated toward Sufi orders. It seems that it was the events in the early 1990s that helped bring about a shift regarding government sentiment toward Sufism. As Liz Fuller and Aslan Doukaev (2007) explain, "Russian leaders, their barely concealed distaste for Islam notwithstanding, by the late 1990s became so concerned about the spread of radical interpretations of Islam that they considered it expedient to co-opt official Muslim clergy and even some Sufi sheiks into the struggle against burgeoning Islamic radicalism." With this sort of action, the government is all the while keeping in mind that with its popular support, Sufism actually played a role in politics against the Russian government for a decade from the mid-1990s onward. For example, the Naqshbandi and the Qadiriya movements urged Chechens to fight the Russian government presence and actions in the region (Ferguson, 2007). The Sufi brotherhoods provided both a spiritual as well as a political component. They would not only teach Islam to adherents in the region but would also provide information on countering government actions (Ferguson, 2007). James Ferguson (2007) explains the importance of Sufism as a force against the national government, saying that the reason for its central importance

> [i]n part, . . . was due to the fact that religious training and ritual was often taught in underground schools attached to the key social unit in Central Asia, the mahalla or neighbourhood based around a group of extended families, a grouping which also provided a "social security net." Mullahs, female religious teachers, and elders within the mahalla were the source of religious authority and custom. On this basis, indigenous Islam was impossible to eradicate. Its place in the social [and] political life of the future of Central Asia is thus a crucial issue.

For example, "[w]ith an official policy of promoting atheism [in the Soviet Union], the Soviet government tried to constrain all forms of

religion, with tightly managed officially approved settings for a very small number of religious functionaries" (Ernst, 1997: 210). Thus, Sufi practices were prohibited. But nevertheless, the influence of Sufism in the region continued (Ernst, 1997).

However, any alliances between Sufis and other Muslim groups began to fracture in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when, "[a]fter the fall of the Soviet Union, Dagestan and other republics experienced an influx of Arab ideologies promoting fundamentalist Islam that had nothing but contempt for local traditions, according to local Sufis" (Nemtsova, 2010). For example, in Anna Nemtsova's interviews, one person, speaking about the Wahhabi influences coming into the region, is quoted as saying, "[t]hey taught us Arabic. They brought us trucks full of Wahhabi literature translated into Russian." She went on to say that "[t]hey told us not to recognize Sufi sheikhs, or any of our traditional knowledge of Islam." Thus, because of the rising influence of Wahhabism, as well as a number of violent incidences in the Dagestan region, "The Russian state has begun to encourage—and subsidise—[Sufism] in an effort to combat the religious extremism that has taken hold in Dagestan and other Russian republics in the North Caucasus" (Nemtsova, 2010). Because of the rise of what the government sees as "fundamental" Islam, "Russia is underwriting the education of moderate religious leaders and teachers at seven Islamic universities, in Moscow, Tatarstan, Bashkyrkostan and in four North Caucasus republics, including Dagestan" (Nemtsova, 2010).[8]

One of the primary state organizations taking up the role of funding Islamic programs is the Kremlin's Fund for the Support of Islamic Culture, Science, and Education, which is expected to spend roughly 13 million dollars annually on a host of activities related to the promotion of Islam (Nemtsova, 2010). The intention of such a program is clear: the government is attempting to control and promote the type of Islam it feels is in its interests, or what "The government finds acceptable" (Nemtsova, 2010). Much of this includes training imams or Muslim religious leaders throughout the regions. For example, the Russian Council of Islamic Education was given the task of teaching roughly 2,500 imams who were to be placed in schools (both primary and tertiary), as well as other avenues of education (such as religious places of worship) (Nemtsova, 2010). Part of this education is a response to the increased number of students from the region who are going to the Middle East to learn about Islam. The government has preferred to keep students in the region, while also maintaining an account of those who are studying elsewhere, and in what specific locations this education is taking place (Nemtsova, 2010). The authorities have even set

aside resources to teach and bring along individuals who can help the authorities combat extremist groups (Nemtsova, 2010). There have also been reports that flyers were put up by the Spiritual Board of Muslims regarding individuals who attend university courses on Sufism. The report suggests as well that the Russian security services themselves have an interest in promoting Sufism (Kavkaz-Tsentr, 2010).

Chechnya

The emphasis on Sufism as national government policy is not the only set of policies aimed at the promotion of Sufism. In fact, leaders from different Muslim-majority regions have also begun programs—with the support of the national government—against extremist Islam. For example, in the mid-1990s, Chechen leaders discussed ways in which they could promote "traditional Islam" in their communities. Within this plan, their initial goal was to target places of learning. However, they encountered some problems, such as an insufficient number of teachers and resources, along with having to explain to the national government exactly what their program of "traditional Islam" consisted of (Fuller & Doukaev, 2007). They also advocated increasing employment opportunities for youth (Fuller & Doukaev, 2007). One primary example of a regional leader's investing in a policy that promoted Sufism is Ramzan Kadyrov, the current leader of Chechnya. Kadyrov assumed the presidency of Chechnya in 2007 after his father, Ahmad Kadyrov, was murdered in 2004 (Marten, 2010). Ahmad, himself a Chechen rebel, later began working with the state, because he was frustrated with the religious direction of the rebellion (Dannreuther & March, 2009). Dannreuther and March (2009) argue that the presence of "[S]alafist and radical extremist Islamic viewpoints . . . was antithetical to his more traditionalist and sufi influenced religious stance" (Dannruether & March, 2009: 6). But in terms of Ramzan's appointment, even before he was selected as the leader of Chechnya, he served as deputy prime minister. He also spent time advocating the establishment of programs that housed youth sports as a measure against extremist Islam (Fuller & Doukaev, 2007).

In exchange for supporting the Kremlin, Kadyrov has been granted relatively free reign in Chechnya since his appointment. Over time, Putin and Dmitry Medvedev (and now Putin again) have provided numerous benefits to Kadyrov. For example, since his regional presidency, the Russian national state has removed much of it own presence in the region, giving military and police control to Kadyrov. In

addition, even antiterrorism measures are now led locally by Kadyrov, who has the power to appoint officials for these assignments (Marten, 2010: 2). Furthermore, the national government has even allowed the local airport in Grozny to operate under the control of Kadyrov. This has granted him even further power, since Moscow is unable to (or uninterested in) monitor(ing) everything that happens, which thus allows Kadyrov to fly in and out of the airport (and have others come into Chechnya), and Moscow is none the wiser (Marten, 2010). Looking at all of these substantial changes and provisions made by the Russian state for Kadyrov, Marten (2010) goes so far as to say that Kadyrov "was given not merely de facto but de jure command and control over the vast majority of security forces located on Chechn territory" (2).

What Kadyrov Offers

At the moment, in return for this patronage, Kadyrov seems to have rather faithfully carried out the interests of the state. For example, regarding religion (and the state's concern about violent Islamic actions), Kadyrov has invoked the importance of Sufism, arguing that it should not only be a central part of Russia but that media outlets should promote the faith (Fuller, 2012). In the past, the government was highly concerned about extremist groups in areas like Chechnya. In fact, one can see a history of violence between the government and armed groups in Chechnya. But while the government has historically used the military to quell any unrest in the region, the state is now looking to emphasize a "more docile strain of Islam" by providing government-sponsored educational opportunities, while helping provide training for Muslim religious leaders (Nemtsova & Matthews, 2010). And in Kadyrov, they have an individual who has installed an extensive program of which a certain form of Islam is advocated. Fuller (2010) explains that "[g]iven that the success of Kadyrov's indoctrination campaign depends in the first instance on the clergy, Kadyrov holds regular meetings both with Chechen mufti Sultan-jajji Mirzayev and with local imams and kadis." With Kadyrov, anyone who does not teach Islam according to the state's preferences can be removed from his position (Fuller, 2010).[9] Furthermore, he has also set up mosques throughout Chechnya, in order to influence how Islam is being taught (Fuller & Doukaev, 2007). For example, in 2007, Kadyrov was building a mosque with a capacity to house 10,000 prayer-goers. The intention was for this mosque to attract individuals away from Wahhabi interpretations of Islam and toward what Kadyrov sees as practices of Islam relevant to the history and tradition of the region (Parfitt, 2007).

Anna Nemtsova and Owen Matthews (2010), in a *Newsweek* article on Kadyrov, explain why the national government may find supporting him and his interpretation of Islam useful:

> Kadyrov, 34, has become the standard-bearer for the Kremlin's efforts to pacify the rebellious North Caucasus once and for all. His bare-knuckle style has brought at least some degree of law and order to Chechnya, and that crude success is why the Kremlin trusts him.

Moreover,

> [a]t first glance, Kadyrov might seem to be the perfect tool for the Kremlin's needs. Russian leader Vladimir Putin (Kadyrov calls him "my idol") appointed him president of Chechnya in 2007, as soon as he became old enough to take the post legally. His brand of Islam is far from the Saudi-derived Wahhabism espoused by many of the Chechen rebels—and Osama Bin Laden.

Along with his implementation of Sufism in the local schools and education in mosques, it is also evident that Kadyrov attempts to use Sufi symbols in terms of political influence. For example, he has promoted the role of public dhikr (remembrance), often attending such gatherings (Fuller & Doukaev, 2007), and even hosting weekly dhikr gatherings at his residence (Parfitt, 2007). He has also set up a website to promote Sufi ideas (Fuller, 2010), and designed the prison uniforms in Chernokozovo to resemble clothing historically worn by Sufis in the Qadiriya order in order to symbolize the importance of Sufi identity in all individuals in Chechnya (Fuller & Doukaev, 2007). In fact, he will often wear clothing similar to that of Sufi guides, even advocating a change in title, from president to *mekkh-da*, which means "father of the nation" (Nemtsova & Matthews, 2010). This term has political and religious connotations, as it is "usually associated with the legendary imams who led the resistance to Russian occupation in the 19th century" (Nemtsova & Matthews, 2010). Kadyrov has attempted to establish himself as the leading spiritual figure in the region, following his father, Ahmed, who served in this role until his assassination in 2004 (Nemtsova & Matthews, 2010). In addition, he has also attempted to connect himself to the nineteenth-century Sufi sheikh Kunta-hadji to gain political and religious legitimacy.[10,11] But not only that, Kadyrov has also emphasized the actions of Kunta-hadji, and in particular his messages of nonviolence.[12] It has been argued that Kadyrov has referenced this point in order to give the impression that one should not take

up arms, and that succumbing to the government is acceptable (and preferred) in order for Chechnya to continue to exist (Fuller, 2012). Thus, by such governments emphasizing historical Islamist movements that traditionally have focused on ties to the land, some have questioned the role of politics in the promotion of Sufism as a form of opposition to antigovernment movements (Fuller & Doukaev, 2007). Thus, at the behest of the national government, Kadyrov and his backers continue to advocate Sufi Islam instead of Wahhabism, or "what he calls 'the evil so-called denomination of Wahhabism'" and "new inventions for [Russia]" (Nemtsova & Matthews, 2010).[13] He has attempted to work with the national government on promoting Sufi Islam, believing that by not doing so Russia will face major problems. He has even suggested not only that religious leaders from Chechnya should monitor all Muslim leaders in Russia but that they should also write out what topics should be covered by imams in their lectures (Nemtsova & Matthews, 2010).

But while Kadyrov has built a policy around the promotion of Sufism, his actions suggest that any proposed differences between "his" Sufism and the Wahhabism he seems to despise are actually difficult to disentangle (Nemtsova & Matthews, 2010). For example, Kadyrov has banned alcohol (Fuller & Doukaev, 2007), has made statements advocating his desire for women to wear the Islamic headscarf (Nemtsova & Matthews, 2010), has prohibited wedding gowns that he believes are too revealing, has barred women who do not wear the headscarf from attending universities in Chechnya, (Fuller & Doukaev, 2007), and reportedly has had individuals shoot paintballs at women whom he and his backers consider as not wearing "proper" clothing. Furthermore, he has established a "Morality Police" to deal with "abuses" of Islamic law as he sees fit. The human rights group Memorial (in Nemtsova & Matthews, 2010) reports that this police force has shaved off the hair of women who have worked as prostitutes, and then proceeded to paint the women's heads green to symbolize Islam (Nemtsova & Matthews, 2010). In addition, "His education policies strongly discourage access to the outside world's 'corrupting' influences, such as the internet" (Nemtsova & Matthews, 2010). This is even reflected in the type of shows and music that exist in Chechnya (Fuller & Doukaev, 2007), as well as other media outlets (such as television) (Fuller, 2010), because he desires that performances "conform to Chechen mentality and education" (Fuller & Doukaev, 2007). But despite such similarities, in the case of Kadyrov in Chechnya, Liz Fuller (2010) argues that the reason for his strong emphasis on Sufism "Is informed by a visceral fear and loathing of Salafi Islam, not, one suspects, so much on narrow doctrinal

grounds as because of the threat the Islamic insurgency poses to his authority and his standing in the eyes of the Russian leadership. . . . "

Thus, despite the various accusations about Kadyrov's role in violence, terrorism, and killings in Chechnya,[14] it seems that Putin is happy enough with Kadyrov. As mentioned, Putin and the Kremlin are benefiting by this cooperation with Kadyrov. First, Chechnya, with its various civil wars, has had episodes of instability. Kadyrov has been able to show his loyalty as well as convince other Chechen fighters to support the state (Dannreuther & March, 2009). Thus, although Putin has provided Kadyrov with resources and great power, there is a belief "that the neo-patrimonial and personal links between Putin and Kadyrov will ensure his fidelity" (Dannreuther & March, 2009: 8). But by providing a trusted local leader with such power, Moscow, although "effectively outsourc[ing] its own sovereignty" (Marten, 2010: 4), believes it has ensured a sense of calm in the region, without a heavy toll on the state (Marten, 2010).[15] However, some observers do think that this will hurt the long-term objectives of the Kremlin's power, particularly if Kadyrov moves toward actions that may be counterproductive to the interests of the national government, or may try to push his own agenda, which might include interests in regional areas outside of just Chechnya (Baev, 2006, in Dannreuther & March, 2009). Moscow, in granting such powers, may have less control over Kadyrov in the future (Dannreuther & March, 2009: 7).

Uzbekistan

Another example of the promotion of Sufism as a counter to extremism, but also Islamist groups that are politically threatening to the state can be found in the former Soviet Republic of Uzbekistan. Similar to the other cases discussed here, Uzbekistan leader Islam Karimov, since coming to power in 1990, has attempted to increase his national power, often by reducing local leadership control, since he has seen local "clan" identity as a "threat" to the state (Ilkhamov, 2007). Thus, part of the way in which he has diminished local power is through the establishment of patronage networks throughout the country, as well as "'divide-and rule' policies" (Ilkhamov, 2007: 76), which, along with his control of resources, has allowed him to establish control, all the while using the same practice of providing benefits to those who are loyal to his regime (Ilkhamov, 2007). Included in this patronage network are Islamic leaders from whom Karimov can benefit (McGlinchey, 2006). Again, this approach is not new in Uzbekistan. During the Soviet era, the

government courted religious leaders in the region for its own interests, namely to generate backing for World War II, or for economic programs that benefited both the national government and those in control of the production locally (McGlinchey, 2006: 129–130). By doing so, it was able to find leaders who would be happy to receive such benefits, and in turn, were better able to control the region (McGlinchey, 2006).

And in many cases, Uzbek religious leaders in turn themselves "actively courted such supervision as a way to ensure continued power" (McGlinchey, 2006: 129).

In the case of Uzbekistan, with the "Islamic revival" that emerged as a result of a number of factors (such as the Iranian Revolution, the Afghanistan war, and Gorbachev's official position on religion) (Gaziev, 2000: 1–2), political elites also found it useful to promote Islam, not only to save their jobs but also to counter certain political movements that they saw as problematic (Gaziev, 2000). In fact, this is a major concern for Karimov and his government. For example, after independence, Islamist threats to Karimov's power became evident in Namangan, in which groups tried to take local political control (Martin, 2007). Thus, shortly after the establishment of independent Uzbekistan, the leader, Islam Karimov, concerned about certain rising Islamist movements, actually began promoting Islam more, and specifically Sufi Islam in society. He did this in an attempt to reinstall a "national heritage" (Papas, 2005: 38),[16] all the while minimizing the power of those whom he saw as opposing him. For example, to counter regional influences in the Ferghana Valley, he has not only disrupted the politics of the region by replacing local leaders (Martin, 2007), but in 1993 also moved against Mufti Muhammad Sadiq Muhammad Yusuf, who not only had ties to the region but has been known to have an "independent reputation," and who some even suggested was a challenge Karimov's power in the elections of 1991 (Martin, 2007: 335). After Sadiq's departure, Karimov filled the religious position by tapping Mukhtarkhan Abdulaev, who was also a leader of the Naqshbandi Sufi order (Martin, 2007). In fact, Karimov has tried to control the Islamic leaders in the region through the Committee on Religious Affairs, as well as the Muslim Spiritual Board (McGlinchey, 2006: 130).

Thus, in addition to watching Islamic leaders, as well as engaging in the political maneuvering of putting a Sufi leader at a high post, the government also began supporting trips to Mecca for citizens, helped localize mosque control, set out to "rename" a number of roads from Communist to Muslim references[17] (Gaziev, 2000), and encouraged increased communications with Naqshbandi Sufi groups outside of

Uzbekistan, with particular interest in the Islamic Supreme Council of America, a Naqshbandi-dominated organization (Keston News Service, 2002). Furthermore, the government has also begun to sponsor Sufi groups (like the Naqshbandi order) to fight Islamic "fundamentalist" groups (Goble, 2000)[18] (with the Naqshbandi receiving more attention from the government (Gaziev, 2000)). For example, the government has remodeled Sufi shrines,[19] as well as helped celebrate the anniversary of the Naqshbandi order (Gaziev, 2000) at the tomb of Baha' al-Din Naqshband, a prominent historical Sufi (Papas, 2005). It even re-established his tomb, from a place in which the Soviet state housed fertilizer to a celebrated shrine that individuals visit (Keston News Service, 2002). The government has also put up billboards that display sayings from Bahauddin Naqshbandi (Goble, 2000). Furthermore, it has also promoted the memory of other Sufi saints, namely Ahmad Yasawi, a Sufi leader from the 1000s ace, as well as Alisher Navoi, who was a poet from the 1400s ace. The government has highlighted the life of Navoi because of his historical role in working within the government. Thus, some argue that he "is ubiquitously mentioned and quoted in order to illustrate the model of a Sufi figure occupying an official position and loyally supporting the court, e.g. the State" (Papas, 2005: 38). There has been no shortage of efforts to use Sufi leaders for state interests, and often positive ways have been found to highlight such groups and leaders, such as discussing them in the context of "Western" philosophers such as Immanuel Kant and G.W.F. Hegel, all the while ignoring any past actions committed by Sufi leaders that indicated a less than full adherence to (and submissive position toward) the state. The state projects an image of "a complete (religious, social, as well as political) Sufi model of loyal citizenship" (Papas, 2005: 38). Some religious leaders have supported the government's increased interest in the order. For example, Bobodzhon Rahmonov, who is "the imam-hatyb of the mosque next to Naqshbandi's mausoleum," expressed his support for and engaged in joint activity with the state to challenge Wahhabi groups. Furthermore, some educators from the Mir-Arab school also spoke out in favor of the government's approach toward Sufism (Keston News Service, 2002). Moreover, television shows on Uzbekistan television *Hidoyat Sari* ("Towards Guidance") have begun to air shows related to educating about Sufism (BBC, 2008).

In addition to direct government actions related to support for Sufi groups, the expectations for Sufism in Uzbek society can also be examined through the type of literature that is currently being published in the country. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, there has been a steady

stream of Sufi publications within Uzbekistan. Some of the major authors on Sufism include Sadriddin Salim Bukhoriy and Najmiddin Komilov, who consults the president in relation to matters of religion (Papas, 2005). When examining such works, it becomes evident that the messages in the text are read with a particular interpretation of Sufism in mind, both in terms of religion and also how this is translated into attitudes toward politics. For example, many of the texts deal with issues of "citizenship," and the literature is not intended as a spiritual guide for those on the Sufi road, but rather, toward what Alexandre Papas (2005) argues is "the pious citizen to explain the proper way to live a submissive life" (39). Papas (2005) cites one example of how this plays out in Bukhoriy's works:

> Typically, in one story of a shaykh imploring the help of Baha' al-Din Naqshband against the Bolsheviks, Bukhoriy makes the appearing saint answer that the bad situation of Uzbek Muslims is due to their lack of faith: neither jihad—inner or outer—nor any other action but the restraint of the believers and the total submission of God offers a way out. (39)

He goes on to say that "these writings teach an obedient Sufism that would validate in the name of God the established political order" (Papas, 2005: 39). But this is not the only case in which Sufism is projected in a particular fashion in literature for the use of the government. In Komilov's works, he is critical of both Sufism that shuns the material world and the effect that this may have on how one behaves. He also takes issue with a Sufism that gives too much attention and unflinching support to a spiritual leader (Papas, 2005). To Komilov, such "incorrect" manifestations of Sufism, should instead be replaced by a "correct" Sufism that advocates an inner emphasis on God, and one that maintains support for the state (Papas, 2005). He has also done this in his works by using Sufi heuristics. For example, the word *futuvvat* (or "spiritual honor code") has been reinterpreted and placed within an expectation of what Papas (2005) argues is "a conformist model of citizenship, which enhances the values of labour, camaraderie, and a sense of duty" (39). Thus, Sufism has found a place in terms of the promotion of Islam by the government, but one that is clearly tied to certain expectations of actions, not only of how an individual should live but also within this context, an expectation of a limited or "correct" political role of an individual within a Sufi framework, and one that is "at the service of a Republic where public opinion is not allowed to opine"

(Papas, 2005: 39). Therefore, it has become evident that the government has encouraged a specific type of Islam in society, namely one that it sees as limiting the politicization of religion (Gaziev, 2000).

In addition, political leaders in Uzbekistan have also found other benefits in promoting Sufism, namely challenging extremist Islamist groups (Papas, 2005). While the government has backed Sufi publications, it has also restricted "fundamentalist" writings (Goble, 2000). Moreover, it has arrested (Goble, 2000) and killed individuals whom it has seen as being "radical Islamists." For example, in May of 2005, anywhere from 173 persons to over 500 persons who were protesting, were killed by government forces (McGlinchey, 2006: 126). Despite government justifications, "[a]ccounts by participants, journalists, and eyewitnesses suggest, however, that everyday grievances (rather than religious fervor) motivated the majority of protesters" (McGlinchey, 2006: 127). In fact, the government often uses this argument in order to control the political situation in the state (McGlinchey, 2006). Along with responding to protesters, the jailing of people is not uncommon. And while some individuals are said to be violent Islamists, many are not. Instead, as McGlinchey (2006) writes, "they are independent Islamic leaders whom the government, in an effort to limit challenges to its legitimacy, has strategically labeled as extremists" (131).

Thus, Sufism has been given support against Islamist groups in Uzbekistan because it often does not support the message of "fundamentalists who diminish or criticize local customs" (Keston News Service, 2002), and who also support the idea of sharia coexisting within the political system, while not being perceived as a challenge to the state (Papas, 2005). This is in comparison to the Islamists, who are seen as objecting to those in power, and are thus viewed as a problem that needs to be fixed, whereas the "good" Sufis are viewed differently, for they are not posing a threat to the government, but rather are more malleable to the particular conditions that already exist (Goble, 2000). Papas (2005) sums up the level of manipulation of the state toward Sufis when he says that what is happening is that "The state's aim is to encourage throughout mystical Islam society's submissiveness to the state. Here, Sufism appears as an artificial Islam, and the Sufi as a creature of the President" (39). But despite the Sufis' high level of support and even attempts to control perceptions of Sufism (as well as having a hand in influential Sufi individuals), leaders in Uzbekistan have taken a multifaceted approach to Sufism, in which some argue that "[t]he local authorities are very careful in dealing with the Sufis. On one hand, they realize that the popularity, influence and widespread structure

of the Sufi orders can be of use in gaining popularity and propagating the official policy of the government. On the other hand, the Sufi sects' code of secrecy and sophisticated organizational framework has the potential to mobilize Muslims and build a "political infrastructure" (Gaziev, 2000: 6). And because of this, the government has been selective as far as which Sufi groups they have promoted, and which organizations they have restricted (Goble, 2000). Moreover, and as mentioned throughout this book, the notion that Sufis are completely submissive to the authoritarian state is highly inaccurate. Even though Sufis and Salafis in Uzbekistan have many differences, both often hold a similar position, namely abhorrence toward the authoritarian governments in the region.[20] Thus, controlling both groups (and the different groups within the Sufis and the Salafis) could be problematic for the government. In the case of extremist groups, they do not recognize political leaders. And in the case of the Sufi groups, their emphasis on the Sufi sheikh requires the government to compete for political power against the sheikhs, and thus it can be the case that such groups are not under wholly the structure of the state (Goble, 2000). Thus, while the government has overall generally supported the rise of Sufi groups (Olcott, 2007), whether this continues or whether the government attempts to work with Sufi groups politically may depend on a number of factors, including the levels of resistance or the level of participation between Sufi, Hanafi, and Salafi groups (Olcott, 2007).

The Interests of Religious Leaders

Throughout all of these discussions on the government's sponsoring Sufism,, the Sufi Naqshbandi Sufi order has been quite aware of what is taking place, and how Karimov has used Sufism for his own personal benefit. However, the relationship, as I have argued elsewhere, is similarly not one-sided in Uzbekistan. Members of the Naqshbandi order who are cooperating with the government are also benefiting from this relationship. These groups have had to compete with other groups for religious as well as political influence in the postcommunist state. And in the case of the Naqshbandi, having such a high political/religious position, along with a host of state initiatives in relation to Sufism, has seemed to provide increased attention to their order, as well as state resources for the group. The relationship thus clearly fits the "exchange of interests" model proposed earlier in this book. Kevin Martin (2007) explains the duel benefits for the state and the Sufi order when he says that

> In general, however, he [Karimov] has clearly been positioning the [Naqshbandi] as a bulwark against politically more active Islamic groups, which are most active in the valley. This is expressed through the cooperation of the Uzbekistani Ministry of Education with Turkish [Naqshbandi]-oriented *vakifs* (non-profit, generally religious, foundations) in establishing private, *vakif*-run and -funded schools in Uzbekistan. While the schools are forbidden from proselytizing, it seems likely that their long-term goal is to increase the presence of their orders in Central Asia; undoubtedly, the Uzbekistani regime is also aware of this possibility. (342)

Thus, while Karimov seems clearly to have an agenda here that helps counter Islamist challengers, Sufi groups do not leave empty-handed in this exchange, as the benefit by additional resources, as well as an increased religious role in Uzbek society.

But despite the fact that many Muslim and Sufi leaders clearly do work with the Karimov regime, often touting his reign, there are still some imams who do not give into the state, or at least the benefits structure for some imams varies, thus making it a bit more difficult for the regime to control all religious voices. While there may be a risk in not supporting Karimov, in order to understand why some are less quick to work with the government, one has to understand incentives. For religious leaders, they have to weigh the benefits of working with the government, which often is in the form of resources, as well as some ability to operate, compared to citizen expectations for an independent religious leadership (McGlinchey, 2006). For example, some have greater interests in meeting civil society's demand for Islamic leaders who are not intertwined with the government (McGlinchey, 2006). And such leaders who stand up to Karimov (by not openly siding with his policies) are often seen as "natural allies" in Uzbekistan, with individuals highly upset about the repression of rights by the Karmov regime (McGlinchey, 2006: 126).

One of the best cases that underscores the complexity between supporting the government and claiming a level of independence, and the costs of such an action can be seen in Mohammad Sodik Mohammad Yusuf. While Imam Mohammad Sodik was viewed by many in Uzbekistan as outside of the sphere of the state's influence, it was not long before he was making public statements in favor of Karimov and his attempt to win the highest post in Uzbekistan. However, he has had to walk a tightrope. Earlier in the 1990s, as Islamist influences increased, the government was worried about such challenges. And with this, they wondered where Mohammad Sodik stood exactly, particularly of his

highly influential religious role in the region as the mufti for Central Asia (McGlinchey, 2006: 135). Karimov, seeing how other leaders could challenge his rule, began to worry about Sodik, and particularly after Karimov himself was held by protesters, who called for a discussion on the role of Islam in society (Botobekov, 2000, in McGlinchey, 2006: 136). Thus, as citizens were pushing more Islam into government, the figure who kept coming up was Sodik. And because of the threat Sodik posed to Karimov (who saw Sodik as supporting radical Islam), Sodik left the state and went to Libya in 1993. However, their position changed, when in 2000, and then for good in 2001, Karimov wanted Sodik to come back to Uzbekistan in order to combat the rise of Islamic extremism (McGlinchey, 2006: 137). Furthermore, Sodik has come out and made statements supporting Karimov's re-election. For example, in 2000 he was quoted as saying,

> The candidates are known. . . . The people' trusted son who has done so much for our people and cares for them, namely Islam Karimov, is one of the candidates. . . . God willing, a majority of people, all, will vote for him. . . . I pray to God that our people stay well on election day and that they will reelect the man they love to the post of head of state. (McGlinchey, 2006: 138)

However, the picture of Sodik is more complicated than one of complete cooperation with the Karimov and the state's line. While he is viewed as being tied to the state, in the eyes of many, there does exist an element of separation from Karimov. For example, he has been adamant about the role of Islamic education in Uzbekistan, particularly in the context of challenging Islamic extremism. But by not investing as much support in allowing imams to teach, Sodik believes that such policies are helping lead to increased extremism (McGlinchey, 2006). Thus overall, some people in Uzbekistan do think that he is tied to the state, but others question how much choice he (or any imam) has. On the one hand, too much attention and power would lead to suspicion from the government, and possibly punishment. By working with the state, there are some resource benefits that one may get, along with the ability to continue work without interruption. However, on the other hand, imams must consider what their followers want. For example, as McGlinchey (2006) notes, "Uzbek religious elites, in contrast to political elites, must be responsive to their constituencies. Whereas the average Uzbek has little recourse if he dislikes his local government administrators, he is free to choose his religious leaders. Should he dislike one

imam, he can travel to the next district or the next city to seek spiritual guidance from another imam" (144). He goes on to say that "in contrast to Uzbekistan's political elite, who respond almost exclusively to government incentives, Uzbekistan's religious leaders must balance government directives from above with society's demands from below. In short, in Uzbekistan there is a market for independent leaders but no such demand for independent political leaders" (144).

But the issue of imams, patronage, and the state is not limited to Uzbekistan. In fact, Uzbekistan is not the only former Soviet country that has addressed the place of Sufism in their state. For example, in Kazakhstan, many "civil leaders seem to view it as harmless, and the Tajiks consider it inevitable[,]" although other religious leaders are concerned about the rising influence (and wealth) of Sufi leaders (Olcott, 2007: 25). Nevertheless, the government in Tajikistan has encouraged Sufism and Sufi practices such as shrine visitations, in order "to simultaneously promote a 'national' and traditional form of Islamic practice and curb undesired trends which are portrayed as posing a potential danger to the stability of the state and the uniqueness of Tajikistan's national character" (O'Dell, 2011: 5). The government has been particularly active in restoring the burial place of Sayyid Ali Hamadani, a popular Sufi in the country, while providing a place to display his writings, as well as elevating his name to "the status of a national saint" (O'Dell, 2011: 7). And similar to the case of Russia (as well as many of the other cases examined), the government of Tajikistan has also attempted to control the education related to religion. Namely, the sole religious university (the Islamic University of Dushanbe) is now overseen by the ministry of education, which enforces the screening of teachers for the institution (O'Dell, 2011: 8). Citizens cannot receive a homeschooled religious education, and anyone offering lessons outside of the purview of the government can be penalized (O'Dell, 2011). Furthermore, the government is limiting the number of students who are studying Islam in other countries. And within the domestic religious schools, Sufism has become a prominent part of the education, often being taught in relation to topics of "peace-building" (O'Dell, 2011). The government has even had a role in what types of religious books are sold (O'Dell, 2011).[21] Thus, this again is not individuals themselves examining different religious interpretations outside of the scope of the government (as was the concern in areas such as Pakistan (Eteraz, 2009), but rather, "[a]s the curriculum of the Islamic University is controlled by the government, the offering of courses on Sufism and peace initiatives indicates that state is vested in promoting Sufism in Islamic education as an

antidote to the perceived threat of Islamic extremism" (O'Dell, 2011: 10). Thus, from the example of Tajikistan (as well as other former Soviet states), Emily O'Dell (2011) argues that this attempt by the governments to "sanitize" Islam is not rare in the region.

Critiques

However, not everyone in the region feels that the promotion of Sufism by the government is beneficial, or even the most useful approach to fighting extremist groups. For example, many people argue that the real objective should be an increase in overall human rights protections, and not specific targeted approaches toward groups that the government feels will serve its own best interests. For example, in an interview with Ana Nemtsova (2010), Tatyana Lokshina, who is the director of Human Rights Watch, alluded to such comments, along with saying that "[t]he development of civil society institutions that would protect human rights is the solution to Dagestan's issues." One finds similar concerns regarding the government's promotion of Sufism in Uzbekistan. For example, Paul Goble (2000) argues that "In promoting the ideas of the Naqshbandi order, Tashkent may find that its success in inoculating its citizens against fundamentalism will not provide the guarantee it seeks to allow it to control an increasingly numerous, impoverished, and restive population." Thus, problems arise when the government promotes Sufism not for the ideas and contributions that Sufi theology stresses, but rather when it does so to combat other political groups, all the while not adhering to its own notions of human rights. For example, Goble (2000) goes on to say that while the government is attempting to stop extremist groups by highlighting Sufism, "In many respects, this attempt to use Sufism to combat fundamentalism is fighting fire with fire. While followers of the two trends dislike one another and disagree on many theological and practical points, they share in common a distaste for many of the actions and corruption of the successor regimes in Tashkent and elsewhere in Central Asia." He goes on to add that controlling both groups could be problematic. In the case of extremist groups, they do not recognize political leaders. And in the case of Sufi groups, their emphasis on the Sufi sheikh makes the government compete for political power against this individual, and thus it can be the case that such groups are not under wholly the structure of the state. Therefore, as a response to this, the government has been careful as to which groups (even within the Sufi groups it promotes) to emphasize as a response to extremist groups, going so far as "[trying] to block

the formation of such orders lest they become a threat to the regime" (Goble, 2000).

Another argument posed by some observers is that the government's promotion of Sufism may actually lead to additional hostilities (Nemtsova, 2010). What has to be emphasized is not the name of the group, but whether any organization (government or nongovernmental organization) is committed to making contributions to human rights, although many have been critical of all Salafi groups, arguing that such groups' interpretations will be harmful to the human rights of individuals (Nemtsova, 2010). Again, one has to keep in mind that the Salafi identification has many different forms and characteristics, and there are individuals and groups within it that do not espouse violence, and that do argue that one can be Salafi and remain "peaceful" (interview with Aisha Yusupova [a mother], in Nemtsova, 2010). But even so, this does not mean that all of them peaceful, or violent, or that they all share similar positions on human rights or politics because of a common religious identification. This has been quite evident with Kadyrov and his "Sufi" background and identification. Again, human rights activists argue that the role of establishing a civil society in which all individuals have a right to voice their concerns about religion is of the utmost importance, because marginalizing non-Sufi groups may lead to violent conflict (Nemtsova, 2010).[22] And we as a global community should continue to criticize any group that limits or advocates human rights abuses, whether Salafi or Sufi.

Furthermore, some suggest that supporting such as authoritarian leaders, as in the case of Chechnya with Kadyrov—both in terms of national as well as local governments and policies—will have the opposite effect from what the government intends. By upsetting local Chechens who are suffering due to the regime of Kadyrov, this may lead to an increase in hostilities, as well as extremism in the region, with individuals leading armed campaigns against Kadyrov (Nemtsova & Matthews, 2010). Moreover, some people contend that it is specifically the perceived ties between Putin and Kadyrov that have directly led to additional support for such extremist groups in the region, which not only view Kadyrov and the imams associated with him as "'murtads' (apostates) and 'mushriks' (idolaters)" (Fuller, 2012) but also as a "puppet" of the government (Parfitt, 2007). Overall, it is believed that the government's categorization of individuals as "Sufi" or "Wahhabi," as well as its strong military response, has led many individuals to become concerned about speaking out (because of worries that they will be viewed as a "Wahhabist sympathizer") (Fuller, 2010), or to fight against

the government (Fuller & Doukaev, 2007). Nevertheless, the government generally seems pleased with supporting Sufi groups, particularly because "[t]he government is attracted to what many see as the lesser risk of politicization of Sufism . . . " (Olcott, 2007: 25). But despite this, the objective should always be the promotion of peace and human rights that are void of a particular political agenda, namely promoting specific religious groups that will primarily benefit the already existing authoritarian regime.

CHAPTER 6

The Promotion of Sufism in the West: Britain and the United States

While much of this book has focused on the role of Sufism and its relation to politics in Muslim-majority states, this chapter will examine the relationship between governments and Sufi groups as it relates to politics in non-Muslim majority states in the West. The primary focus of this chapter will be examining Sufism in Britain, but I will also spend discuss how nongovernmental actors have advocated Sufism in the United States. In terms of the presence of Sufism in the "West," there is no monolith that exists within Sufi communities. For example, while various Sufi groups have been in the United States for decades, we find that, at least one part of "Sufism resembled more a freelance New Age movement than the kind of teaching and training represented by the more traditional Sufi orders of other parts of the Islamic world" (Smith, 2002: 13). Nevertheless, there has also been an increase in Sufi groups that have ties to "the traditional orders and organizations" (Smith, 2002: 13). This seems to be the case in Britain, for example, in which we see the Sufi structure "centered on local *khalifas* or saints (*pirs*) which recognize sacred genealogical links to different orders and saints located in different parts of Pakistan" (Werbner, 2006: 128). Marcia Hermansen (2006) categorized the Sufi groups into what she labels "hybrid" groups, "perennial" groups, and "transplant" groups. She sees hybrid groups as "those movements that identify more closely with an Islamic source and content. For example, in the United States, these hybrid Sufi groups generally are founded and

led by immigrant Muslims who were born and raised in Muslim societies" (28). Some examples of hybrid Sufi movements include the Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship (initiated by Baba Muhaiyaddeen, from Sri Lanka) that was later based out of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Different from the hybrid Sufi groups, the perennial Sufi groups "are those movements in which the specifically Islamic identification and content of the movement have been de-emphasized in favor of a 'perennialist', 'universalist', or 'traditionalist' outlook" (28). The emphasis here is on a "universality" regarding faiths (Hermansen, 2006). But while stressing the message of universality, many groups that fall into this category adhere to a "practice of a specific tradition . . . " (28). Some perennialist Sufi groups in the United States include the International Sufi Order International (whose recent leadership has included Pir Vilayat Khan, and more recently Zia Inayat Khan [the son of Pir Vilayat]), as well as another group called the Society for Sufi Studies (who was recently led by Idries Shah (until 1996) and currently by Omar Ali Shah [the brother of Idries]) (29). The third category is identified as the transplant Sufi groups.[1] This categorization is labeled by Hermansen (2006) as "Sufi movements conducted among small circles of immigrants with less adaptations to the American context" (29).

In the case of Britain, there are many different Sufi groups.[2] The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life (2010) explains that the Barelwis, as well as the Naqsbandi orders have high numbers of adherents in England, although the increase in Muslims from areas outside of Britain has led to a greater presence of other Sufi groups in Britain as well. Some of the additional Sufi groups include the "Chishtis, Qadiris, Mevlevis, Alawis, Shadhilis, and Tijanis" (Geaves, 2006: 142), groups that decades ago did not have as much of a presence in Britain (Geaves, 2006). The reasons for the lack of a large historical influence of organized Sufi groups in Britain stems from a number of factors. First, the early Muslim immigrants who came to Britain made the initial decision to establish places (and communities) of worship that "[were] stripped down to exclude any regional or traditional elements" in order to build the Muslim community, particularly because many of the individuals were without their families at the time, as they arrived to Britain alone (Geaves, 2006: 142). Second, many of the leaders of the individual mosques were often from urban areas in their previous country. This is important because this is here where more non-Sufi ideas of Islam—namely the Deoband in Pakistan—were influential. Thus, "[t]he educated mosque leaders were more inclined to reform ideas and began to invite imams from the subcontinent that were trained in the Deobandi *Dar al-'ulums*"

(Geaves, 2006: 143), whichled to protest by individuals who adhered to ideas closer to Sufi Islam, which led to tension between the different groups (Geaves, 2006). A third reason for the lack of a high public presence of Sufism in Britain had to do with many of the practices that individuals followed, and the effect that the move to Britain had on their religious practice. According to Ron Geaves (2006), "[t]he movement to Britain deprived the adherents of this locale-based practice with the infrastructure or spiritual geography around which they had focused" (143), since Sufis would often be more focused on the shrines of their previous country (Barton, 1986, in Geaves, 2006).

As mentioned, the different Sufi groups have faced criticism from a number of other Muslim groups. One of the main groups is the Deobandis. This movement came about primarily in the mid-1800s in India, mainly as a counter to British influence. Unable to match the British in military strength, a number of Deobandis suggested that, in order to raise Islam to a level of prominence (as they saw Islam historically being), they needed to find ways to bring about this high status. In the discussion about how Islam had declined, as well as what was to be done to remedy this situation, some individuals suggested that the reason for the recent events (particularly outside influence, and the decline of Muslim empires and power holds) had to do with a belief that they were caused by "a corrupt faith spoiled by cultural accretions creeping in from the Hindu majority culture" (Geaves, 2006: 144). However, Hinduism was not the only faith that received blame. Sufism was also seen as a negative factor that had led to such outcomes. And because of this, the Deoband movement arose, in which "Muslims could be educated in their faith stripped of any impurity arising from contact with beliefs and practices originating from Hinduism or Christianity" (Geaves, 2006: 144). As discussed in the previous chapter, the Deoband movement had over 8,900 education centers in the region (Geaves, 2006). Not only were the Deoband influential in India and Pakistan, but also they were able to gain popularity in Britain through the building of mosques, as well as the organizing of a number of education-based activities. They were becoming increasingly popular because the "Deoband's reputation for scholarship and religious orthodoxy appeared to supply the correct Islamic values necessary to provide the spiritual needs of the newly established communities" (Geaves, 2006: 145). But not only this, the Deoband were able to offer educational program—particularly in religious matters—to many of the youth in Britain (Geaves, 2006).

A second Islamic movement—namely Jama'at-i-Islami—has also been a further challenge to the potential influence of Sufi groups in

Britain. This organization was founded by Maududi (Jamal, 2009). Jam'at-i-Islami has been highly political both in Pakistan and in related organizations in Britain. Groups within Jam'at-i-Islami often "identify themselves with the struggles of various groups throughout the world who are engaged in a struggle to implement radical change in their societies utilizing Islam as their ideology, rather than cultural and ethnic identity problems originating in the subcontinent" (Geaves, 2006: 145). Such a message has seemed to work, particularly among many young Muslims in Britain (Geaves, 2006: 145). And similar to the Deoband, Jam'at-i-Islami often views Sufism as a factor in what they see as a "decline" of Islam. Along with this, they (along with the Deoband, the Wahhabi, and the Salafi groups) take issue with a number of Sufi rituals, often labeling such beliefs "superstitions" (Geaves, 2006: 145).

As mentioned, one of the larger Sufi groups represented in Britain is the Barelwi Sufi order. But while the Barelwis have some of the highest numbers of followers among Sufis in Britain, they have had a difficult experience in attempting to convert this popularity into strong organizations, and have worried about being able to spread this particular faith to their children, who, they worry, are becoming increasingly attracted to the messages of groups previously mentioned (Geaves, 2006: 147). Many youth have been moving away from what they see as a more specific, ethnically based Islam (which was continuing to be expressed by a number of the Muslim sheikhs in the Sufi orders) to other ideas that promote a global *ummah*, or Muslim community (Geaves, 2006: 148). Thus, while such issues existed, some people within these groups suggested relabeling their faith to represent the "true" Islam, aiming to take power and influence from the other groups, thus framing them as "innovations" of Islam (Geaves, 2006: 148).[3] Nevertheless, while tension has existed between such groups, in the 1980s, the different groups aimed to work together on issues, as opposed to fighting with one another. However, in the 1990s, a rise in the number of additional Muslim groups took hold. In particular, the group Hizb ut-Tahrir, who are seen as Salafi Muslims, became more influential. And because such groups have taken issue with what they see are "non-Islamic innovations" (Geaves, 2006: 146) (to many Salafis, Sufism falls within this category), they have been highly critical of Sufi groups and practices. In terms of their relationship with Sufis in Britain, "Muslims loyal to Sufi-influenced Islam would find themselves confronted by ardent young missionaries on leaving their own religious gatherings" (Geaves, 2000, in Geaves, 2006: 146). Yet despite the challenges by the Deoband, the Jam'at-i-Islami, and the Salafis against the Sufis, Sufi groups have attempted to speak out against these groups.

Britain and Antiterrorism Policies

While the British government has taken an interest in fighting terrorism (in part due to the conflict in Northern Ireland) (Gale, 2006), and it established significant antiterrorism legislation in 2000 (Terrorism Act, 2000), antiterrorism policies have increased since the 2005 terrorist attacks in London. As a response to the London attacks, Prime Minister Tony Blair introduced a "12 Point Plan" to address terrorism (see Appendix 4). Some of the points from the plan included "New grounds for deportation including fostering hatred, advocating violence to further a persons beliefs or justifying or validating such violence. Possibility of amending the Human Rights Act if legal obstacles arise in respect to the interpretation of article three of the European Convention on Human Rights. Association with a list of extremist websites, bookshops and networks will be a trigger for the home secretary to consider deporting a foreign national," the "Review of citizenship ceremonies to make sure they are adequate and a commission to advise on better integration of those parts of the Muslim community that are less so than others," as well as the "Consultation on a new power to close of a place of worship used as a centre for fomenting extremism" (Guardian, 2005). However, the 12 Point Plan was not without criticism. For example, it has been argued that actually carrying out the points would be very difficult in reality (Prince, 2010). Regarding the 12-Point Plan itself, one highly debated issue was related to point 6, which called for "Detention without charge for terrorist suspects extended to 90 days" (Prince, 2010). The Parliament did not support this, although it did allow a suspect to be held up to 28 days. This doubled the previous length of time, which was for 14 days (Prince, 2010).[4]

However, in addition to the 12 Point Plan set forth, in March of 2006, the Parliament passed the *UK Terrorism Act 2006*.[5] The document is highly critical of anyone speaking in favor of terrorism. For example,

> A person may be charged with the encouragement of terrorism offense for making a statement that glorifies or encourages a) terrorism in general, or b) a particular act of terrorism—a past, present, or future act—that "members of the public could reasonably be expected to infer that what is being glorified . . . should be emulated by them." As for the requisite mens rea, a person may be charged with the offense if he "intends" to encourage or if he is merely "reckless" as to whether members of the public would be encouraged by the statement to commit terrorism. (Parker, 2007: 715)

In addition, the government made it a crime to publicize in any way terrorist literature, which "will be determined 'in relation to particular conduct' (a) 'at the time of that conduct' and (b) considering the publication's contents as a whole and the circumstances in which such conduct occurs" (716).[6] In fact, one of the more controversial parts of this legislation relates to freedom of speech. Many individuals have been highly concerned about how the government might decide what are acts of "terrorism" as well as "the encouragement of terrorism" (Parker, 2007: 749–750).

One other key point regarding the antiterrorism legislation in Britain is the approach toward the British Muslim community. Because of the differences in terms of the extent of integration of American Muslims compared to British Muslims (Parker, 2007), the British government has attempted to figure out ways to go after those who speak highly of terrorism, while attempting to work with the overall Muslim community in its counterterrorism efforts and regarding integration. Some argue that Gordon Brown particularly avoided certain phrases and language that could be seen as directly related to Islam after any attacks (Parker, 2007). And because of this, it has been argued that "[b]y fostering such relations with the Muslim community, the United Kingdom increases the likelihood that members of the mainstream Muslim community will denounce radicalization and report activity among the Muslim extremists to the authorities" (732–733).

Britain: 2006 Sufi Muslim Council

This discussion of Sufism in Britain (and to a lesser extent the United States), as well as British antiterrorism policies since July 7, 2005, serves as a backdrop to the recent actions by the English government regarding Sufism and the view that Sufism can help in terms of domestic antiterrorism policy. In 2006, shortly after the London terror attacks on July 7, 2005, an organization called the Sufi Muslim Council (SMC) was formed. This organization was made up of a number of Muslims who sought the representation of Sufi voices in England. SMC leaders, such as Haras Rafiq, explained that they set up the organization after these events, and partly due to government leaders' request for "moderate Muslims" to have their voices heard (Casciani, 2006). The leaders of the organization argued that it would stress commonalities of all people, playing down any differences between people based on race, ethnic, or religious makeup (Casciani, 2006).

This new organization received support from the British government. For example, one of the most outspoken advocates for the SMC was Ruth Kelly, who was the secretary of state for communities at the time. Kelly was at the opening event for the organization, and commented on the importance of the government's communicating with different organizations in the most effective manner possible, and particularly with groups who are doing what is seen as good work. Specifically regarding the SMC, she was quoted as saying that "[o]rganisations such as the Sufi Muslim Council are an important part of that work . . . I welcome the council's core principles condemning terrorism in all its forms and its partnership approach to taking forward joint initiatives and activities" (Casciani, 2006). In fact, Kelly was very active in this process, and wrote "Preventing Violent Extremism—Winning the Hearts and Minds" that dealt with finding ways to counter extremist threats in Britain (Stjernholm, 2010: 216). Another example of the government's support for the SMC as an "alternative" message can be seen in the comments of Maqsood Ahmd, an "advisor to the government on issues regarding faith communities and local government" (Stjernholm, 2011: 272). At the 2009 Tariqa Conference organized by the SMC (in which the Naqshbandi-Haqqani order played a great part), Ahmed was quoted as saying,

> Until two years ago there was no voice, a voice of love and peace reaching us in the government. And it is, I think, the testimony to our shaykh who put the foundation of the Sufi Muslim Council. And you have people like Shawqat, people like Haras (. . .) and all those Sufis sitting in this room who are saying that eighty percent, eighty percent of the British Muslims come from the Sunni Sufi Muslim background who have nothing to do with radicalisation. And I salute you shaykh for your effort, with all the demonisation and criticism you received from the minority, that you are preventing violent extremism. Islam and Sufism have nothing to do with the violence and indeed hatred towards others. So basically, I am here to pay my homage and respect to your effort, and seek your du'as ["prayers"] and blessings that may Allah give us tawfiq ["success," "prosperity"] that we spread this message of love across the humanity. (Stjernholm, 2011: 273)

And while it is difficult to say how much his words directly represent the perspective of the government, it seems that there is at least one view that the message of the SMC was not being heard by the state. Moreover, as Stjernholm (2011) argues, "the fact that Maqsood Ahmed works closely with the government and his unhesitating support for

and salutation of the gathered Sufis and their shayks gives an image of increased partnership between the SMC and political offices compared to the Celebrating Spirituality events of 2006, which appeared to be largely internal Naqshbandi-Haqqani affairs" (273).

The SMC itself teamed up with other Muslim organizations, such as the British Muslim Forum (BMF), a group that promotes the issues of hundreds of mosques and that has emphasized the need for dialogue within the Muslim community (and with other religious communities) to discuss interpretations of Islam that promote and support differences, as well as community involvement (Casciani, 2006). However, this group has been seen by some as a counter to one of the main Muslim organizations in Britain, the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) (Casciani, 2006). This organization is seen as one of biggest Muslim groups in the country. However, there has been concern expressed by some individuals that the organization could have done much more to deal with issues facing the Muslim community, include extremist interpretations but also other issues such as jobs and Muslims' place in British society as it relates to their concerns (Casciani, 2006). A number of Muslim organizations that have formed since July 7, 2005, have taken issue with the MCB, as this group has been seen by some individuals as not speaking out clearly enough regarding approaches to countering extremist ideologies (Birt, 2008). Yahya Birt (2008) has argued for example that "[i]n the moral panic over 'Islamism', the MCB has too often fallen into the trap of refuting the aspersion of guilt by (ideological) association with violent extremism rather than framing its own proactive narrative on terrorism, and so other Muslim actors have stepped into this vacuum." Thus, the MCB, once highly influential in Britain, has now been seen as competing with others for political influence. Moreover, the government itself has been working with different organizations—and not just the MCB—while setting up its own divisions to deal with a plethora of issues in regard to Muslims in Britain (Birt, 2008).

Nevertheless, more recently the government has moved itself away from directly backing the Sufi Muslim Council. Whereas "The government at first worked to promote Sufism, supporting the creation of the 2006 Sufi Muslim Council, a group that took a strong stance against Islamic extremism" (Baker, 2009), it seems as if recently the British government has been less direct in backing this council, speaking of more general and wide-scale approaches to stop extremism (Baker, 2009). Luke Baker of Reuters (2009) says that "it has moved away from explicit support, saying that working via the Sufi community—whose exact number in Britain is not known—is just one element of a wider approach to

countering Islamic radicalism" (Baker, 2009). Speaking about the issue of Sufism and the program, one government spokesperson says "[i]t's part of a broader engagement. We don't want to isolate any one group over another" (Baker, 2009). In fact, in 2010, through the Home Office, the new administration began to examine the antiterrorism program that was installed by the prior government (Mumisa, 2010). The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life (2010) explains that

> The efforts by European governments to promote Sufism have not always been successful. For instance, the Sufi Muslim Council in the U.K.—which was founded with the encouragement of the government in the aftermath of the July 2005 London transit bombings—has been widely viewed with suspicion by British Muslims, who question its credibility as a representative of the community. Many see the Council as an attempt by the government to displace larger and more established organizations, such as the Muslim Council of Britain, which is widely regarded as the main national umbrella body for Muslim organizations in the U.K., and the British Muslim Forum, a grassroots group representing the majority strain of Sufism in the U.K. Others perceive the Sufism Muslim Council as a blatant attempt by the government to co-opt traditional Sufism for political purposes. These debates are taking place against the backdrop of broader discussions that have been going on since 9/11 over how Western governments can promote various forms of "moderate Islam."

In addition, Michael Mumisa (2010) has suggested that the government's response since the 2005 attacks has actually led to divisions among Muslims within Britain, and has also led to many young Muslims being "further marginalized and more vulnerable to extremist ideas" (Mumisa, 2010). Mumisa (2010) argued back in 2006 that a government's getting involved in the interpretation of Islam would lead to significant domestic challenges and problems. He believes that is exactly what has happened. Because of the government's sponsoring the SNC, it became involved in attempting to have a say in what it believes should be the interpretation of Islam. Furthermore, by focusing on the promotion of the Sufi Muslims, this has led to a number of problems, as this approach simplifies a complex situation of actors in these respective states, as has been discussed throughout this book. In the case of Britain, Mumisa (2010) explains how this "good" versus "bad" Muslim dichotomy has been prevalent in the approach of the government, and how this has hurt the domestic situation, when he says that

> There has since been an assumption that Muslims can easily be divided into two crude categories: The good "moderate Muslim" and the bad

> "extremist" Muslim, and that the problem of extremism can be solved by pouring money on the "good Muslim" in order to neutralize the "bad Muslim."

He goes on to say that

> The announcement in October 2007 that £70 million would be spent by the government on preventing violent extremism over three years unleashed a gold rush among the different and opposing Muslim sects in Britain. Since then each sect has been presenting itself as the "moderate" voice of Islam while demonizing its rivals as the "extremists." (Mumisa, 2010)

Thus it seems that different groups, such as the Barelvi Sufis and the Deoband Muslims in Britain—who historically have at times had issues with one another in Britain, are now looking to point fingers at one another (Mumisa, 2010). He argues that this has also been quite evident between the Sufis and the Salafis, and has permeated the media, in which Sufis "have been used to investigate extremism among Deobandis or Salafis." But as we have seen with other cases, such distinctions between religious groups and supposed characteristics are not so clear. In the case of Britain, for example,

> [s]oon after the 7/7 bombings a Salafi organization in Birmingham was the first Muslim organization to print and distribute a collection of fatwas titled "The Corruption of Terrorism and Suicide Bombings: Exposing the Perpetrators of Evil" which attacked and condemned the 7/7 bombers as evil. In 2008 Deobandi theologians based at the spiritual home of Taliban, the influential ultra-conservative Islamic seminary at Deoband, India, issued a detailed Fatwa condemning terrorism and suicide attacks as the "most inhuman crime" which should be eradicated from society. (Mumisa, 2010)

And because of this, it actually can be harmful to any antiterror campaigns when one is pigeonholing such groups based on the actions of a few who may claim to be influenced by such groups, because by having these groups speak out against terrorism, this may lead to wider success in stopping and preventing such attacks (Mumisa, 2010).

Sufi Interests

While I have addressed the interest that the government has had in supporting Sufism, its backing away from the SMC as an official policy,

and criticism of its overall positions by others, I must also discuss the interests of the Sufi leaders and organizations in joining such a group, as well as why they were so active in working with the government. Again, Sufi groups are not merely pawns in the game of the government. They have their own strategic interests in their activities, and their own particular objectives. This is no different when looking at the actions of those associated with the SMC. When talking about motivations to organize and support the SMC, there seems to be more than one reason for their interest in the SMC. To begin with, the organization itself, cofounded by Rafiq (who also served as the spokesperson of the organization), has stated that the group's aims were to represent that "silent majority" of millions of Sufis in Britain who, according to an SMC *Spirit the Mag* publication, have been "drowned out by the very vocal Minority" (Stjernholm, 2010: 218). Thus, it seems that the organization's goals are to raise the voice and actions of many Muslims against "Muslim radicals who are portrayed here as life threatening to ordinary Muslims" (Stjernholm, 2010: 219). Related to this, the organization seems to be interested in educating the public about the peaceful nature of Islam and its adherents, brining different Sufi groups together, all the while continuing to speak out against violence in the name of Islam, and thus doing something that (according to the organization) all Muslim groups do not do (Stjernholm, 2010).

The cofounder, Rafiq, himself took an interest in this organization after what he believed to notice was a dominance of Wahhabi ideas presented both in terms of the literature and individual voices as related to Islam. Concerned about this, he began to look more into studying Islam. This road took him to Cyprus, where he spoke with Sheikh Nazim al-Haqqani, the leader of the Naqshbandi Haqqani order. Stjernholm (2010) explains that "Rafiq was encouraged by the shaykh to set up a voice in Britain that could publicly bring forward the Sufi message and counter the extremists' influence" (221). Thus, through the group, they have continued to discuss peace in Islam and have been active in a number of initiatives, such as speaking with Muslim youth and working on deradicalization programs (Stjernholm, 2010: 221). The SMC also set up a number of events such as two in 2006 entitled "Celebrating Spirituality" that were comprised of talks by members of number of religious traditions, as well as conferences in 2009 in Britain that brought together different Sufi orders to discuss issues of Islam and ideas for countering extremism (Stjernholm, 2010: 222–223). It was at such an event that Sheikh Hisham, one of the leaders of the Naqshbandi-Haqqani order, "mentioned that in order to promote tolerance among

religions, it had been decided to establish 'a voice' for the 'silent majority': the Sufi Muslim Council" (Stjernholm, 2011: 270). In fact, it seems that he was connected to the SMC. Along with speaking at the SMC event, he also "asked for the prayers and support for everyone gathered and encouraged . . . [those in attendance] to leave contact information in order for the SMC to get in touch with the individuals" (Stjernholm, 2011).[7] Furthermore, at the 2009 Tariqa Conference, many of the Sufi leaders in attendance spoke about the importance for Sufis to be active in promoting the message. Such sentiments seemed to be echoed by Hisham, who talked about how Sufis must take an active and not a passive role in this objective (Stjernholm, 2011). Furthermore, at this 2009 event, there seemed to be agreement about the importance of working together to promote Sufism's message to the state as well as to others (Stjernholm, 2011: 280). Thus it seems that the Naqshbandi-Haqqani order, which has been strongly tied to the SMC, seems to have additional interests in being a part of their government-backed group. For example, according to expert Stjernholm (2010), "[t]he connection to this Sufi order [the Naqshbandi-Haqqani] is crucial for understanding the SMC, since the involvement with high-profile political figures and attempts to bring Sufism into the public has been a long-term project of its leading shaykhs" (217–218), and in fact, "the SMC can be viewed as a British offshoot of Shaykh Hisham's and his aides' long-term project of advancing their mission of Sufism as a positive counter-force to the alleged threat from 'Wahhabis'" (Stjernholm, 2011: 280).

The United States and Antiterrorism Policy

The United States has taken a number of antiterrorism measures, particularly following the September 11, 2001, attacks. The US House and Senate members, after a mere six weeks (Cato Handbook, 2003), passed a bill known as the *USA PATRIOT Act*, a piece of "legislation [written] to grant sweeping new power to both domestic law enforcement and international intelligence agencies" (Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, 2004). The goal of the *PATRIOT Act* was to increase the powers of federal officials to combat terrorist activities in the United States (Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, 2004). While many observers argue that parts of the *PATRIOT Act* are fair and beneficial to the welfare and protection of America, several sections, while aimed to protect the United States, do so at the cost of American civil liberties (Cato Handbook, 2003). One of the implications of the *PATRIOT Act* was the effect it has had on the protection of

the Fourth Amendment. According to the US Constitution, the Fourth Amendment "guarantees of the individual's rights against unreasonable search and seizure [and] is a requirement that the government give notice before searching through or seizing an individual's belongings" (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2002). Furthermore, the Fourth Amendment states that officials must declare themselves before beginning a search (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2002). But as a result of section 213 of the *PATRIOT Act* (Chang, 2001), government officials were granted authority to bypass "giving notice" in order to conduct their searches. It was only after the completion of the search that officials were required to notify the citizen (Chang, 2001). Section 213 allows authorities "the delay of notice of the execution of a warrant to conduct a seizure of times where the court finds a 'reasonable necessity' for the seizure." Moreover, prior to the *PATRIOT Act*, Rule 41 (d) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure required any property that was taken from a search to be reported and documented with a receipt. But with the introduction of the *PATRIOT Act*, federal officials conducting searches have the power to "delay" the notice for longer than a week (Chang, 2001).

The *PATRIOT Act*, under section 215, gives the government the ability to access personal records of US citizens, as long as it takes the appropriate measures to do so, which entails a court order. This order must be granted, as long as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) explains that the search will aid in an ongoing international terrorism case (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2002). Information that may be obtained includes library checkouts, bookstore purchases, or Internet usage at a public library, all without the US citizen's being informed that an investigation is occurring (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2002). Furthermore, according to "Section 216 . . . , courts are required to order the installation of a pen register and a trap and trace device to track both telephone and internet [activity] anywhere within the United States when a government attorney has certified that the information to be obtained is 'relevant'" (Chang, 2001). While officials cannot specifically review material searched on websites, the *PATRIOT Act* is unclear in its explanation of "where the line should be drawn between 'dialing, routing, addressing and signaling information' and 'content'" (Chang, 2001). In addition, under section 802 of the *PATRIOT Act* (Chang, 2001), FBI officials are given the power to continue such monitoring activities, regardless of whether the group being observed had ties to a terrorist activity case (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2002). According to Section 802, domestic terrorism is

defined as "acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws" if they "appear to be intended . . . to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion" (Chang, 2001). Nancy Chang (2001) argues that such a "vague" definition allows federal authorities to monitor those who are opposed to actions of the government. Moreover, the simple act of protest can now, under this law, be viewed as "domestic terrorism" (Chang, 2001). While "[t]he First Amendment does not tolerate viewpoint-bases discrimination, section 802 allows the government to keep watches on specific individuals/groups" (Chang, 2001) without a timeframe of which to conduct such inquiries on these groups (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2002).

Post 9/11 Terror Suspects: Detentions

The US government and Attorney General John Ashcroft called for the detention of thousands of non-US citizens (and many US citizens) following the attacks of September 11, 2001 (Amnesty International, 2002; Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2002; 2003b). The US government failed to release information about why the detainees were being held, explaining only that such measures were "an important step in the antiterrorism investigation" (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2002). While the US government argued for the necessity of such detentions for homeland security, others have pointed out that most of those detained were never charged with a crime (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2002). Under the US Bill of Rights, exceptions can be made to the rights that American citizens have in being informed of the charges brought against them and their right to a quick trial, in addition to "protection against torture" (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2002). With the post-September 11 detentions, Ashcroft called for a 48-hour holding window for detaining individuals, an increase from 24 hours (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2002). Furthermore, according to the new policy, a detainee may be held up to six months with a charge. Even a "technical immigration violation" is sufficient under this policy (Cato Institute, 2003). According to the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights (2002) report "A Year of Loss," "317 were held without charge for more than 48 hours. In 36 of those cases, individuals were held for 28 days or more before being charged . . . [t]hirteen people . . . for more than 40 days . . . and nine were held for more than 50 days." In following Section 412 of the *PATRIOT Act*, federal officials may detain a noncitizen for up to a week without any charges filed against the detainee (Cato Institute, 2003). While the *PATRIOT Act*

states a mandatory limit of seven days, Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) actions suggest that the seven-day limitation was being ignored, as several detainees were held without charges "for months" (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2002).

Another provision issued by the INS concerned the rights of detainees to post bond. Before the recent changes by the INS, only under certain conditions could the INS interfere with a judge's ruling of bond for a detainee. Previously, when the judge granted bond, the INS only could ask for a "stay" regarding serious convictions (such as a felony). But under this new "automatic stay" (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2003) policy, INS officials could override a judge's ruling, so long as the detention occurs while the individual's case is in the removal proceedings or if the bond was listed as above 10,000 dollars (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2002). In addition, individuals who could first be released on bond were now "denied." Such cases were denied because an individual did not pass a "clearance," which was used as a check to ensure that the detainee was not involved in terrorist activity (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2002). By establishing a "clearance," it allowed the government to suspect guilt of an individual. The Lawyers Committee for Human Rights (2002) explains that "[e]ssentially, a detainee is presumed guilty until proven innocent."

The US government also began conducting "volunteer" interviews in November 2001, focusing on "at least 5000 men between the age of 18 to 33 who had legally entered the United States on non-immigration visas in the past two years and who came from specific linked by the government to terrorism" (Council on American-Islamic Relations, 2005: 10, underlining in original; Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2003). These interviews were followed by further interviews in 2002, in which 3,000 US residents from Middle Eastern, as well as from South Asian Muslim countries, who had a right to be in the United States, were targeted (Council on American-Islamic Relations, 2005: 10). Muslim American leaders worried such interviews "would aggravate growing fears" (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2002) and further create an "isolationist" mentality within the Muslim community (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2003). Furthermore, those who participated in the interviews felt as if they did not have much of a choice to speak or not, questioning just how "voluntary" the interviews actually were (Council on American-Islamic Relations, 2005; Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2003). The Department of Justice (DOJ) (Government Accounting Office, 2003) backed this response with its own conclusions, reporting that "the interviewed aliens did not

perceive the interviews to be truly voluntary because they worried about repercussions, such as future INS denials for visa extensions or permanent residency, if they refused" (also reported in Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2003). The DOJ also cited concerns from officials who conducted the interviews, questioning "the quality of the questions asked and the value of the response obtained in the interview project" (GAO, 2003).

Moreover, in 2002, the George W. Bush administration began implementing a program called the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System, or NSEERS (Immigration Policy Center, 2004; Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2003). The goal of NSEERS was to bring in males who were primarily from Middle Eastern nations—from the ages of 16 to 45—to register with the INS. This registration process involved being fingerprinted, having their photographs taken, and undergoing questioning (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2003). The two stages of the NSEERS were the "Special Call-In Registration . . . and Port-of Entry Registration [POE]" (Immigration Policy Center, 2004). The purpose of the Port-of Entry Registration was to document foreign visitors from specific countries entering the United States. The countries listed included "Iran, Iraq, Libya, Sudan, and Syria" (Immigration Policy Center, 2004).. Individuals were then required to come back within "30–40 days of their POE registration and another follow-up interview within 10 days of the one-year anniversary of their registration" to check in with officials (Immigration Policy Center, 2004). This registration process also required citizens of various Muslim countries (and citizens of North Korea) to register with the INS by being fingerprinted and photographed. Similar to the POE registration, those who registered in 2002 also had to reregister within days of their anniversary (Immigration Policy Center, 2004).[8]

One of the greatest problems with the installation of NSEERS has been the belief that it has specifically targeted Arab Muslims (Immigration Policy Center, 2004). The Immigration Policy Center (2004) reports that NSEERS has not specifically targeted Arab Americans, since "[m]ore than 80 percent of people of Arab origin in the United States are U.S. Citizens who are not subject to NSEERS," but rather that those "most affected by NSEERS are in fact non-Arab Muslims, in particular Pakistanis and Bangladeshis" (Immigration Policy Center, 2004). Figures suggest that thousands of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have been processed under NSEERS, and that many more thousands have fled "before the registration deadline" (Immigration Policy Center, 2004). The government has unequally used the law against Muslims,

"applying immigration laws in a highly selective and discriminatory manner" (Immigration Policy Center, 2004). Several cases show that the Department of Homeland Security was looking for even past violations of those who married US citizens, in order to deport these Muslims (Immigration Policy Center, 2004). In addition, numerous reports suggest that many who were called in to register were not offered translators, while others were not allowed to be accompanied by their lawyers (Immigration Policy Center, 2004). Moreover, "[m]any were physically and verbally abused by corrections officers, held in cells with 24-hour lighting, blocked from access to their attorneys and families for weeks at a time, and held for more than a month without charge . . . Many [of which] were eventually deported for minor immigration violations" (Immigration Policy Center, 2004).

The Promotion of Sufism in the United States

But along with official government policies such as the *PATRIOT Act*, some nongovernmental organizations have also organized meetings related to Sufism, and or on how the promotion of Sufism can help in the US fight against terrorism. Again, in the case of the United States, the attention paid to Sufism is related not to the highest level of official government actions and comments, but rather approaches by nongovernmental actors in the form of conferences and or reports concerning Sufism and international affairs.[9] In fact, reports from think tanks have come out examining the role of Sufism in relation to US policy interests, namely in the context of "the War on Terror." In a 2003 paper by Cheryl Benard that was "sponsored by the Smith Richardson Foundation" and "published . . . by the RAND Corporation," the author speaks about political Islam in relation to the United States, and what she sees as "Three goals [for the US] in regard to politicized Islam" (iii). She argues that "[f]irst, it wants to prevent the spread of extremism and violence. Second, in doing so, it needs to avoid the impression that the United States is 'opposed to Islam'. And third, in the longer run, it must find ways to help address the deeper economic, social, and political causes feeding Islamic radicalism and to encourage a move toward development and democratization" (iii). In her discussion about the role of Sufism, she encourages the idea of "[b]uild[ing] up the stature of Sufism. Encourage countries with strong Sufi traditions to focus on that part of their history and to include it in their school curricula. Pay more attention to Sufi Islam" (63). Thus, she argues that it is in the interest to "encourage the popularity and acceptance of Sufism" (64).

On October 23, 2003, a meeting took place at the Nixon Center in Washington, DC. From this meeting a report was produced entitled "Understanding Sufism and Its Potential Role in US Policy" (2004), which was edited by Zeyno Baran. The report explains that this conference was organized in order "to explore the role how Sufism—the spiritual tradition within Islam—relates to US foreign policy goals." This conference addressed a number of topics related to Sufism, such as the theological positions of Sufism and how Sufi groups are set up, as well as Sufi groups' role in society. And while the primary focus was on the Naqshbandi, along with Sufi groups in Turkey, the objective seemed to be for the ideas to be applied in other areas as well (Nixon Center, 2004). But this has not been the only platform on which Sufism has been examined in relation to US foreign policy. Hedieh Mirahmadi, in discussing the feasibility of Sufism in connection with US policy, suggested the unlikelihood of the US government's promoting Sufism. However, from Mirahmadi's speech, the US government can be aware of the different histories of the different countries, and can play a role in what the report says is "to help such nations regain their lost heritage" (6). According to the report, Mirahmadi lists a few different possibilities that include "The preservation and/or reconstruction of shrines of Saints and their associated centers of learning" (6),[10] as this "would fortify the ancient traditions of the people" (6). Another approach could be "the preservation and translation of ancient manuscripts" (6). With the United States being involved in helping carry this out sort of action, "the documents could prove to a wider audience the historical precedent for such inclusive traditions within Islam" (6). According to the report, the last possibility discussed, suggests "the US could be helpful in the creation and funding of educational centers that focus on ancient history and civilization of the region, with a particular emphasis on the precedent of religious and ethnic toleration. These centers can also help the community 'retrain' those youth who have become disenchanted with the aggressiveness of Wahhabi thought" (7). The end of this section in the report notes that "[t]hese initiatives will be very helpful provided that the US undertakes proper due diligence so it does not fund the wrong groups, and accordingly only works with those who have proven themselves in their communities to be advocates for peace, multi-religious tolerance and moderation" (7).

In addition, according to the report, Alan Godlas also spoke on the role of Sufi Islam in Central Asia, the "loss of collective memory of Sufism in Central Asia [,]" and how "the US can support the preservation of this collective memory by supporting indigenous revivals, but

this must be done differently in each country." According to the report, he discussed some governments' efforts (such as in Uzbekistan) to promote Sufism through publications of Sufi writers such as Baha ud-din Naqshband, as well as Najmuddin Kubra (7). He also spoke about promoting Naqshbandi Sufism in Uzbekistan. And while many Sufis in Uzbekistan would not want outside help, according to the report, "the US can encourage governmental openness to the reemergence of Naqshbandi Sufism" (7). The report seems to summarize what Godlas said, namely that

> The US would do well to support each country's own attempts to revive its local Sufi identity and integrate it with each national identity, through 1) encouraging the publishing of works about local Sufis and of translations of the classical Sufi texts (by local Sufis) in both modern local languages and in English (given the popularity and significance of English for the youth, in particular); 2) encouraging the integration of Sufi values with those of civil society in educational institutions; 3) advising various Central Asian nations to adopt an attitude of openness toward Naqshbandi revival in particular; and 4) encouraging Sufi cultural and literary revivals specifically in conjunction with the existing traditions of shrine visitation in each country. (8–9)

The report also states that Godlas saidthat Sufism and Wahhabi Islam were in conflict in the region, and that the United States, by supporting the expansion of Sufism in the region, can help overcome the violent groups that are currently influential in the area (9). And while many others spoke (including a keynote address by Bernand Lewis),[11] other points to note are the report's summary of comments by Mohammad H. Faghfoory, who talked about the positive role Sufism can have in terms in what the report describes as "'*Islamizing*' democracy[,]" while also "*democratizing* Islam" (12, emphasis in original). The report goes on to say that "[i]t can also contribute to political stability in Iran and Central Asia by bringing about understanding among competing political groups and factions and much-needed tolerance toward other religions, ideas and currents" (12).

Lastly, a 2005 *US News and World Report* article discussed the approach of the United States in regard to the promotion of Sufism in relation to "fundamentalist" forms of Islam, saying that "[t]he conflict has caught the attention of U.S. policymakers, who, while they can't endorse Sufism, directly, are pushing to strengthen those associated with it." Some individuals, such as Mirahmadi, who is the director of the nongovernmental organization WORDE, argues that, in order to

counter radical Islamist positions, the government should help fix Sufi tombs and help in supporting the protection and language translations of historical written works, as well as play a role in encouraging other governments to support Sufism (US News & World Report, 2005).

Thus, while the level of state involvement in promoting Sufism seems not to be at the highest echelons of government, some individuals, such as Dr. Rashid Moqtedar, believe that the United States has taken the approach of promoting Sufism against violent Islamist groups. In an interview with Hassan Al-Ashraf of Al-Arabiya (2010), Moqtedar said that "[i]n addition to military incursions, the United States has been resorting to Sufism to fight al-Qaeda and similar organizations throughout the Muslim World." The US government's attempt to court Sufi groups in order to combat Islamist influences stems partly from its view of Sufism as "moderate." Lieven (2011) states that "This image of Sufism as representing a sort of latitudinarian and pacific moderation has led to a US strategy of supporting Islamist Sufis in the Muslim world against radicals—whereas in reality a more helpful strategy in the 'war on terror' might be to use the FBI to support American Methodists against American Pentecostals" (141). In the case of Pakistan, this attempt of outside governments to court Sufis may have the opposite effect. Lieven (2011) explains that "[t]he unpopularity of the US is such among ordinary Pakistanis—including Barelvis and followers of the saints with whom [he has] spoken—that US moves in this direction are a great asset to radical enemies of Sufism" (141). As discussed earlier, we also have to be careful about categorizing all Sufis as either "moderate" or "apolitical." In the case of Pakistan, for example, while some Sufis surely are "moderate," many "Barelvis [in Pakistan] are in fact deeply conservative reactionaries and are therefore opposed to modern Islamist revolution *and* to liberalism" (Lieven, 2011: 141, emphasis in original).

Thus, some observers outside of the United States have perceived actors within the United States to be involved in the promotion of Sufism, and have taken issue with such a policy. Others have been highly critical of those from the United States and elsewhere who are considering the promoting of Sufism as policy. For example, Ammar Ali Hasan (2007), in an article written in *Al-Hayat* (in BBC, 2007), argues that

> American visualizations deal with Sufism, in its operational dimension, on the basis that it is either a single positive pattern that can be promoted, or that it is a unique, inner condition that upholds a human being's inner thoughts and liberties and increases a human being's tolerance in

> dealings with others and in belief in human rights. Thus they hope to be able to exploit it in combating extremism, using it as a religious framework for an Islamic political culture based on democracy.

He goes on to say,

> But the fact is that Sufism is no longer a state of asceticism and individual prayers, as it started. It has become giant institutions with a universal transcontinental presence. Some of these sects strive to play a developmental, political, and social role, while some have delved into folklore and become reduced to a ceremonial phenomenon. Some of them are tolerant in dealing with others, including the followers of rival Sufi sects, and some enter into rivalry with others and become hostile to them.

He adds that some individuals from the United States have not mentioned, whether by choice or not, detailed examples of the role Sufis played in anticolonialist movements (Hasan, 2007, in BBC, 2007). Thus, he believes that the promotion of Sufism by those in the United States "[is] doomed to abject failure" (Hasan, 2007, in BBC, 2007).

Conclusion

In this book, I have argued that governments have tried to sponsor Sufism for their own political objectives. In a number of the cases, while the governments have been fearful of violent extremism, their reasons for promoting Sufism seem to be more than antiterrorism policy. Often leaders have been concerned with supporting groups that they believe will benefit the leaders' hold on political power, at the expense of challenging groups, which are often Islamist groups. And as I argued through numerous cases, leaders throughout the world are promoting Sufism for these specific political interests.

In Algeria, in line with my arguments about the use of Sufism, it seems that Bouteflika has advocated Sufism as a policy for specific political objectives. As mentioned, he has allowed Sufis to operate more freely than other Islamic-based organizations in Algerian civil society. While other Islamist groups have little religious freedom, Sufis are able to spread their message in public without as much interference from the government. In fact, the government has even provided media support. In addition, he has also tried to use Sufism to control the mosques. The reason that Bouteflika has done all of this stems partially from a history of concern regarding Islamist organizations in Algeria. With his continued authoritarianism, and willingness to suppress opposition, working with Sufi groups serves his interest of portraying closeness to the Islamic faith, while attempting to find groups that will not pose a political challenge to his regime. He has continued to court the Sufis by providing funds and support, as well as increased room to operate in the public space.

However, as I discussed, Bouteflika is far from the only leader doing this. In Morocco, Mohammed VI has supported Sufism because this faith is viewed as more "tolerant" compared to other Islamic interpretations. Throughout public speeches he has made, the king has continued to advocate the importance of Sufism to Morocco's history. He has

also interwoven the relationship between Sufi leaders with the political kingship of the state. Thus, to the public, he appears as a leader of the Muslim community, aligning himself with Sufi orders, who overall have a high reputation in Morocco. However, for the king, it is not merely his image of Islam that is important. Mohammed VI also benefits politically from his sponsoring of Sufi organizations. It seems that he is trying to limit the influence of the Justice and Development (PJD) party and the Justice and Charity (JC) party, two major Islamist challengers, while at the same time attempting to strengthen his own religious influence, iterating the ties between the sheikhs and the Commander of the Faithful. He knows that the PJD and the JC are able to build and maintain a following, a great part of which is due to their religious messages. Thus, he needs to brand himself as a religious leader, but with those who have little interest to challenge his political authority. The Sufi groups with which he has worked, and which he has promoted, serve both of these interests.

In Pakistan, the government has had a history of not only sponsoring Sufi groups but also attempting to connect its own leadership to these orders. Various heads of state have used Sufi symbolism, tying it to politics by visiting Sufi shrines, while simultaneously promoting Sufism as a government policy in the hope that this will be politically beneficial for the country. In addition, political leaders have also tied themselves to *pirs*, or even highlighted their family ties to Sufi leaders. Many have attempted to do so to gain political authority. However, interestingly, while they have worked with Sufi leaders, government officials have also tried to reduce the role of the Sufis, worrying that a parallel authority could rival some of their own power. Thus, Sufism serves to help these leaders build their own power base, while serving as a counter to extremist currents in the state. It is for these reasons that the government continues to sponsor meetings and other initiatives regarding the role of Sufism in Pakistan. For example, during Musharraf's time in power, he organized the National Sufi Council in order to promote Sufism. Other leaders, such as Benazir Bhutto, made it a point to visit Sufi shrines. And the government more recently has continued to advocate Sufism through meetings, as well as the advocacy of Sufi written works, at the same time framing Sufism as a counter to religious extremism in the state.

In Russia, Putin has looked to Sufism as a mechanism to fight Islamists. This has been a shift compared to the strategy employed in previous decades, in which leaders were critical of Sufi orders. Yet today, concerned about the rise of Islamic extremism in the state,

leaders such as Putin have attempted to allow the promotion of Sufism. And in Chechnya, he has gone so far as to support a Sufi-inspired leader in Kadyrov, a highly authoritarian figure. He has placed Kadyrov in power in order to combat any potential anti-Russian movements, and has offered him political and financial support. Kadyrov, in turn, has spoken out against Wahhabi interpretations of Islam, arguing that the movement is foreign to the state. Furthermore, Kadyrov often meets with Sufi leaders, and has expanded his control of the mosques (and what they teach) in the region. He also uses symbolism to suggest his ties to Sufism. Yet despite the benefits Putin receives politically through Kadyrov, he does so at the price of ceding more power to the Chechen leader. Kadyrov has increased his hold in Chechnya, with little checks to his authority. And as a result, he has restricted human rights in the region and threatened many who oppose his positions.

In the case of Uzbekistan, I discussed the promotion of Sufism. There, the government is establishing ties with Sufi groups, which will allow them more ability to monitor such organizations (Gaziev, 2000). Similar to the other cases that I have mentioned, leaders have wanted to promote Islam, but a type that is within their grasp and also one that is within their ability to manage it according to their liking. They have done this through political symbolism and more direct attempts to highlight Sufism to the public. However, while this is their goal, such a strategy may be far from successful, since citizen frustration exists due to poor socioeconomic conditions. The government's position is far from unerring (Goble, 2000). And thus, similar to many of the other cases, while the government under Karimov promoted Sufism to challenge extremist groups, it has been very constraining in terms of the operation of political parties in a free political sphere (Papas, 2005). Specifically, "Karimov's state has systematically and violently oppressed any political opposition, including movements that find inspiration in the various trends of political Islam" (Papas, 2005: 38). The adherents have been painted as a positive force of Islam against outside extremist elements.[1]

While much of this book discusses the state politics of promoting Sufism in non-Western settings, that does not mean the same thing is not happening in Western states. As I show in chapter 6, following the July 7, 2005, attacks in London, The British government began backing Sufi organizations such as the Sufi Muslim Council. In the attempt to try to combat terrorism, it worked with this organization, even at the expense of other Muslim groups in the state. And while it did shift its policies away from this group later, this suggests that the government

did indeed try to work with Sufi organizations. In fact, we see this promotion of Sufism in the United States as well. While this strategy has not come directly from the government, there have been think tanks that have promoted Sufism in terms US foreign policies.

Thus, I believe that this book offers ample evidence that governments in these various states are interested in promoting Sufism for their own political benefit. But while this book has examined how the governments of Algeria under Bouteflika, Morocco under Muhammad VI, various leaders in Pakistan, Russia under Putin (and in regional governments such as Chechnya), and Britain have promoted Sufism for a variety of reasons, I believe that these are far from the only examples of states in which such policies exist. In fact, we find other cases that further support the argument that Sufism is being used as a political tool to fight radical interpretations of Islam, and that Sufism is promoted to highlight "nonpolitical" aspects of Islam, which are emphasized instead of the beliefs of Islamist groups that are a challenge to the incumbent regimes. Along with the examples of the policies of Morocco, Algeria, Pakistan, Russia, and Britain, a couple of other examples require brief mention. For example, in Somalia, the government is currently in a fight with the Islamist Al-Shabab group, which has ties to Al Qaeda, as well as Hizbul Islam, which has also been in conflict with the state (Al Jazeera, 2010). Many people both domestically in Somalia and internationally have expressed concern at the rising influence and established territories governed by Al-Shabab. Reports of amputation rulings as punishment have begun to surface. As a response to rising concern about the conflict with these groups, government authorities set up an alliance with Ahlu Sunna Waljamaca (ASWJ), a Sufi group, to fight against these organizations, which have established political influence in large parts of Somalia. This group was formed in 1991 with the goal of advocating "moderate Sufi Islam." But while the regional government has teamed up with Ahlu Sunna, this group was not always willing to use force (changing its position in 2009), nor has it been a full supporter of the government, but it does want to reduce Al-Shabab's and Hizbul Islam's influence (Gulaid, 2010). Part of this deal to bring along ASWJ will be to put in place what is seen as a less literal interpretation of Islamic law (Al Jazeera, 2010). Thus, many observers are suggesting the government increase ties with supporting Sufi groups that have "moderate" understandings of Islam as a counter to violent Islamist groups like Al-Shabab (Montero, 2009).

Ahmed Karzai, in 2002, believed that Sufism could help postconflict Afghanistan (Afghanistan Television, in BBC, 2002). Others within the

government made similar overtures regarding the role of Sufism, and in one case, projected that Sufism would help address internal conflict in the country. For example, in 2009, Sayed Ishaq Gilani, an Afghani politician, called for examining how Sufism could help in the struggle against the Taliban, and how they have in the past convinced members of the Taliban to not fight. He also spoke said that if Sufism is backed, it could have a wide positive effect regarding relations in Afghanistan. He has argued that Sufis are committed to improving the situation in Afghanistan and moving the country toward harmonious conditions (Najibullah, 2009). But as supportive as he is about Sufism, he has been worried about the effect of outside actors (such as the United States) playing a role in promoting Sufism in the region (Najibullah, 2009), saying that "[a]ny potential Western support to Sufis has to be discreet and nonpolitical" (Najibullah, 2009). Some individuals, including former Taliban member Abdul Hakim Mujahed, said that promoting Sufism could be a possibility, since some within that organization view Sufism in an esteemed fashion (Najibullah, 2009). But while this is the case, others have been skeptical that Sufism can have an impact on the political conditions. Masud Naqshbandi, a Sufi intellectual, explained that while a variety of options should be considered, this is primarily a political and not a religious conflict, and thus what is foremost needed are answers to political disagreements (Najibullah, 2009).

Again, it must be remembered that Sufis are very political, and often exist outside of government influence and control. In Iraq, all Sufis have not been completely outside of political involvement. For example, while the perception at times was that Sufis supported Saddam Hussein (and in some cases were active in protests supporting Saddam and speaking out against the United States), it has been reported that he went after a number of Sufis after "some Sufi orders formed an underground organization aimed at toppling Saddam from power" (Caryl, 2003). In addition, Christian Caryl explained in a 2003 *Newsweek* article that "U.S. forces are using members of a Sufi community in the north to provide desperately needed security for the main pipeline used to transport Iraqi oil to neighboring Turkey. Postwar Sufis have also been exulting over the Americans' destruction of the Ansaw al-Islam, the Al Qaeda-allied Islamist organization."

We are also seeing this phenomenon played out in Egypt, following the power grab by and then the subsequent "election" of Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. Following the overthrow of Muhammad Mursi and then banning of the Muslim Brotherhood, el-Sisi continued to consolidate his political authority as the top official in Egypt. But while he did this,

primarily at the expense of the Muslim Brotherhood (banning the organization, jailing its members, etc.), he also has tried to find ways to bolster his religious credibility. In fact, he has begun to do this through the promotion of Sufism. For example, in 2014, el-Sisi attempted to portray himself as the guardian of the Islamic faith, while gaining control of the mosques, a historical stronghold of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. However, more than this, he is looking for Sufi Islamic currents that he views as "apolitical." He met with Sufi leaders and groups when he planned to run for the presidency, and has been influenced by grand mufti Ali Gomaa, himself a Sufi (Perry, 2014). Muslim Brotherhood supporters in turn were outraged at these actions, believing that el-Sisi is using faith for political gain (Perry, 2014). Nonetheless, as Suleiman (2014) explains, it does indeed seem that "[t]he Egyptian state is looking for a religious current to fill the void left by the retreat of most Islamist groups from Egyptian politics, to set the scene for the next phase and represent all social components in the government." And it seems that because some Sufi orders are willing to support el-Sisi. For example, the leaders of the International Association of Sufism, as well as sheikh Mohammed Alaeddine Abul-Azaem of the al-Azmiya order, announced their backing of el-Sisi for president. Sheikh Abdul-Khalek al-Shabrawi, who leads the Sufi Reform Movement, was quoted as saying "Sisi is a man of action and achievements in the first place. He has a strategic vision and radical solutions to major problems which have been accumulating and the previous government has failed to resolve them" (Suleiman, 2014). In fact, Mustafa Zahran, a researcher at the Foundation for Political, Economic, and Social Research in Turkey (SETA) believes that el-Sisi's objectives seem to be to build the strength of the Sufi orders, and directly at the expense of the Muslim Brotherhood, as well as Salafist movements in Egypt (Suleiman, 2014). This indeed seems to be the case. El-Sisi benefits in this relationship by gaining a religious backing, and the Sufi orders that support him have more freedom to speak at religious settings such as mosques (Suleiman, 2014), something other groups have difficulty doing freely, given the human rights repression of the el-Sisi regime.

Again, leaders should not promote one Islamic group over another merely because of religious identification, but rather, must act in a way that ensures human rights (socioeconomic, civil-political, group rights, etc.) are protected. It is therefore irresponsible and inaccurate to fall into the "good-Muslim/bad Muslim" dichotomy, believing that only "Sufis" can adhere to such rights, whereas other groups cannot. And thus, this is one of the major problems with the promotion of Sufism

by a government. The problem lies in the fact that a detailed understanding of various domestic factors (unique to each country) is ignored for a simplistic, and inaccurate generalized policy that overlooks the nuances of each political situation. Thus, we need to move from the mindset that one religious group equals good, whereas another equals bad, or that secular is positive, and religious is therefore problematic to a democratic government. As mentioned, Islamists can be nonviolent and deeply committed to the electoral system, or they can be violent, extremist, and unwilling to recognize the rights upheld in other Islamic interpretations.

Similarly, Sufis can be good, and Sufis can be bad. Sufis can be apolitical, or deeply political. Sufi individuals can care about civil-political issues, they can care about socioeconomic issues, or they may be concerned with both, or with neither. For those who are political, they can work within the political system (i.e., the Justice and Development Party in Morocco), or they can be political without recognizing the current nondemocratic system (Justice and Charity party in Morocco). Some are "moderates," while others are not. Throughout history, Sufis have had a number of characteristics. For example, many times they have been far from removing themselves from sharia, while becoming more "moderate," a more "private" application of Islam, or more "secular." In many cases, Sufis have advocated more attention to sharia (Levian, 2011: 141). Moreover, many extremists have come from Sufi traditions (Ernst, 1997, in Levian, 2011). Using Werenfel's (2011) language of "Simplistic framing, complex realities" (3), one has to move from a position of thinking that the government always has the ability to, or should we assume that all Sufis are operating in one context. For example, in the case of Algeria, some Sufis consider themselves Sufi as well as members of Islamist organizations that have operated and are currently operating in the political system (as in the case of the Alawiya order [Werenfels, 2011: 3]), while some Sufis also have publicly supported candidates who are running against Bouteflika (even though this does not happen nearly as often) (Werenfels, 2011: 2). In the case of Morocco, the JC party also has strong influences, and is anything but controlled and "manipulated" by the government. In many other cases, the government—while trying to control Sufi groups and sheikhs—relies on them for support.

Moreover, positions are complex, depending on the individual or the group, as well as social and political conditions within the respective state. For example, Mufti Sarfraz Naeemi, who was discussed earlier, did not fit within the often-framed generalization of Sufis as

"apolitical." In his case, while highly outspoken against the Taliban, he was far from apolitical on other issues. For example, he was highly critical of the Pakistani government's role in the US government's "war on terror," and also spoke out against the cartoon images of Muhammad from Denmark (Reuters, 2009). Yet, this current political involvement and interest of Sufis is not limited to historical records, or to Pakistan. Moreover, as mentioned, the politicization is not merely a "secular" position, as some have suggested would be the case with the promotion of Sufism. Regarding the case of Algeria, for example, James McDougall (2007) explains the clear compatibility of Sufism and politics, and the intersection of political Islam and Sufism, when he says that

> "Political Islam" can mean several different things in today's Algeria. Just as some members of the generation that, having in their youth embraced the cause of a radically politicised Islam, now turn to a Sufism they previously fought as "heresy" for their own spiritual needs, for an alternative vision of Islamic community or a recovery from the traumas wrought by the last decade's conflicts, so spokesmen for Sufism have themselves discovered the possibilities of a certain political participation.

A related issue is the belief that all of these governments are acting with the best interest of the citizens in the mind. As has been discussed, in most of the cases examined, the governments have horrible human rights records, with many of them offering very little citizen voice when it comes to voting, public protest, the organization of political organizations, etc. One should be skeptical when governments are in the business of promoting religion, and in particular nondemocratic states whose leaders are holding power as authoritarian leaders. And while Sufism, like other Islamic and non-Islamic faiths, has a range of positive contributions to offer, suggesting that all problems would cease to exist if everyone practiced Sufism would be to paint a rather simplistic picture of a complex situation. Moreover, one has to wonder whether such applications of "practicing the Sufi" lifestyle are being self-applied by the government. If Sufism does speak of human rights, justice, and the alleviation of poverty, then the same leaders who are advocating the faith are themselves utterly failing. The issue is not that Sufism cannot be advocated as *another* approach.

Again, there is nothing wrong with understanding and demonstrating an interest in Sufism by individuals and groups. Sufism, like other faiths, has a great deal to contribute to human rights and notions of global citizenship. And as we have seen, such as in the case of Morocco,

citizens themselves are taking an increased interest in the faith, and from this, many have began discussions with individuals of other religious traditions (Ghambou, 2009). For example, Mokhtar Ghambou (2009) explains that in Morocco, the

> Moroccan youth are increasingly drawn to Sufism because of its tolerance, its fluid interpretation of the Qu'ran, its rejection of fanaticism and its embrace and modernity. Young men and women find in the Sufi principles of "beauty" and "humanity" a balanced lifestyle that allows them to enjoy arts, music and love without having to abandon their spiritual and religious obligations.

Putting aside for a moment the complexity of Sufism (and Sufi historical figures, writings, understandings, and the following of sharia aside for a moment [since, as we have discussed, some people who claim to promote Sufism do not support a flexible approach of the Quran]), individuals who have an interest in ideas of Sufism (and any faith or philosophy that can help one toward notions of human rights, respect, and acceptance of all) is welcomed. This is not the problem, and in fact, in the case of Sufism, this can be helpful in building an overall understanding of the complexity of Islamic approaches within its rich tradition. The issue becomes when the state—and particularly states that are not supported by their citizens—have restrictions on human rights and yet attempt to use Sufism and Sufi groups for their own political agenda, while moving no closer to clear human rights reforms.

The issue, as mentioned, concerns governments using the faith for their own personal interests, which seem to have little to do with the advancement of rights, but rather for the maintaining of order and power. In most of the cases (such as Algeria, Morocco, Pakistan, Russia, Libya, etc. these are authoritarian states with quite poor records of human rights. Their actions are not for a rights-based discourse, of which Sufism could be one avenue to reach the objectives but not the only one (as other religions, atheists, secularists, communist movements could also contribute to the human rights discourse), but rather, in many of these cases, the government is attempting to use (and control) religion for their own personal benefit of staying in power. This makes one question what would happen if the same Sufi groups that are now being given aid, protection, and free rein to promote their message, tomorrow become much more powerful political actors that pose a threat to the leaders of the state. But as of now, many leaders do not view these groups as political, or as a serious danger.

The reason that I bring this up is because, as illustrated through historical examples, governments have often shifted their levels of support for groups, including different Muslim groups. For example, postindependence movements resulted in governments' supporting Islamist parties as a counter to secular and communist groups. Currently, governments, which are concerned about the popularity of Islamist groups in some cases (both politically and in terms of their socioeconomic programs in society), and the threat of extremist Islamist groups in other cases, have begun to court Sufi groups, highlighting Sufism as the "official" Islam in the state. However, it is interesting to ask whether this increased power of Sufi groups will lead to shifts toward such groups in the decades to come. As Olcott (2007) mentions, "[t]hus far Sufism poses little threat of destabilizing the secular ideology of the state. Much depends on the policy of the state. Currently it is not Sufis but neo-Islamists who have penetrated secular state structures. Sufis are today's safeguard, but circumstances could turn the younger generation of Sufi leaders into tomorrow's enemies" (38). And thus, while predicting future government actions is problematic at best, from past (as well as current) events, it has become evident that Sufi groups are not shying away from politics, and are currently seen as "moderates" and are part of the favored Muslim approach in a number of states. The question remains: will this increased level of support and influence, coupled with resources and an interest in politics, lead to further concerns by regimes—in cases in which authoritarian leaders remain in power?

Notes

Introduction

1. It must be noted that even if Sufism does indeed offer a positive message, this does not mean that non-Sufi Muslims, within this dichotomous framework, do not also offer similar positive messages.
2. We must also keep in mind that it is not merely current regimes that can practice illiberal democracy but also Islamist governments, which may be doing so for power, or based on their specific stance of how Islam should be implemented in society (Hamid, 2014: 25–26).
3. Loimeier (2007: 62).
4. Often, even cases that looked to be solely political actually had specific economic interests underlying the motivation. For example, Loimeier (2007) argues that in the cases of Sufi sheikhs such as Ahmad Khalifa Niass (b. 1946), along with Sidi Lamine Niass (b. 1951), both first seemed to speak out against colonialism. However, their actions have now "be[en] interpreted as particularly clever strategies of negotiating privileged positions and access to scarce resources in a nationwide competition for state recognition as *islamologues fonctionnaries*" (Loimeier, 2007: 66–67).
5. There have been occasions on which the system was challenged, but this often occurred when goods or promises were not granted. For example, Loimeier (2007: 63) explains that the times when the relationship seemed to be questioned were times when the state was having economic issues and often could not provide the benefits people expected. When this happened, Murid Sufi leaders at times did speak out against the state's authority (64).
6. But as we shall see later, despite these actions, the government's lack of human rights, as well as the extensive social services provided by the Islamists continue to make them a popular alternative to the state.

1 What Is Sufism? History, Characteristics, Patronage, and Politics

1. We start to see a more systematized Sufism around the 1000s, particularly with the development of *tariqas* and *khanaqah* or *zawiya* (Ernst, 1992),

although we find a range of periods of Sufism, beginning in the 700s to the mid-900s with the rise of "individual mysticism" (Malik, 2006: 4). During this initial time, "Sufism was characterized by few rules and regulations for the mystic and his followers" (Malik, 2006: 4), and only later did beliefs begin to become more "standardized" (Malik, 2006: 6).

2. But while such proclaimed events often furthered the support for an individual to be seen as a saint, it has not always been a criterion that miracles are absolutely needed (even though they have often been expected) (Ernst, 1997). Historically, some have been critical of the notion of miracles. For example, Robert Rozehnal (1997) explains that "In *Fawa' id al-Fu'ad*, Shaykh Nizam ad-Din Awliya' cautions against any public display of control over the forces of nature. In his view, miracles are merely a distraction on the spiritual path: 'God Almighty has commanded His Saints to conceal their miracles (*karamat*), just as He has commanded His prophets to demonstrate theirs (*mu'jizat*). Since anyone who performs a miracle is disobeying God, what sort of work is this? There are one hundred states on the spiritual path. The seventeenth stage provides divine inspiration to perform miraculous acts. Now, if the traveler stops at this stage, how will he reach the other eighty-three?' Others such as Zauqi Shah see such actions 'as child's play'" (in Rozehnal, 1997: 55).
3. Along with the role of miracles often came the notion of "witnessing" the miracle (Ernst, 1997: 69–71).
4. A host of such examples of such power is covered in John Renard's (2008) book *The Friends of God: Islamic Images of Piety, Commitment and Servanthood*.
5. We shall observe in later chapters examples of leaders wanting to associate themselves with Sufi tombs. Part of this strategy is to seem tied to the religious leaders, often with the objective of increasing their credibility as a religious and political authority figure.
6. Thus, the Sufi *shakyh*'s power extends well beyond his life, for many see their power as continuing well after their passing or "wedding" (union with God). Furthermore, in some cases, not only are the tombs of the *shaykh*s thus given an important status for individuals who may travel to these sites to make supplication and ask for intercession but the bodies themselves of the *shaykh* are also important. Scott Kugle (2007) explains that some have believed "[t]he saint's body acts as a mirror for the religious virtues around which society can adhere and upon which political leaders can establish their authority" (78). For a detailed discussion on the body with regard to saints in Sufism, see Scott Kugle (2007).
7. Leonardo Villalon (1994) provides a detailed discussion on the political and religious role of Sufi celebrations in Senegal as it pertains to the Sufi *marabouts*, the government, as well as citizens. These rituals are helpful to individuals who take part in them. They also help the *marabouts* to influence society. This discussion is useful in better understanding the

different benefits of religious ceremonies to the various actors in a number of these cases that I shall discuss.

8. Some have argued that, similar to the notion of Sufis often refraining from political action, Sufi groups in the United States similarly focus more on spiritual issues. However, we do find that Sufi political organizations in the West (such as the Islamic Supreme Council of America) are involved in politics (Nimer, 2002: 170). A number of Sufi leaders in the West have taken active roles in public writing (such as opinion pieces for newspapers), particularly after the September 11, 2011 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon buildings, in order to explain their position "against tendencies that are usually both anti-West and anti-Sufi" (35).
9. For such a work, see Paul Heck's (2007a) edited collection entitled *Sufism and Politics: The Power of Spirituality*.
10. Carl Ernst (1992: 15).
11. Muhammad Ali made numerous attempts to distance himself and Egypt from the Ottoman Empire, trying to establish Egypt as an independent state outside of the control and influence of the Empire (Cleveland & Bunton, 2008).
12. When one examines the history of the Sudan and the discrepancies in resources, it becomes clear that the two civil conflicts between Northern and Southern Sudan, as well as the rebellion in Darfur was partly due to frustration at the lack resources available to these regions compared to that of leaders and citizens in Khartoum (Collins, 2008; Miller, 2007).
13. The two were said to have parted ways due to a disagreement, of which the origin is debated, but which may have been over issues of influence, as well as a quarrel over different interpretations of Islamic law, which led Muhammad Sharif to expel Muhammad Ahmad from the order (Holt, 1958: 38–40).

2 Algeria: Abdelaziz Bouteflika, Sufism, and Authoritarianism

1. Boubekeur (2008) explains that two separate Salafi Islamist positions developed. In one group, the attention was on addressing an increased role of Islam in society, all the while not focusing their attentions on politics. The other group was more open to the political process, with the ultimate objective being a political Islamist state (4–5).
2. The Family Code was a recurring issue in Algerian politics. In 1990, when many human rights activists attempted to protest the law in hopes of its repeal, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) continued to advocate for the Family Code, all the while framing the issue as one of "pro-French" supporters (for those who wanted to rid of the law) (Evans & Phillips, 2007).
3. The FIS was not the only Islamist party to receive recognition. In fact, Chadli also recognized the Nadha Party, as well as the Hamas party, arguably as a "divide-and-rule tactic" (Evans & Phillips, 2007: 147).

4. Martin Evans and John Phillips (2007) argue that a number of individuals were prepared for violence, having gone to the mountainous areas. However, they were not going to take violent action in case this might hurt the FIS's ability to succeed in the upcoming elections (167).
5. Amel Boubekeur (2008) explains that "[v]arious amnesty policies were implemented to put an end to the violence of the GIA and to pardon those who were responsible for crimes (both jihadists and security forces). These policies ranged from the first *rahma* (forgiveness) law in 1995, which was announced by President Liamine Zeroual after his election, to the Civil Concord Law in 1999 . . . " (7).
6. The notion that all Sufis worship through music or dance is itself problematic and inaccurate. Some Salafis have taken issue with the overall practice of dancing and/or music in combination with religious worship.
7. The debate regarding the application of the term "fundamentalism" to the context of Islam has been problematic, and debated by a range of thinkers. For a discussion and critique of the term, see Khaled El Fadl's work *The Great Theft* (2007).
8. It is also worth noting that his wife was a member of a Sufi *zaouia* (Werenfels, 2011: 2).
9. James McDougall (2007) argues that while citizens knew Sufism was not outside of the politics of the state, there was a comfort in Sufism as opposed to the positions of extremism, and it could be useful in things such as moving forward from the civil conflict in Algeria.
10. Many of those surveyed did, however, associate Sufism with positive characteristics such as "Peace" (63.28%) and "Tolerance" (50.41%), although others (63.88%) saw Sufism as "*Bidaa* or unacceptable religious innovation" and "Obscurantism" (54.97%) (Khemissi et al., 2012: 7).

3 Morocco: King Mohammed VI, Sufism, and the Islamist Challengers

1. For example, in the mid-to-late 1600s, the Nāsiriyya order "gained a reputation for remaining aloof from the struggles of temporal authorities over the throne—a position that attracted many followers and allies, and helped to protect the order from makhzan persecution" (Gutelius, 2002: 31).
2. What is interesting, however, is that a number of former political leaders, after being removed from office, would often join a Sufi order (Zeghal, 2008: 18).
3. For a detailed discussion about the relationship between the king and the Sufi sheikh in relation to *Baraka*, particularly in examining the cases of Molay Islamail (who was the Alawite king during the mid-1600s to the first quarter of the 1700s (1672–1727)) in relation to Sidi Lahsen Lyusi, as well as Sultan Moulay Slimane in relation to Abou-Bakr Mhawest, a sufi leader in the late eigthteenth century, along with a detailed discussion

of this relationship with Muhammad VI, see Fatima Ghoulaichi's master's thesis entitled "Of Saints and Sharifian Kings in Morocco: Three Examples of the Politics of Reimagining History Reinventing King/Saint Relationship."

4. The order organized a "Youth Congress" 2009 under the title of "Sufism Is the Saviour of Mankind," at which they had over 10,000 attendees. Youth education was a primary objective at this conference, and even years before this, the order had been active in seeking future members in schools (Bekkaoui & Laremont, 2011: 39). In fact, it even has professors serve as "representatives (muqaddams)" of the order (Bekkaoui & Laremont, 2011: 40).
5. For a sample of Mohammed VI's letters and speeches, see Appendices 1–3.
6. This was despite the fact that only 8.1 percent of those surveyed self-identified as belonging to a Sufi order (Bekkaou et al., 2010: 51).
7. Secular parties in the past have joined together to support Mohammed VI in order to counter any Islamist challenge, and some suggest that such parties could either side with the Islamists against the King or become part of the government, thus gaining some political power, but at the expense of advancing a democratic system against the political repression of the king (Ottaway & Riley, 2006). This has helped the PJD, as it was not seen as being aligned with the undemocratic leadership of Mohammed VI (McFaul & Wittes, 2008).
8. The Justice and Charity (JC) group, under Yassine, also competed with the Boutchichiya order over youth recruitment (Bekkaoui & Laremont, 2011).
9. And because of the unique situation of JC and its attitude toward the king and the overall politics in Morocco (that includes nonviolence, yet also the removal of the king, among other points mentioned), Avi Spiegel (2011) has argued that "[Justice and Charity] may very well be the least understood Islamist group in the world."
10. On a side note, in the past, the Islamist parties in Morocco have also worked with a number of organizations—including human rights groups—regarding abuses that the government has been accused of committing (Cavatorta, 2006). One of the major points of agreement between Islamist and non-Islamist human rights groups has been the call for the release of political prisoners (Cavatorta, 2006).
11. Freedom House (2011a) reports that the government has also been critical of protests in the territory, going so far as to try those who are working on the Western Saharan issue.

4 Appealing to Sufi Orders and Shrines: The Case of Government Sufi Advocacy in Pakistan

1. Mariam Abou Zahab (2009) explains that even within these groups, major differences based on their political positions, as well as interpretations of *jihad* exist. For example, while some groups are active in politics,

some Ahl-e-Hadith groups dismiss the idea of political involvement. Furthermore, the different groups have a range of understanding on what *jihad* to advocate (whether it is personal *jihad* that involves the improvement of self) or violent conflict, and whether this should be done individually or within a group (130–131).

2. In fact, a strong "rivalry between the Barelvis and the Deobandis" (Talbot, 1998: 29) has existed.
3. Despite previous attention paid to the rule of Muslim military conquests and the resulting conversion to Islam, Riaz Hassan (1987) argues that Sufi missionary organizations played a key role in the expansion of Islam.
4. Two popular Sufi movements in India include the Chisti and the Suhrawaridyya. For a discussion on the origins of these groups in India, see Trimingham (1971: 64–66).
5. Carl Ernst (1992) explains that even though Ghraib "rejected this as a bribe," he did at times at least hear what the individual was asking (193).
6. Carl Ernst (1992) cites Zayn al-Din's comments regarding Sufi leaders' advocating the continuation of the government's position. Citing from Ernst (1992), part of the specific text reads, "If someone enters the path of poverty, he should not give up his work and acquisition. Service work and the like does not prevent obedience and trust in God. Whatever they do, they pursue their work" (197). The text goes on to describe how other sheikhs similarly argue that a follower must carry out her/his duties, but be mindful of God.
7. This development brought out about a new influence from other Sufi leaders and movements. For a discussion of this as it relates to the Chishti order in India, see David Gilmartin (1979).
8. But while British leaders often set up deals with Sufi leaders, they were often critical of some Sufi practices, and particularly the role of the shrine and the emphasis on the saint, and the role of superstition in this relationship between the individual and the spiritual leader (Lieven, 2011: 145).
9. Not all Sufi leaders were supportive of the policies of Britain. For example, many Chishti leaders in the late 1800s and early 1900s did not advocate such supportive policies as did a number of the *sajjada nashin*, and were not primarily concerned with the economic interests of the community, but had a desire for religion to play an increased role (Gilmartin, 1979: 496).
10. A number of new *shakyhs* and *pirs* have emerged in Pakistan, with varying degrees of authority (Lieven, 2011: 139).
11. For example, Sufi leaders in the Punjab region play a key role in reducing violence between different groups in Pakistan by attempting to highlight commonalities between religious groups, namely by emphasizing a message of focusing on God, and not differences among one another (Lieven, 2011: 298).
12. Non-Sufi sites have also been attacked by the Taliban in Pakistan. For example, a Buddha statue was bombed in 2007 (Buneri, 2010).
13. In addition, on July 22, a potential bomb attack on the Sufi shrine of poet Hamza Khan Shinwari in Khyber was stopped before it was carried out (Radio Free Europe: Radio Liberty, 2011).

14. There are differences within the Barelvi order itself. For example, "The Barelvis in Pakistan are divided into four families called *silsilas* that trace their lineage to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH): Qadriya, Naqshbandiya, Chistiya, and Suhurwardiya" (Khan, 2011: 6).
15. Shortly after, another Sufi-inspired conference was set up by Pervaiz Elahi, who was the chief minister of the Punjab region (Philippon, 2009). Other groups such as the Sufi Order International—that have been in agreement with Musharaf's position of "englightened moderation" in relation to religion—have also set up similar events, such as a conference to discuss Sufism in comparison to extremist positions of Islam that they viewed as harmful (Philippon, 2009).
16. Nicholas Schmidle interviewed Pakistani poet Anwar Sagar, who referenced the family to Qalandar.
17. The government has not been the only one to call for the increase role of Sufism in politics and society. In fact, citizens have also made similar arguments, arguing that Sufism is opposite conflict. For example, Pakistani artist and activist Jimmy Engineer has urged individuals to study the messages of Sufi saints in order to bring together all of humanity through notions of love (Pakistan Press International, 2011). Other nongovernmental actors have also been involved in discussing what they believe is the role of Sufism against terrorist activities. In 2010, there was a meeting run by the National Mashaikh Council of Pakistan entitled "Role of Sufis in Arresting Terrorism" at which a number of individuals, including journalists, religious figures, and other intellectuals, spoke on the role of Sufism in stopping terrorist attacks. Some positions from the conference included the notion that a "unified" Muslim Pakistan was needed, and "[t]hey warned that bombing shrines and mausoleums of great saints was a conspiracy to make Muslims fight one another and thus ignore the enemy agends of controlling Muslim countries and their resources" (The News, 2010). At this meeting the participants argued that Sufism has historically promoted notions of "love and peace" (The News, 2010). Moreover, in March of 2010, the Pakistan Academy of Letters organized an event entitled "Sufism & Peace," which was run by Governer of Punjab Salman Taseer, as well as Sardar Assef Ahmad Ali (Zaidi, 2010). The governor emphasized the importance of Sufism to Pakistan, and particularly how Sufism is seen as a guide for Pakistani society (Zaidi, 2010). It was here that the Islamabad Declaration was supported, a document that called for intergroup dialogue, with an ultimate objective of peace between the different communities in the world. The document also addressed (and spoke against) terrorist attacks (Zaidi, 2010).Also, in early 2011, a number of Pakistani writers who came together at a Sufi conference in Sindh advocated increased government attention to Sufi writers, arguing that certain Sufi writings should be published, and that daily broadcast time should be devoted to Sufism (Dawn, 2011). A number of writers made it a point to stress that Sufism itself preached ideas of tolerance and peace. The "[p]oetess Ms Aasia Aslam [from] Lahore said that [the Sufi] [Bazm-i-Baahoo] and all other Sufis preached love, peace and human values" (Dawn, 2011). Others, such as "Prof. Tehmina Mufti of Sindh University said that Sufi poets of the subcontinent

preached love for humanity and their teachings could curb extremism and fundamentalism[,]" and thus should be promoted throughout the country (Dawn, 2011). This attitude of Sufism as above conflict came out in the resolutions that were passed from the conference proceedings. For example, "[o]ne resolution said that Sufism alone prevents wars" (Dawn, 2011). At the 2011 Sehwan Sufi conference, Faqir Aijaz Ali, one of the individuals who organized the meeting, said that Sufis were always interested in speaking for peace, and always aimed for "unity" of all individuals (Khaskheli, 2011).

5 Promoting Sufism in Russia, Chechnya, and Uzbekistan

1. While many individuals supported such orders, some others, such as Sheikh Kunta-khadzhi Kishiev, were more inclined to back nonpolitical Sufi orders (Yemelianova, 2001).
2. For a discussion of Kunta Haji's position on nonviolence in the context of the Russian state and its policies, see Bennigsen & Enders, 1985: 21.
3. However, the government was more tolerant of the Qadirriya, who as a whole were more supportive of the Bolshevik Revolution (Yemelianova, 2001).
4. Bennigsen and Enders (1985) also discuss the Hairy Ishans, who essentially formed a secret society to avoid the government's interference (36).
5. James Ferguson (2007) argues that at least some credit must be given to Sufis for continuing to provide some avenue to practice Islam in the years of heavy state control, in which the state severely limited the amount of resources and support for Islam.
6. There have also been some Sufi groups that have not favored current Sufi leadership, who have not viewed the Wahhabi groups with contempt, and have been more willing to meet with the Wahhabis (Yemelianova, 2001).
7. It must be noted, however, that understanding this as an overall unified Islamist threat is oversimplified (Dannreuther & March, 2011), as all Wahhabi groups are not the same, with variations in moderation/lack of moderation and level of involvement with the regional state (Yemelianova, 2001).
8. A major supporter of such a program to sponsor Sufism in schools was Maksud I. Sadikov, rector of the Islamic University of the North Caucasus (Kramer, 2011). He felt that teaching a "moderate" Islam would be highly useful in the fight against terrorism, and called such teachings "antivenom" for the extremist interpretations. Some of the topics discussed at the school were Sufi whirling, as well as "taking pilgrimages to holy sites" (Kramer, 2011). Sadikov was killed in a gun attack on June 7, 2011. Some worried that such ties to the state would make him and the university vulnerable. It seemed that Sadikov himself understood the risk of promoting Sufism (Kramer, 2011).
9. In addition, in one case he confronted an imam as to why he is not as well received by individuals as an Islamist insurgent (Fuller, 2010).

10. Liz Fuller (2012) (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty) reports that his great-grandfather was very close with Kunta-hadji.
11. Kadyrov has also attempted to highlight his traveling to the graves of Kunta-hadji's family, such as his mother's grave. He even made it a point himself to go to the tomb after he was installed as president (Fuller & Doukaev, 2007).
12. They also dress according to how the followers of Kunta-hadji dress (Fuller, 2012).
13. Supporters have expressed similar sentiments toward the Wahhabis. For example, in an interview with *The Guardian*, Sultan Mirzayev, who is the Chechnyan Mufti, said that "[t]he Wahhabis offer nothing but death and destruction" (Parfitt, 2007).
14. See *The Economist* (2009b) and Marson (2009) for a discussion regarding the accusations and criticisms some have made about the role some believe Kadyrov and his security personnel have had in the current state of affairs in Chechnya.
15. While some have argued that Putin's actions in the region are related to his interest in oil, others have said that this is not accurate since Chechen oil is not only on the decline but also makes up so little of Russia's industry. And while the Rosneft Company will work in the region after many years, Kadyrov is himself the one who is expected to benefit greatly from the Grozny refinery (Marten, 2010: 4).
16. For example, it has been suggested that the Uzbekistan Mufi—Mukhtarkhan Abdulayev—received the support of the government for the position because of the level of national support that this could provide to Karimov (Gaziev, 2000).
17. For example, the prime road, which was once named after Vladimir Lenin, has been renamed after Bahauddin Naqshbandi (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 2000).
18. Najmiddin Kamilov, a political leader in Uzbekistan, has strongly supported the promotion of Sufism as a possible counter to extremist ideology. And "[a]mong the steps taken by the Uzbek authorities are the promotion of scholars who advocate Naqshbandi ideas, the erection of billboards featuring quotations from the 14th century founder of that mystical group, and renaming the main street in Bukhara. In Soviet times, that avenue bore the name of Vladimir Lenin. Now it is called Bahauddin Naqshbandi Prospect in honor of the order's founder" (Goble, 2000). The government has coupled the promotion of Sufism with bans on reading material by groups it sees as promoting extremist ideas (Goble, 2000).
19. Scholars argue that, by devoting resources to the shrines, the government has thus granted "implicit endorsement to the practice of shrine veneration whereby Muslims seek the intercession of *avilyo* in overcoming illness or worldly difficulties (Schubel, 1999, in Rasanayagam, 2010: 108).
20. For example, Freedom House (2011b) called Uzbekistan "one of the world's most repressive countries," and said that there were a number of abuses such

as the censoring of the Internet and other media outlets. The 2012 Freedom of the World Report (Freedom House, 2012), concerning Uzbekistan, stated that "[a]s in previous years, Uzbekistan's government suppressed all political opposition and restricted independent business activity in 2011, and the few remaining civic activities and critical journalists in the country faced prosecution, hefty fines, and arbitrary detention."

21. Emily O'Dell (2011) explains that the government promoted Sufism not only domestically but also abroad. For example, Syed Baig, who is the ambassador to India, at a Sufi conference, called for the acceptance of Sufism (18).
22. Anna Nemtsova, in an interview with Yuriy Mikhailov, who is an author. In her article, it is explained that while Mikhailov does emphasize "moderate education programmes and institutions[,]"the debate should be had within society, not with weapons.

6 The Promotion of Sufism in the West: Britain and the United States

1. Gisela Webb (2006) argues that "three waves" of Sufism has taken place in the United States, with the first wave being during the beginning of the twentieth century, the second wave in the 1960s and the 1970s, and the third wave taken place from the mid 1990s.
2. Studies have examined a variety of Sufi organizations in Britain (Werbner, 2006). Pnina Werbner (2006) makes a number of observations regarding the Sufi groups in Britain. For example, many of the members are predominantly born outside of Britain, many happen to be Pakistani, many of the groups place an emphasis on *dhikr* (saying and repeating the name of God), and many of the followers are educated. In terms of differences, she does find some variations in terms of the level of gender equality that exists between different Sufi groups.
3. This is not to say that all Sufi sheiks and groups have continued to advocate a more ethnically concentrated Islam, as many have attempted to broaden the message of their version of Islam. For a discussion of groups that are taking this approach, see Ron Geaves (2006).
4. Rosa Prince (2010) reports that Gordon Brown attempted to increase the number of days a suspect can be held to 42 days, but this was eventually not carried through.
5. It was only after the third attempt that the legislation was passed (Parker, 2007).
6. For a detailed discussion of the *UK Terrorism Act 2006*, see Ellen Parker (2007).
7. Although Simon Stjernholm (2011) in his study says that "this was, to my mind, the only reference made explicitly to the work of the then newly established SMC during the two events in 2006" (270).

8. The Immigration Policy Center (IPC) (2004) explains that a number of failures existed on behalf of the INS when implementing NSEERS. They argue that the rules to register were "complex, confusing, and poorly publicized" (IPC, 2004). Individuals who were registered in this system had deadlines within which to return for the follow-up interviews; this was determined based on the country of origin of the person. Before November 1, 2003, those who were late for registration were allowed to "show there was misadvice," and if this was correct, and they provided supporting documents, they would be allowed to register (IPC, 2004). IPC explains (2004) that the process changed drastically after Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) took control of NSEERS. Under ICE, anyone who registered late was "getting put into [removal] proceedings" (IPC, 2004) from the United States back to his/her home country. Another problem with the distribution of NSEERS information had to do with the fact that "the rules of NSEERS were disseminated primarily via publication in the Federal Register" (IPC, 2004). And because of this, individuals who did not check the Federal Registrar for updates to their situation ended up "unintentionally violat[ing]" rules, giving the INS grounds for deportation (IPC, 2004; Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2003). Flight attendants would also give incorrect information to passengers regarding departures, failing to make them aware of mandatory check-ins with the INS (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 2003).
9. The Nixon Center (2004) report indicates that "Panel 3: Cultural Islam and Implications for US Policy" did have "representatives from US government agencies." It should be noted that panel 3 was an "off-the-record panel" (Nixon Center, 2004: 23).
10. In a *New York Times* article, Huma Imtiaz and Charlotte Buchen (2011) say that "[t]he United States, meanwhile, sees Sufi Islam as a counter force to terrorism, and has helped promote it by giving more than $1.5 million since 2001 on the restoration and conservation of Sufi shrines in Pakistan."
11. For a detailed write-up of the speeches, see the Nixon Center (2004) report.

Conclusion

1. However, all Sufis do not fit into the neat boxes of "good" and "bad" Muslim. In 2005, Karavan (a news outlet in Kazakhstan) put out a story regarding two individuals who were tried by the Uzbekistan courts. The individuals, Rashid Toshmatov and Nurali Umizakov, were found guilty and given six-year jail terms for, according to the court, belonging to Hezb-e Tahrir, a terrorist organization. But while the courts claimed these men were a part of this group, others point out that they were actually Sufis (Karavan, 2005). Thus, the government has gone after Sufis as well as others who pose a challenge to the government (Karavan, 2005).

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