

## Islamic Education Institutions with Sufism Characteristics in Classic Times (*Ribath, Zawiyah, and Khanqah*)

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### Abstract:

The heyday of Islam was when Islamic education developed rapidly, marked by the development of Islamic educational institutions and traditional schools and universities in various Islamic cultural centers. Educational institutions greatly influence and shape the pattern of life and culture of Muslims. Islamic educational institutions with a Sufism design have become part of the ongoing process of the history of educational thought in the classical period of Islam. Therefore, this discussion will focus on tracing the development of *ribath*, *zawiyah*, and *khanqah* institutions, starting from the curriculum, methods, and their contribution to Islamic intellectual progress in general. The purpose of this study is to present a tracing of the development of Islamic educational institutions with a Sufism nuance because the institutions have contributed to the intellectual progress of Islam and are reflected in the history of human socio-cultural development on earth. This research is a literature study using literature from various sources. The survey results show that Sufism institutions (*Ribath, Zawiyah, and Khanqah*) contribute to the growth of Islamic educational institutions in restoring spiritual purity and inner peace in Sufi teachings. Its teachings include curriculum, and methods that promote a spiritual closeness to Allah Swt, formalize Sufism as a separate scientific subject, increase social power through the organization, revive Sufi traditions, and serve as a distinct way of understanding and practicing Islam.

**Keywords:** *Islamic educational institutions, Sufism, ribath, zawiya, khanqah*

### Introduction

The study of classical Islamic history is certainly not just a discussion of meaningless records of events at that time. Of course, suppose there is a view that an account is a past event that does not need to be remembered. In that case, this opinion is undoubtedly disappointing because it contradicts the *Qur'an* and *hadith*, which teach humans to accept lessons from the past. People with this view will be at a loss because those who study history can find many benefits.

A study of Sufi institutions found that *ribath*, *zawiyah*, and *khanqah* were part of Islamic education centered on structured and systematic religious knowledge and marked the beginning of the growth of *madrrasah*<sup>1</sup>. Even during the heyday of the *Abashid Dynasty*, this Sufi institution has experienced rapid development, producing many scholars who are qualified in their fields

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<sup>1</sup> Muhammad Faizul Amirudin, "Lembaga Pendidikan Kaum Sufi Zawiyah, Ribath dan Khanqah", *el-Ghiroh*, Vol. XII No.01, (2017), 119-132, <https://doi.org/10.37092/el-ghiroh.v12i1.30>.

with all forms of tradition and academic activity<sup>2</sup>. *Ulama* and other great scholars born from this Sufi institution, such as Imam al-Ghazali, Suhrawardi, and Hasan Basri, show that Sufi institutions have an essential role in the progress of Islamic civilization<sup>3</sup>.

The conclusions of several studies conducted provide information and reference materials for enthusiasts and reviewers of Islamic education. However, the heyday of Islam was a period of rapid development of Islamic education and the development of Islamic educational institutions, *madrasah* (schools), and universities from various Islamic cultural centers, which greatly influenced the formation of patterns of life and Islamic culture in classical times. Therefore, it is crucial to continue reviewing Islamic educational institutions' development and find new clues to enrich the scientific treasures. This study details this Sufi-style institution and its contribution to Islamic intellectual progress in general. Therefore, this study aims to present a tracing of the development of Islamic educational institutions with a Sufism nuance because the institutions of *ribath*, *zawiyah*, and *khanqah* have contributed to the intellectual progress of Islam and are reflected in the history of human socio-cultural development on earth.

## Literature Review

At its introduction, *ribath* was not part of a Sufi institution. Asari<sup>4</sup> explains that in the I/VII centuries, *ribath* meant military barracks on the front lines near the borders of territories controlled or conquered by the enemy during the great Islamic conquests. *Ribath* was also an army dormitory where religious warriors lived to protect their land with weapons. Followers of *Riba* (*Murabit/Murabithun*) turn their attention from physical warfare against their enemies to spiritual action against themselves and their souls in Sufi practice.

*Ribath* has two different definitions. In short, *Ribath* is a stronghold on the border of Islamic territory. The surrender of Islamic troops in this border area has been considered a sacred task since the time of Umar bin Khattab. At that time, the Arabs accepted this view, and for Islam to stand firmly on the borders of the world, the defenses of the Islamic armies had to be strengthened. On the other hand, another definition is that the *Ribath* system combines military service and religious service, and many *Ribaths* are also gathering places for Sufis.

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<sup>2</sup> Mahfud Ifendi, "Dinasti Abbasiyah: Studi Analisis Lembaga Pendidikan Islam", *Fenomena: Jurnal Penelitian*, Vol. 12 No. 2, (2020), 139-159, : <http://doi.org/10.21093/fj.v12i2.2269>.

<sup>3</sup> Fauzi Ahmad Syawaluddin, "Lembaga Pendidikan Sufistik Masa Klasik Islam (Ribath, Zawiyah dan Khanqah)", *Pena Cendekia: Journals of Science, Education and Islamic Religion*, Vol. 2 No. 1, (2019), 1-17.

<sup>4</sup> Hasan Asari, *Mengungkap Sejarah Mencari T'brah: Risalah Sejarah Sosial-Intelektual Muslim Klasik*. Edisi Revisi (Bandung: Citapustaka Media Perintis, 2013), 181.

In the *al-Qur'an*, precisely in QS. Al-Anfal (8): 60 and Ali Imran (3): 200 what is meant by ribath is to prepare oneself to be bound in defense of Islam, as Allah says:

“Make ready for an encounter against them all the forces and well-readied horses you can muster that you may overawe the enemies of Allah and your own enemies and others besides them of whom you are unaware but of whom Allah is aware. Whatever you may spend in the cause of Allah shall be fully repaid to you, and you shall not be wronged”.

The meaning of the word ribath in Tafsir *al-Mishbah* is that the word ribath is rooted in the word *rabatha*, which means "to bind." The word used in the verse above is taken from the word *rabatha* in the sense of staying in the defense area as if the resident had bound himself there and did not move to wait or watch for a possible enemy attack<sup>5</sup>.

As a Sufi institution, Al-Maqrizi defines *ribath* as a Sufi house. Each group (*qawm*) has a home, and *ribath* is the house of the Sufi. In this respect, they are similar to the *abl-ashuffah*, a group of companions who lived on the sidelines of the Prophet's Mosque in Medina. The occupants of *ribath* are people who have the same intentions, goals, and circumstances but have attachments (*murabith*). *Ribath* was developed to achieve this goal<sup>6</sup>. Al Syuyuthi provides a slightly different definition of *ribath*. According to him, *ribath* is a place to live for the poor (*fuqara'*), elderly parents (*'aja'iz*), or poor widows who cannot care for themselves. With this definition, the relationship between ribath and Sufism becomes loose<sup>7</sup>.

In its development, the meaning of *ribath* underwent several changes. Muhammad Munir Mursiy distinguishes between ribath in the eastern Islamic world and ribath in the Moroccan region. In the eastern Islamic world, ribath is a home for the poor who spend their time worshipping and studying. Therefore, *ribath* in Morocco means simply a military dormitory with a large hall consisting of several rooms, sometimes with one or two pillars supporting the minaret especially for the call to prayer. There is also a place to monitor the coastal borders to stop the Roman Navy attack<sup>8</sup>.

The debate about *ribath* is undoubtedly very diverse and produces many opinions. Al-Fasi spends more pages on his work explaining the history and names of *ribath* than on *Madrasah*. *Ribath-ribath* was founded mainly during the time of Al-Fasi himself. There are more than 50

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<sup>5</sup> Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan, dan Keserasian al-Qur'an*. Vol. I-XV (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2017), 588.

<sup>6</sup> Hasan Asari, *Menguak Sejarah Mencari T'rah: Risalah Sejarah Sosial-Intelektual Muslim Klasik*, 162-163.

<sup>7</sup> Hasan Asari, *Menguak Sejarah Mencari T'rah: Risalah Sejarah Sosial-Intelektual Muslim Klasik*, 164.

<sup>8</sup> Emroni, "Kontribusi Lembaga Sufi dalam Pendidikan Islam (Studi Terhadap Lembaga Ribath, Zawiyah dan Khanqah), Ta'lim: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Islam, Vol. 5 No. 01, (2015), 48.

*ribath* around the Grand Mosque in Mecca, while in Medina, Al Sakhrawi registers more than 30 *ribath* in the Prophet's City<sup>9</sup>.

Like *madrasah*, most of this *ribath* is donated by non-hijazi rulers and philanthropists. The Haramayn Ribaths are generally established for male Sufis, but some *Ribaths* in Mecca and Medina only accept women. In addition, there is evidence that some *ribaths* take both men and women. Some of the *ribaths* mentioned by Al-Fasi seem to get people who are not Sufis. They are "poor" (*Al-masakin*) and "lost" people in their hometowns because they have no money to return to their hometowns<sup>10</sup>.

*Ribath* buildings usually have a mihrab for congregational prayers and a place to read the Koran and learn other sciences. However, the construction of such structures, although often associated with mosques, can still be separated from their functions. The spacious kitchen is shared between students and guests and sometimes the school. The founder's grave is usually in the same place. The sheik lives with his family in a quarter of the compound, meeting students at certain times, guiding spiritual progress, and guiding the congregation's five daily prayers.<sup>11</sup>

As for the activities of the *ribath* residents, as quoted by Asari<sup>12</sup>, al-Suhrawardi explained that they must cut ties with creatures and maintain contact with God, earn a living by worshipping and praying day and night wirid and be careful not to neglect these activities.

In fact, in its development, Sufism has been misunderstood. This is due to the assumption that Sufism teachings include non-Islamic elements such as Neoplatonism, Greece, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity. Likewise, Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 579/1200) sharply criticized the *ribath* population because the *ribath* system was considered to deviate from the actual teachings of Islam<sup>13</sup>.

The evolution of the institution of *ribath* has changed over time. Institutional criticism isolates *ribath* from the larger population. Still, it keeps the door open as wide as possible for every poor individual, whether Sufi or not, to live and achieve good things in *ribath*. As a result, *ribath* has become a democratic institution, accepting anyone who wants to join other *ribath* members.

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<sup>9</sup> Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII dan XVIII* (Jakarta: Prenada Media Grup, 2014), 66.

<sup>10</sup> Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah dan Kepulauan Nusantara*, 67

<sup>11</sup> Annemarie Schimmel, *Mistical Dimension of Islam (Dimensi Mistik dalam Islam)*, Terj. Sapardi Djoko Sarmomo, dkk. Cet. IV (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 2018), 10.

<sup>12</sup> Asari, *Menyingkap*, 164

<sup>13</sup> Asari, *Menyingkap*, 162.

The word *zawiya* comes from the word *Ozawa*, *Yazawa*, which means worship in general. *Zawiyah* in Arabic means wings. Thus, *zawiyah* and *ribath* have the same purpose, but *ribath* is more specific regarding organization than *zawiya*. In North Africa, the term refers to a mosque or simple place of worship, a place of seclusion for religious activities, or a place where Sufis gather for prayer and remembrance. *Zawiyah* can take the form of large or small buildings or even the tomb of a guardian closely tied to a particular tarekat tribe.

In terms of purpose, the *zawiya* is similar to the *khanqah*, although it is smaller and designed for poor Sufism worshippers. In the 13th century AD, a Mamalik ruler founded the *zawiya al-Jumairah* and housed several poor Sufis there. However, there is a *zawiya* founded by a well-known sheik whose mission is to share knowledge, isolate himself, and be religious<sup>14</sup>.

The *zawiya* institution became an independent entity after the Sufi organization emerged. Its evolution is repeated to spread the teachings of one tarekat and win additional followers. According to Asari, there were two kinds of *zawiyah*: the traditional *zawiya*, which maintained strong ties to the Mamluk rulers, and the more independent *zawiyah*. The styles of these two types of *zawiyah* often function as mosques and *ribaths*, offering worship and security, and sustenance to the poor. This independence can be illustrated in the case of Sheikh Ibn Qiwam, who refused to accept *waqf* for *zawiya*, which he built and funded himself.

Sheikh *Zawiyah* is usually buried in his *zawiya* complex after he dies, and his cemetery has become a pilgrimage center for followers of the Sufi order. The number of pilgrims who come to the shaykh's meal for spiritual blessings or other purposes is determined by the popularity of the shaykh. This activity places a more significant burden on the *zawiya* concerned because the *zawiya* usually provides lodging and services for the pilgrims. On the other hand, this pilgrimage activity is also a source of income for *zawiyah*. These pilgrimage donations are often sufficient to support *zawiya* operations<sup>15</sup>.

*Khanqah* is a Sufi institution and part of the development phase of the tarekat. The existence of *khanqah* is very religious and Sufism. Every activity must be associated with self-purification and getting closer to *Allah SWT*. Perhaps the background behind the birth and development of this *khanqah* institution is an attempt to purify oneself and increase purity.

The origin of the word *khanqah* is unknown, nor is the exact date when this institution became known. However, it is most likely that the phrase *khanqah* comes from Persian, specifically "Khanh Kah" (plural: *khanqat*), which means the house of remembrance (*Bayt al-dhikri*) and the

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<sup>14</sup> Emroni, "Kontribusi Lembaga Sufi dalam Pendidikan Islam (Studi Terhadap Lembaga Ribath, Zawiyah dan Khanqah), Ta'lim: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Islam, Vol. 5 No. 01, (2015), 48.

<sup>15</sup> Asari, *Menyingkap*, 167-168

abode of Sufis and Erekat adherents. *Khanqah*, on the other hand, is a Sufi residential school formed in response to the increased activity of Sufism. According to Asari<sup>16</sup>, chroniclers only looked at the *khanqah* in the 4th/10th century, citing Fernandes and Lapidus that in this century, the *khanqah* had become famous in Khorasan and Transoxiana.

The *zawiya* and *khanqah*, which provided temporary refuge for wandering Sufis from the 11th century, have spread life throughout the countryside and helped define the Islamization of societies in border areas and non-Arab parts of Central Asia and North Africa. Almost all tarekat institutions have teachings such as bait, tawajjuh, isolation, and reflection in the form of institutions. This period was also marked by the growth of *khanqah* institutions, characterized by enthusiasm for creating new *khanqahs* and the emergence of organizational processes. Furthermore, the *khanqah* was more developed as pilgrims were allowed to visit the graves of deceased Sufis, bringing the *khanqah* closer to social life.

The *Khanqah* had close ties to the political kings who ruled in the second half of the 5/11th centuries, the Snow dynasty throughout its history. This situation is favorable for the development of the *khanqah* institution. The support of the ruler supports the existence of the organization. The rapid expansion of the *khanqah* institutions accompanied the Snowq growth outside Khurasan and Iraq. Large cities such as Aleppo and Damascus began to be decorated with the *khanqah*, which grew progressively over the centuries. According to al-Nu'aymi, a historian of the 10/16th century, there were at least 30 *khanqah* for Damascus alone<sup>17</sup>.

According to the argument above, *ribath*, *zawiyah*, and *khanqah* are Sufism institutions that have become part of the ongoing process of the history of educational thought in the classical period of Islam.

## Methods

This study uses a qualitative research approach as descriptive historical research. What historical research means is research that applies scientific solving methods from a historical perspective to a problem. The forms known in this research are biographies, institutions, and bibliographies. In contrast, descriptive research provides an overview by analyzing and applying the findings encountered during this research. Thus, the results of this study will describe the

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<sup>16</sup> Asari, *Menyingkap*, 171-172.

<sup>17</sup> Asari, *Menyingkap*, 173.

institutions of *ribath*, *zawiyah*, and *khanqah*, starting from the curriculum, methods, and their contribution to the intellectual progress of Islam in general.

Data collection techniques used by researchers are observation and literature study. These techniques are expected to assist researchers in obtaining the necessary data. The observation technique is a method of collecting data by direct observation in the field. This process takes place with statements that will be directly recorded by the researcher systematically, as well as looking at other things that may be needed to support the research being carried out. The data analysis technique used the Milles and Huberman approach through four main stages: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and data confirmation<sup>18</sup>.

At the data collection stage, the researcher carried out a systematic process of collecting observations or measurements. At the data reduction stage, researchers change the recorded data into patterns, focuses, categories, or specific issues after the data is collected. The data collected and recorded in various notes while in the field were then summarized and selected. At the stage of displaying the data<sup>19</sup>, the researcher presents a set of structured information that allows concluding and taking action. Meanwhile, at the data confirmation stage, researchers conduct the process of compiling research reports that are used in assessing the truth of the theoretical basis with facts in the field, which must then be processed and analyzed.

## Results and Discussion

### Curriculum at *Ribath*

*Ribath* learning curriculum emphasizes the deepening of religion and Sufism with worship and memorization teaching techniques. Students in *ribath* pray daily and night, remember and study theology through the *sheikh* (head of *ribath*), and reciter. *Ribath* has grown and spread in large numbers in its time, but not as much as madrasas or mosques, but *ribath* has become part of the evidence of the development of educational institutions in classical Islamic times.

At that time, the curriculum and methods in *ribath* taught various kinds of literature that were used explicitly among themselves, both in terms of *fiqh* and Sufism, with remarkable memorization and prayer, as well as *wirid*. In addition, several agreements between students and their teachers are known as *bai'at*. The sources of *ribat* fees vary. Some *ribaths* receive regular assistance from the government or donors, but some *ribaths* live on *futuh*, without outside help or support.

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<sup>18</sup> Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Bandung : Alfabeta, 2019, 87

<sup>19</sup> Mettew, B Milles and Michael Huberman. *Analisis Data Kualitatif*. (Jakarta: UI Press, 1992), 17

The abundance of medieval literature evidence this institution. For example, al-Nu'aymi claims that the city of Damascus has 21 *ribath*. Still, he does not give much detail about this institution, while al-Maqrizi notes that Egypt has 12 *ribath*, Ibn Duqmaq and 'Ali Mubarak have eight *ribath* each. *Ribath al-Bayani* in Damascus, founded by Abu al-Bayan bin al-Harawi (d. 551/1156), is a famous *Ribath*. He was the first sheikh to have a large group of Sufi followers. *Al-ribath Atsar*, which contains his fiqh teachings, and *al-ribath Al-Baghdadi*, specifically for women, are two of the more famous *ribaths*<sup>20</sup>.

*Ribath* has been a part of Islamic civilization for a long time, although it has declined since the mid-8th/14th century. The connection with the rise of other Sufi institutions was the cause of this collapse (discussed later). As a result, the mid-nineteenth century (9/15) is seen as a period when the institution of *ribath* plummeted.

### **Curriculum at *Zawiyah***

Various materials on Sufism, *riyadhah*, or training to pave the way to *Allah SWT*, *dhikr*, and meditation, as well as studying *naqliyah* and *'aqliyah* arguments related to religious matters are among the subjects taught during *zawiyah*. Memorizing, *riyadhah*, and *sima'an* are methods used by students to strengthen their knowledge (listening). Asari<sup>21</sup> argues that the growth in the development of the *zawiyah* can be seen clearly from the existing historian's records: al-Nu'aymi and al-Maqrizi each reported 26 *zawiyah*, while al-'Asali recorded 40 *zawiyah*.

*Dar Mu'awiyah* is a *zawiyah* with historical significance because *Mu'awiyah bin Abu Sufyan* initially occupied it on his way to Jerusalem. This *zawiyah* was originally established as a house belonging to *Ibn al-Ha'im* and was given the name *zawiyah al-Wafa'iyah* and founded in the 8th/14th century. Several large books and manuscripts belonging to the *al-Badri* family are still stored in this *zawiyah*. Another *zawiyah* with significant tarekat affinity among *zawiyah al-Naqsyabandiyah* residents. This *zawiyah* has survived to the present day, and is now occupied by the descendants of *Sheikh Ya'qub al-Bukhari* after being restored in the 11/17th century due to its popularity in providing accommodation assistance for travelers from outside Jerusalem<sup>22</sup>.

*Mulyadhi Kartanegara* explained that the *zawiyah* as an educational institution deserves attention because of its contribution to the advancement of science, especially the esoteric sciences (the perception of the unseen nature that is only visible to the eye (*'ayn al-Qalb*), and all true be-

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<sup>20</sup> Asari, *Menyingkap*, 166.

<sup>21</sup> Asari, *Menyingkap*, 169.

<sup>22</sup> Hasan Asari, *Menyingkap*, 170-171.



liefs have a taste (*dzawq*), namely the Sufi training center (Sufi center). After the Mongol invasions, Sufi training facilities became increasingly prominent as places of formal education. As a result, *zawiyah* is vital as educational institutions because of their dual role as madrasas and centers of spiritual practice, where they specialize in esoteric and exoteric disciplines<sup>23</sup>.

Based on the discussion above, the existence of *zawiyah* institutions has played an essential role in various sectors. The development of the *zawiyah* is widely seen not only in the Middle East but also in Europe and Asia. The author also finds that the *zawiyah* functions as a religious, educational institution and a place for visitors to live, in addition to functioning as an academic center for prospective Sufism/*Tarekat* teachers.

### **Curriculum on *Khanqah***

The Khanqah was used as a site to teach prose and poetry and by Sufis to compose their writings to lead and direct the people during the significant development of the *Snowq* dynasty and the rise of Persian literature. The benefits of establishing a *khanqah* institution include: (1) providing a sense of security for the poor and homeless Sufis and (2) enabling the Sufis to create uniformity both physically and spiritually by gathering in one area (*khanqah*). Sufis can unite to correct and correct each other's shortcomings because they are spiritual.

The khanqah experts follow a set of norms and etiquette while living in the *khanqah*. These rules are followed to ensure the physical and spiritual cleanliness of the khanqah experts. These principles and behaviors are intended to increase a sense of sharing, unity, and brotherhood among fellow residents of the *khanqah*, as well as to increase righteousness to *Allah SWT*.

The famous Sufi al-Suhrawardi (d. 632/1234), on the other hand, proposed seven basic rules that the inhabitants of the *khanqah* should follow: 1) They should strive to establish positive relationships with all beings; they cannot isolate themselves from other groups. The balance between worship to Allah SWT and good relations with others must always be maintained; 2) it is obligatory to perform the obligatory prayers in congregation and to multiply the sunnah prayers; 3) as far as possible, the inhabitants of the *khanqah* do not earn a living and submit themselves entirely to the will of Allah SWT; 4) their whole life should be devoted to spiritual self-purification by engaging in regular Sufism activities; 5) for that they must avoid absolutely all activities that do not support the purification effort; 6) khanqah experts must value time and use it only for religiously valuable things; and 7) they should throw away sluggishness and laziness<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>23</sup> Esoterik adalah persepsi esensi supranatural yang hanya terlihat oleh mata (*ayn al-Qalb*), dan seluruh keyakinan yang sejati memiliki rasa (*dzawq*), dalam Cyris, *Ensiklopedi Islam*, h. 371.

<sup>24</sup> Al-Suhrawardi, Awarif al-Maarif, dikutip dalam Nizami, "Some Aspects", h. 55, dalam Asari, *Menyingkap*, 177.

## Islamic Education Institutions with Sufism Characteristics in Classical Times (*Ribath, Zawiyah, and Khanqah*)

In Jerusalem and Egypt, there were two *khanqah*. Sultan Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi founded *Khanqah al-Shalahiya* in 583/1187 with sufficient *waqf* financing. According to the *Waqfiyyah Khanqah al-Shalahiyah*, all Sufis, sheikhs, and students, Arabs and '*ajam* (non-Arabs), are welcome to stay or just visit (*al-muqimin bi-ha wa al-muhajirin*). *Siraqus Khanqah* was founded in 723/1323 by King al-Nashir Muhammad b. Qalawun, during the reign of the Mamluks, was the only *khanqah* in Egypt. For 100 Sufis, this complex has 100 *kehalwah* (small rooms). A mosque, kitchen, and bathroom are nearby. The first sheikh was Sheikh Majd al-Din Musa al-Aqshari<sup>25</sup>.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the *kehalwah* institution is an institution that not only forms and fosters individual Sufi piety but also holiness in the group. At the same time, social piety is directly related to the broader community. The curriculum and methods taught in the *khanqah* are also inseparable from the main worship activities such as prayer, reading the Koran, fasting, and remembrance. The procedures are carried out in the congregation to maintain a sense of brotherhood among fellow residents of the *khanqah*.

The Contribution of Sufism Institutions to the Intellectual Progress of Islam in General

1). The formalization of Sufism/*Tarekat* as an independent scientific discipline

Based on the description above, it is clear that the formation of institutional Sufism in the form of *tarekat* led to a new philosophical path. Sufis contributed to Islam in various ways, including creating a kind of monasticism (derived from the Greek *monakhos*, a religious discipline in which a person renounced worldly pursuits to devote his life entirely to spiritual work) and ceremonies. According to Azyumardi Azra, *tarekat* organizations significantly impact the Islamic world. After the Mongols overthrew the Abbasid empire in 1258 AD, the Sufis took over the task of maintaining Islamic unity and expanding it to distant areas, including Indonesia.

Historians argue that Islamization in Southeast Asia, especially Indonesia, could take place peacefully because of the elements of Sufism and *tarekat*. The cosmological and metaphysical teachings of Ibn 'Arabi's Sufism can easily be combined with Indian Sufism ideas and the original Sufism ideas adopted by the local community. Even today, Indonesian Islam is still imbued with Sufism and love for sacred things, so the concept of *Insan Kamil* has much potential as theological legitimacy for the rulers. Treatises of Sufism and accounts of miracles from Persia and India are among the oldest surviving Islamic manuscripts from Java and Sumatra. Thicker Sufism doctrines

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<sup>25</sup> Asari, *Menyingkap*, 178-179.

can be found in modern Javanese works, and the tarekat gained a large following in the 18th and 19th centuries AD.

Sufism/*tariqat* was finally formalized as an independent scientific discipline due to the development of the study of Sufism/*tariqat*. Sufism is a branch of Islamic studies that focuses on purifying humans' inner qualities so they can give birth to a noble character. This formalization of the study of Sufism allows a person to learn self-purification and practice them well to organize the heart and be born in a state close to *Allah SWT* and of good character.

Sufi life thrives, and frustrated people than push them to return to God (not just in a fatalistic sense), but in a fundamental understanding, to unite with God as the Sufis teach. Sufi activities are seen in both existing and new madrasas. Under the leadership and authority of the Sufis, madrasas developed into *zawiyah-zawiya* to practice *riyadhah*, opening the way to return and unite with God<sup>26</sup>.

In addition, the inclusion of Sufism/*tarekat* studies in specific madrasas marked the formalization of Sufism/*tarekat*. Sufi works are included in the formal curriculum in madrasas that blend with the *halaqah-kehalaqah* and *zawiyah-zawiyah* Sufis, especially in India, where the works of al-Suhrawardi, Ibn Al-'Arabi, and finally the works of Jami' are taught. since the 8th century AH/14 AD. The academic curriculum in most Sufi centers, especially in Turkey, consists almost exclusively of Sufi books.

In addition, Azyumardi<sup>27</sup> quotes Al-Samhudi, a writer of History of Medina, who states that Sultan Ghiyats al-Din founded a madrasa in Medina in 814/1411, full of his *ribaths*. Al-Samhudi further noted that this madrasa was not the only one of the first in Medina. The Mamluk king Jauban Ata Bek built the Jaubaniyah Madrasa in the area between Dar al-Syibak and Al-Husn al-'Atiq in 724/1323. Several Mamluk kings, according to Al-Samhudi, founded madrasas, which are collectively known as *Asbrafiyah Madrasah*. The majority of these madrasas have *ribath*. The Al-Haram Mosque in Mecca and the Prophet's Mosque in Medina, as well as the madrasas mentioned above, are one of the Islamic educational institutions in *Haramayn*. The span of the 16th and 17th centuries also saw the growth of many *ribath* or *zawiya*.

## 2). Increasing social power through organization

In Indonesia, Sufism and *tarekat* were previously a political force. Sufism and *tarekat* play an essential role in improving the status of Islam in the state and society and the development of the broader communal environment. The following are some of these roles: 1) the part forming fac-

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<sup>26</sup> Zuhairini, dkk., *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam, Cetakan XIII* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2015), h. 111.

<sup>27</sup> Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII & XVIII* (Jakarta: Prenada Media Grup, 2014), 65.

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tors and procedures for the functioning of the state. 2) As a model of various lifestyles that encourage community and economic growth. 3) As a deterrent to European colonization.

In the political arena, Sufism and *tarekat* play a more significant role. According to Sartono Kartodirjo, tarekat had a vital role in the 19th century AD, eventually becoming the dominant revival group. Although the *tarekat* was a religious revival movement, the *tarekat* gradually became a religious-political force, even becoming the most effective tool for organizing religious activities and indoctrinating the ideals of revival.

Another benefit of Sufism organizations for advancing Islamic intellectuals, in general, is the increased social authority given by the tarekat institutions that were formed and still exist today. More vital tarekat institutions developed from the increase in structured Sufism institutions. The Tarek was able to establish and popularize cult traditions among the saints as part of the institutionalized '*Amali tasawuf*'. Through the silsilah *tarekat*, he performs *tawajjuh*, which means encounter, in which a person opens his heart to his *shaykh/murshid* and imagines his heart being showered with blessings from the *sheikh* who brought that heart before the Prophet Muhammad.

According to K. Ali and Bruinessen, two main causes led to the birth of the *tarekat*. The first is the influence of political dynamics. The Crusades were European Christian attacks against the western regions of the Islamic world, such as Palestine, Egypt, and Syria. There were eight catastrophic wars between AD 490/1096 and AD 656/1258. The Mongols invaded the eastern part of the Islamic world, quickly conquering every location they attacked. Second, the transformation of society is a dynamic factor. Each tarekat functions as a social network simultaneously, and *tarekat* membership creates several social relationships that can be used anytime. Especially for those just starting in the city, networking can help them find jobs, housing, and assistance whenever they are in trouble.

The following are some organized Sufi orders that are still developing as a form of contribution to Sufi institutions, precisely in the 12th century AD; this period was marked by changes in the life patterns of the Sufis, from individual patterns to institutional patterns, which eventually gave rise to exclusive Sufi groups and these are known as *tarekat*. The following are some prominent tarekat that became the intellectual form of Sufism institutions and until now still contribute to the advancement of Islamic intellectual activity in general; (1) The Qadiriyyah Order, its founder, 'Abd al-Qadir Jailani (d. 1166 AD), (2). Suhrawardiyah Order, this tarekat came from two descendants of Caliph Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, namely Dhiya al-Din Abu Najib Suhrawardi (d. 1168 AD), (3). The Khalwatiyyah Order, founded by Shaykh 'Umar al-Khalwati (d. 1398 AD), (4). In 60 | **International Journal of Islamic Education (IJIE)**, Vol. 1 No. 1 (January - June 2022)

the Rifa'iyah congregation, Rifa'iyah refers to the founder of this *tarekat*. This person is said to be part of the family of 'Abd al-Qadir Jailani, namely Ahmad Rifa'I (d. 1182 AD), (5). The Syadziliyah Order originated from Abu Hasan al-Syadzili (d. 1258 AD), (6). The Tijaniyah Order, attributed to Ahmad al-Tijani (d. 1815 AD), (7). The Naqshbandiyah Order was founded by Baha' al-Din al-Naqshbandin (d. 1389 AD), (8). The Maulawiyah Order, attributed to Jalal al-Din Rumi (d. 1237 AD), (9). The Chishtiyyah Order was founded by Mu'in al-Din Chishti (d. 1236 AD), (10). The Ku-brawiyyah Order was founded by Najm al-Din Kubra (d. 1221 AD), (11). The Ni'matullahi Order, a Persian order, was founded by Nur al-Din Shah Ni'mat-Allah Wali (d. 1431 AD), (12). The Sanusiyyah Order, a congregation from the African continent, was founded by Muhammad bin 'Ali al-Sanusi (d. 1859 AD), (13). The Syattariyah Order was founded by Shaykh 'Abd-Allah al-Syattar.

### 3). The regeneration of the Sufi tradition

The revival of the Sufi tradition also had a significant impact. Through various advances in Sufism thought, this contribution undoubtedly ensured the survival of a new generation of Sufi practices. The growth of traditional Sufism institutions that prioritize Sufism teachings continues to be developed in practical Sufism teachings, including all fields of Islamic education such as prayer, fasting, zakat, pilgrimage, jihad, and so on, is evidence of this regeneration.

The revival of the Sufi heritage that continues to emerge as evidence of the contribution of Sufism institutions to Islam in classical times has given rise to various Sufi practices that the Muslim community may approve of. This regeneration is in line with the increase in Sufi tradition institutions that continue to prioritize the teachings of Sufism, which continue to be developed in practical Sufism instructions, covering all aspects of Islamic education such as prayer, fasting, zakat, hajj, jihad, and so on.

The revival of the Sufi tradition can also be observed from the opinion of Azyumardi Azra about the Muhammadiyah paradigm regarding the regeneration of Sufism. He claimed that, despite not liking the Sufism paradigm, Muhammadiyah had to establish the method of preaching Sufism as the rebirth of Sufism. Sufis spread the tradition of wali worship by performing *tawajjuh*, which means encounter, in which a person offers his heart to his shaykh/murshid and imagines his heart being showered with blessings from the *sheikh* who brought that heart to the Prophet Muhammad. This can happen during a private meeting between the student and the murshid during the *bai'at* of the first meeting. While implementing the following practices, the *rabithah/murshid* technique has an inner connection with the supervisor as a prelude to remembrance.

They base this tradition on the fact that there is no prohibition in the al-Qur'an to honor pious people. Since no specific law in Islam stipulates this, public acknowledgment of a person is usually based on the privileges (*karamah*) shown by a *wali*, beloved of God. The great Sufis defended the idea of perfect equality between men and women regarding the level of "guardians of Allah." They included Rabi'ah al-Adawiyah (717-801), a female mystic from Basra who lived a majestic life. Rabi'ah became the foremost *wali* in Sunni hagiology after that<sup>28</sup>.

In the tarekat tradition, it is a general norm that if one wants to practice his teachings, he must first learn from his teacher. This procedure is known as *talqin*, or the instructor's warning to prospective students and is also known as *bai'at* as in other tarekat. The ability prospective students emphasize in front of their teachers to practice and carry out all virtues, especially tarekat practices, is also shown in the context of *talqin* or *bai'at*. The murshid is the person permitted to give the *talqin*, although it can also be someone else who has the permission of the *murshid*, such as a *talqin* representative.

4). Serves as an alternative approach to understanding and practicing Islam

Sufism also provides an alternative approach to understanding and practicing Islam and the three contributions listed above. As stated earlier, establishing Sufism institutions served as a channel for spreading Islam to countries conquered by Islam. People who seek to purify themselves can achieve their goals by following the Sufi path.

As an alternative approach, Sufism provides a preferred path for spiritual fulfillment in understanding and practicing Islam. Because Sufism invites people to know themselves and, ultimately, their God, this is what establishes the fact that Sufism can be a viable option for studying Islam.

The rise of Sufism in the United States is one such example. Sufism emerged in this country around the 1900s, thanks to scholars, writers, and artists who learned about Sufism through the orientalist movement. There are many examples of the influence of Sufism on Western figures. The presence of Sufism opened an alternative way for Westerners to seek a deeper understanding of Islam, resulting in a surge in the flow of Sufism at that time.

Furthermore, some Muslim immigrants in the United States joined the Sufi community to develop a more profound religiosity or see Sufism as an alternative to modernity. The *Naqshbandi* Order, the *Ni'matullahi* Order, the *Tijaniyah* Order, the *Qadiri* Order, and other *tarekat* organiza-

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<sup>28</sup> Philip K. Hitty, *Sejarah Ringkas Peradaban Arab Islam*, (Jakarta: Zaman, 2018), 102.

tions have established Sufi orders in the United States. This shows that the teachings of Sufism can be an alternative approach that continues to overgrow, not only in the Islamic world but in the Western world.

## Conclusion

Sufism institutions (*Ribath, Zawiyah, and Khanqah*) have emerged as institutions that contribute to the growth of Islamic educational institutions, especially in restoring the purity of soul and inner peace in Sufi teachings. Its teachings, curriculum, and methods encourage spiritual closeness to *Allah* Almighty, not just for individual purposes but for all purposes. Sufism institutions contribute to the intellectual growth of Islam in general by formalizing Sufism/*tarekat* as a separate scientific subject, increasing social power through an organization, reviving Sufi traditions, and serving as a distinct way of understanding and practicing Islam.

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