

# THE CONTRIBUTION OF SCHOLARS OF UZBEKISTAN TO THE SCIENTIFIC AND EDUCATIONAL STUDY OF SUFI TEACHINGS IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION

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## **Abstract**

This article highlights the research, lectures, works, and online activities of Shaykh Muhammad Sadiq Muhammad Yusuf focused on explaining the true essence of Sufi teachings.

**Keywords:** Shaykh Muhammad Sadiq Muhammad Yusuf, Sufism, tazkiyah (purification), spiritual upbringing, works, lectures, websites.

## **Introduction:**

In today's era of globalization, events are rapidly evolving, and centuries-old values, customs, and traditions are undergoing transformation. The modern world demands deep knowledge and dedication from individuals in order to preserve their identity, essence, and ethics.

Although for thousands of years Eastern nations have studied human perfection and spiritual matters, achieving significant practical outcomes, the intensity of globalization today is severely impacting the foundations of moral values. Unfortunately, this issue has had a particularly negative effect on our national mentality and the upbringing of our youth.

Sufi teachings, which represent the highest form of Islamic enlightenment, are a vast spiritual heritage passed down to us from our ancestors. Relying on this heritage is of great importance in preventing today's moral crises.

However, the current activities of global and local Sufi centers are insufficiently coordinated and lack integration among regions and states. Additionally, the difficulty of controlling fake Sufi orders that spread misleading materials online has become a serious problem. Modern technology has given such pseudo-orders a major advantage in spreading their propaganda.

In response to these challenges, various scientific and educational efforts were undertaken under the leadership of the late Shaykh Muhammad Sadiq Muhammad Yusuf (may Allah have mercy on him), aimed at conveying the true teachings of Sufism to the people and countering false innovations and superstitions spread in the name of Sufism.

### Main part

After Uzbekistan gained independence, the people's interest in learning about Islam increased significantly. Despite the country's long-standing reputation as a land of scholars and its rich Islamic scholarly heritage, the initial years of independence were marked by challenges in translating, interpreting, and publishing classical Islamic texts. This was due to more than a century of colonial rule that had distanced the nation from its religion and scholars, and deeply instilled communist ideology in the public consciousness.

During this difficult transitional period, Shaykh Muhammad Sadiq Muhammad Yusuf (may Allah have mercy on him), took upon himself the heavy responsibility of addressing the religious needs of the people. A distinguished scholar, exegete, hadith expert, jurist, spiritual guide, and public figure, Shaykh Muhammad Sadiq was a prominent representative of the Islamic world in his time. He served as a deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, head of the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Central Asia and Kazakhstan, and was a member of many international Islamic organizations, including the World Sufi Association. His scholarly work and lectures played a major role in countering fragmentation within the Sufi world.

Throughout his religious and educational career, he authored numerous works on Islamic sciences that continue to be widely read today. His mission was to convey Islamic principles, ethics, and teachings to the public using reliable sources and proofs. Initially, he focused on foundational Islamic texts and sermons, but as the public's religious literacy and interest grew, he began presenting works and lectures on Sufi teachings as well.

In his book *"An Understanding of Sufism"*, Shaykh Muhammad Sadiq explores theoretical aspects of Sufism and provides analysis of the developments, disputes, and discussions among Sufi communities both globally and locally. Several volumes of his *"Hadith and Life"* series are also dedicated to spiritual topics:

- Volume 3: *Book of Intention, Sincerity, and Knowledge*
- Volume 34: *Book of Goodness and Morality*
- Volume 35: *Book of Remembrance, Supplications, Forgiveness, and Repentance*
- Volume 36: *Book of Zuhd and Heart Softening*
- Volume 37: *Book of Manners*

In 2014, Shaykh Muhammad Sadiq published a comprehensive three-volume work titled *"Spiritual Upbringing"*, consisting of 1,440 pages:

- Volume 1: *Purification*
- Volume 2: *Revival*
- Volume 3: *Character Formation*

These books were based on 86 authentic sources.

In *Purification*, he elaborates on the necessity of continuous spiritual cleansing and discusses harmful traits and how to eliminate them.

In *Revival*, he outlines how to develop a morally upright Muslim personality, stating:

"The second part of 'Spiritual Upbringing' is titled 'Revival'. It discusses how to restore a purified soul and achieve spiritual stations, with reliance on Allah and our best efforts."

In *Character Formation*, the final volume, he continues the previous discussions and emphasizes the need for focused reflection, advising readers not to mix its meanings with unrelated matters.

Another notable contribution is Shaykh Muhammad Sadiq's five-volume commentary titled "*Explanations of the Noble Wisdoms*", based on *Hikam al-Ata'iyya* by the Egyptian Sufi master Ibn Ata'illah al-Iskandari (1260–1309). Published in 2014, this work received praise from scholars, readers, and followers of Sufi traditions.

Even after his passing, some of his unpublished works have been compiled and presented to the public by his family and students. For example, the 2018 publication "*Naqshbandiyya: Duties and Remembrances*" concisely presents key elements of the Naqshbandi path, including spiritual lineage, practices, etiquettes, and daily recitations.

### **Shaykh's Use of Technology & Online Outreach**

Shaykh Muhammad Sadiq Muhammad Yusuf (may Allah have mercy on him) also gave special attention to effectively utilizing modern technological advancements. With noble goals in mind—such as spreading Islamic knowledge through the internet, informing the public about developments in the Muslim world, warning against destructive movements, refuting their doubts and claims, and answering Islamic legal questions - he founded the website **[www.islom.uz](http://www.islom.uz)**.

Today, this website has grown into a large platform encompassing nearly 20 independent sub-sites focused on different areas of Islamic knowledge, including:

- [www.quran.uz](http://www.quran.uz)
- [www.islam.uz](http://www.islam.uz)
- [www.info.islam.uz](http://www.info.islam.uz)
- [www.muslimaat.uz](http://www.muslimaat.uz)
- [www.arabic.uz](http://www.arabic.uz)
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- [www.e-tarix.uz](http://www.e-tarix.uz)
- [www.fiqh.uz](http://www.fiqh.uz)
- [www.masjid.uz](http://www.masjid.uz)
- [www.hilolnashr.uz](http://www.hilolnashr.uz)

These platforms host a wide range of analytical content on Sufi teachings and offer responses to questions submitted by users from Uzbekistan and abroad. Specifically, **[www.tazkiya.uz](http://www.tazkiya.uz)** is dedicated entirely to Sufi-related matters. Based on Shaykh's books "*Spiritual Upbringing*" and "*An Understanding of Sufism*," over 320 lessons have been published on **[www.islom.uz](http://www.islom.uz)** for educational purposes.

In recognition of his lifelong contributions to Islam, Shaykh Muhammad Sadiq Muhammad Yusuf was posthumously awarded the “**Highest Order of Imam Bukhari**” by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2023.

The presidential decree honoring the Shaykh stated:

“For his multifaceted work and invaluable scholarly legacy in enriching Islamic thought and culture, spreading the great humanistic ideals of our sacred religion to the people, researching the precious works of our renowned scholars, promoting them globally, establishing interfaith dialogue on an international scale, strengthening harmony among nations and ethnicities, ensuring a stable socio-spiritual environment, training highly qualified specialists in religious and secular sciences, and educating the younger generation with love for their homeland and respect for both national and universal values...”

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the contributions of Shaykh Muhammad Sadiq Muhammad Yusuf (may Allah have mercy on him) to conveying the true ideas of Sufi teachings and nurturing Muslims with profound spiritual and ethical values must be specially acknowledged.

Despite the rise and decline of interest in Sufi teachings over time, attention to these values is steadily increasing today. In a world suffering from moral degradation, “**struggle ignorance through enlightenment**” remains the most effective path toward preserving human values and raising a generation grounded in sound beliefs.

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