



Clip: Whirling Dervishes



Sufism

Origins and Historical Development



Sufism - The Inner Path

- shari'ah
 - outward path
- tariqah
 - inward path
- mutually complimentary



Sufism's Origins (8th c.)

- rapid expansion of Muslim Empire
 - power struggles, wealth, worldliness
- early Sufis were ascetics (*zuhhad*)
 - garment of coarse wool (*suf*)
- began in areas of mixed populations
 - e.g., Kufah and Basrah (Iraq)



Sources of Sufism

- influenced by Christian/Buddhist monks
- **HOWEVER,**
 - primary sources: Qur'an and Sunnah



Clip: Prophet's Night Journey



Decline and Revival

- aided spread of Islam
 - tolerant outlook
- incorporation of local customs
 - critique of Sufi syncretism (18th/19th c.)
- great capacity for self-reform
 - present revival around the world



Sufism is...

- universal way open to all Muslims
- not a sect but a devotional practice
- cuts across all legal/theological schools



Assignment

- **Source Material: 6.6 Rumi (pp.143-146)**
 - Read the examples of Rumi’s mystical poetry. Choose one of his poems and write an interpretation. In your interpretation explain what makes this poem an expression of Islamic mysticism (Sufism).