



## **SOCIO-CULTURAL DYNAMICS OF MURIDIZM MOVEMENT IN CAUCASIA (Kafkasya’da Müridizim Hareketinin Sosyo-Kültürel Dinamikleri)**

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### **Özet**

Tasavvuf üzerine çok şey yazılmasına rağmen Kafkasya’daki Müridizim hareketinin dinamiklerini Nakşibendilikle ilişkilendirerek değerlendiren sınırlı sayıda kaynak ve yazılar bulunmaktadır. Bu yüzden, bu çalışma bu tür bir eksikliği Müridizim hareketinin dinamiklerini analiz ederek telafi etmeyi amaçlar. Bu tür bir amaç, bir taraftan, Kafkasya’nın jeopolitik, sosyo-kültürel yapısının, diğer taraftan ise dini, özellikle Müridizim hareketinin Sufi zemininin ortaya konulmasını gerektirir. İslam’ın tüm Kafkas kabileleri tarafından kabulü çok geç bir dönemde olmasına rağmen, On sekizinci yüzyılda, Gürcüler ve Ermeniler dışındaki tüm yerli kabileler Müslüman olmuşlardır. Hareketin ilk lideri İmam Mansur’dan Şeyh Şamile değin, Nakşibendilik bölgede tüm Kafkas kabilelerinin Rus orduları ve işgallerine karşı İslam ve Müridizim bayrağı altında birleşmeleri ve örgütlenmelerinde çok etkili ve başarılı olmuştur. Bu çalışmada, birincil tezim, Müridizim hareketinin başarısının ardında en azından Nakşibendî Sufizmi ve kabile “asabiye”si gibi birbiri içine geçmiş ve Rus imparatorluğuna karşı tüm Kafkas kabilelerinin birliğini sağlayan iki temel faktörün bulunduğudır. Dolayısıyla, bu çalışma bu iki boyutun bir arada değerlendirilmesini amaçlar.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kafkasya, Müridizim, Nakşibendilik, Kabilecilik, Şamil

### **Abstract**

Although much has been written on Sufism, there are only some sources or writings evaluating the dynamics of Muridizm movement in Circassia in relation with Naqshbandi Sufism. Therefore, the aim of this

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study is to compensate such a shortage through analyzing the dynamics of Muridizm movement. Such an aim requires elucidating, on the one hand, the geopolitical, socio-cultural structure of Circassia, on the other hand, the religious and more particularly, the Sufi grounds of Muridizm movement. Although the acceptance of Islam by all the Circassian tribes was very late, all native tribes except Georgians and Armenians had become Muslim during the eighteenth century. From the early leader of the movement, namely Imam Mansur, to Sheik Shamil, Naqshbandism was very successful and effective in that region in terms of organizing as well as uniting all Circassian tribes under the banner of Islam and Muridizm against the Russian troops and their invasions. In this study, my principal thesis is as follows: there were at least two main factors behind the success of the Muridizm movement; they were Naqshbandi Sufism and tribal “*asabiyya*”. Both amalgamated and brought unity for all Circassian tribes to struggle against Russian Empire. Consequently, this study aims to evaluate these two dimensions in collaboration with each other.

**Key Words:** Caucasia, Muridizm, Naqshbandiyya, Tribalism, Shamil.

## **GEOPOLITICAL AND THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF CAUCASIA**

The mountain region, lying between the Black Sea and Caspian Sea is named as Caucasia. As Nart (1991: 81) points out that “this country with its mountains is winged with snow, valleys and gorges resounding joyfully to the sound of rushing rivers...” Although it seemed to be a natural castle, throughout the history, all the migrating tribes of Asia and East in order to reach Europe and West had to pass from that region. This region, from the earlier period of time, because of its natural peculiarities, was difficult to control; even so, many nations and powers such as Greeks, Roman Empire, Caspians, Mongols, Turks and Arabs tried to invade, yet neither of them had been successful in terms of settling a complete control over the region.

As Tarran (1991:103) illustrates, “long before Christ, the Greek colonies on the shores of the Black Sea had introduced the Hellenic civilization into the Caucasus, and naturally Christianity made its way through them.” Moreover, the reason of such invasions were the natural consequence of this region’s geopolitical importance, since if any power holds its control over this region then it gains an opportunity of both control and invasion of other adjacent geopolitical regions such as Anatolia and Persia. As Bilge (2005) illustrates, since the 16th century both Ottoman Empire and Russia have tried to control the region because of its geopolitical importance. Therefore, during the Muridizm rebellion, not only Russian

Empire but also other European powers, especially Great Britain, Italy and Germany dealt with the region and the war between Russia and Caucasians. Since the sixteenth century, Ottoman, Iranian and Russian armies had tried to attain the control of the region. Thus, all the battles came about in the region since the sixteenth century happened among these three empires. Despite the fact that all these powers periodically had succeeded the control of the Circassia, they failed to spread their culture and religions among the native tribes of this region. Tarran (1991:104) explains this in such a way that:

As a matter of fact, most of these peoples had never really been completely Christianized because of extremely difficult geographical conditions which isolated communities and prevented the infiltration of the external elements. The same condition made complete Islamization of Caucasus impossible.

At the same time, other empires such as the Ottoman, Russian and Iranian always perceived these kinds of extreme difficult geographical conditions as an important advantage after holding a military and political control over the region. As historical records illustrates, after Russia had accomplished a complete hegemony in this region, then, it had superiority and control not only in Circassia but also in other parts of its eastern and western borders.

In relation to the ethnic structure of the Circassia, it can be stated that it is a transitory region among Asia, Europe and Middle East throughout the history. Then, many different ethnic groups had settled to this mountainous area. In addition to its native settlers, many different human groups invaded and settled into Caucasia. This resulted in a mosaic ethnic structure. In relation to this multi-ethnic structure of the region, Bennigsen (1985: 4) states that:

The Caucasus represents an extraordinary mosaic of races, languages, and has only one unified bond, it is the Islam religion. Muslims in this area belong as you know to three completely different linguistic families. Six million are Turks, Azeris and Northern Caucasus, the Kumik, the Nugay, the Balkar and the Karaçay represents six million in all; Iranians, Ossetians, Kurds, Talişian, Tats, around one million and three million of Ibero Caucasians, Dagistani, Çeçen, Ingus, Kabertey, Çerkez, Abhaze, etc.

Besides, along with the Muslim ethnic groups, there was also Christian Population, living "...in the central sections (Ossetes, Svans, Khousurs, Pshavs, Tush, Georgians..." (Henze 1983: 46) In fact, up to the nineteenth century, Caucasia lacked any religious or socio-political unity as it was filled with tribes of different ethnic origins. Although there were some Muslim groups in some parts of Caucasia, the broad section of the area, despite

Christians missionary efforts, believed in animism, shamanism and polytheism (Tavkul 1993: 238). As a result of the region's natural difficulties, as Tarran evinced, "any one of the monotheistic religions of Caucasia, instead only the sea side of Black sea and some north Western tribes of Caucasia were become Christianized." (Tarran 1991: 103) Despite this polytheistic religious structure of Caucasia, there was no any kind of unified societal structure due to its tribal differentiation. There were continuous struggles among the native tribes; most of the time, each tribe's principal aim was to invade and plunder other tribe's villages, goods, women, etc. Moreover, there were a hierarchical structure among members of each tribe; individuals were discriminated into three main groups: Pşı (prince), Özden (notables) and kuls (slaves) despite each clan's religious unity (Longworth 1996:132). Most of the time the slaves of each tribes were the members of other tribes and also there was no any marriage relation between the members of these two groups; each özden families had all kind of relations from their strata. In addition, similar to other tribal structures, among the notables and free members of each tribe, the most important issue was nobility and their personal ability in using sword and riding horses. Consequently, there existed a tribal solidarity among the members of each tribes and notables (Tavkul 1993: 72-74). In addition to this, as a corollary of the natural conditions and difficulties, each tribe's members were dependent to one another. As a result of these social factors, there were both the strong sentiment of solidarity and dependence among the members of each tribe, which is, in fact, corresponding to Ibn Khaldun's writings on the nature of tribal "asabiyya."

The same religious and societal structures continued until the sixteenth century. However, after the existence of Russian troops in terms of the invasion in Caucasia a new period started. For each tribe, in addition to their native Caucasian enemies, a new foreign threat came out. Consequently, the tribes of north Western Circassia had to make preparation against Russian invasion which compelled them to have co-operations with the Ottomans, seems to be one of the main important reasons of their acceptance of Islam. Since, unlike Russians, Ottomans were Muslims and they could attain help from Ottomans if they accept Islam as a religion against the Christian Russians. In fact, the existence of Islam among some Circassian tribes corresponds to the beginning of Russian invasion, for instance, Kaberteys accepted Islam during this time. Although there was no any complete unity among the all-Circassian tribes, in a short span of time, after the invasion of Russian troops in the region agreement and solidarity among them took place. Moreover, the struggle between native tribes and the invasion of Russian troops, both of which brought an atmosphere for the liveliness of the spirit of "tribal asabiyya" which is the one of the most important dynamics of Sheik Shamil's struggle for the independence of Caucasia.

## THE HISTORY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF NAQHBANDIYYA IN CAUCASIA

Although the first Muslim troops' attacks to the region, especially to Daghistan, had started during the life of the third Khaliph, Omar Ibn al-Hattab, the spread of Islam in the Central Circassia was very slow and late (Gökçe 1979: 19).

Daghestan became a definite Muslim territory only in the 10th century but it is only in the late 16th century that the central Caucasus, the Kabardey area became Muslim. The Çecen... becoming Muslim only in the 18th century and some other Çerkez tribes and the Inqush were converted to Islam only in the second half of the 19th century (Bennigsen 1985: 4).

What is the reality about the Islamization of northern and central Circassia is that: Although the first existence of Islam in Circassia, mostly in the Daghistani region goes back to the invasion of Arab Troops in the eight century, its spread into the other regions of Circassia seems to be a very late phenomenon. One of the main reasons of the late Islamization of the central Circassian tribes and others is that: similar to Christianity, as it was pointed out by referring to Tarran, the extremely difficult geographical conditions of the region, made the complete Islamization of the Circassia impossible (Tarran 1991:104). In spite of these geographical difficulties the Sufi sects, especially the Naqshbandi and Qadiri orders had been successful in terms of the Islamization of whole Circassia, because in the late 19th century, Caucasia completely transformed into a Sunni region. According to Algar (1990: 36),

The Naqshbandi order appears first to have reached Daghistan in the twelfth/eighteenth century from Black Sea region of eastern Anatolia, but a more vigorous implantation of the order came several decades later when a number of Daghistani murids of Shaik Ismail of Amasya, a Khalipha of Mavlana Khalid, commenced activity among the Caucasian mountaineers.

The first leader of Muridizm movement in Caucasia was a Chechen leader, Imam Mansoor. In some historical sources there were contradictory explanations about his origin and nationality; for instance, Nart writes that "Both the articles and the novel are full of the crassest geographical and chronological errors. The Turkish historians and publicist Kazem Bek held that Mansoor originated from Bukhara...any objective observer looking at Manoor's portrait can easily spot the falsity of such claims." (Nart 1991:83) Yet, for both Nart and Bice his origin is Chechen (Nart 1991:83; Bice 1990:15) On the other hand, his Naqshbandi origin is far more interesting that his nation; even though he was considered in all sources as the member of Naqshbandiyya, his chain (silsila) and his master's (murshid's) name is unknown. Moreover, as Bice illustrates, "without any real ground and

support some writers thought that Haji Muhammad Bukhari was the Murshid of Mansoor, who came to Daghistan to preach Islam in Caucasia” (Bice 1990: 15). However, Algar (1990: 35) initiates the Naqshbandi leaders of Daghistan with the name of Gazi Muhammad. Yet, the historical chain of the movement could be elucidated in such a way: The first Naqshbandi leader of the Muridizm movement was Imam Mansoor, imprisoned in Scklisselburg Castle where he died of hunger and homesickness on 13 April 1794 (Nart 1991:91), and the second leader of the movement was Gazi Muhammad (also known as Qadi Mulla) was killed by the Russians in 1832, and his immediate successor, Hamza Bey, became the third leader, followed him into martyrdom only two years later, and the last leader of the movement was Sheik Shamil, who was “able to resist the Russians for a quarter of a century, finally surrendering to superior might in August 1859” (Algar 1990:36). Throughout this movement, together with the aim of independence both Sharia and Naqshbandi Sufism had spread in all Caucasian mountains together; as a result of its historical Sufi background this Muridizm movement and each leaders of it had reflected their Mujaddidi and Khaldi character.

The first leader of the movement, Imam Mansoor was born in 1732 into an influential Chechen family. He began his religious and Qur’anic education in his early childhood. Then, at the age of twenty he left his home to complete his religious education in Daghistan, which was, at that time, a famous center of Islamic education and studies. After a few years later, having mastered all the subjects that were necessary to become a Mullah, he returned to his village, where he started to preach both religion and Sufism and in a short time his reputation had spread among the Caucasian tribes. During this time, the Russian Troops invaded some northern parts of the Caucasia. Against these invasions he had tried to unite all native tribes and for this objective he published in 1783 a declaration that was inviting all Circassian Muslims into a Holly War (Jihad) against the Russian troops (Bice 1990:15-16). As Nart states “in that declaration Mansoor wrote that “...through his messenger Muhammad, God had shown how human beings must live and for this reason he gave them the Qur’an, He told them that if they did not obey his words by correcting their ways, living according to Qur’an and unity in a battle against Russian dominance, then God would punish them...” (Nart 1991:86). The response to his invitation to participate Holly War came not only from the native Caucasians but also from other Muslim communities; for instance, Sayyid Khalil Efendi who was the ulema of Antep, went to Caucasia with his two hundred murids to participate his Jihad against the Russia (Bice 1990: 16). As Nart illustrates, in a short time,

...the people gathered in Aldy and in 1785 they elected Mansur as their Imam, that is spiritual and worldly leader of Caucasus. Mansur’s influence was so great that almost all the powerfull Khan’s and beks of Daghistan as

well as the princes (Pshi) of the Adyghe people (Atazhukin, Adzhi Giray Yedizh, etc) sent messengers with assurances of their readiness to help and even to subordinate themselves to Mansur in the struggle against Russia (Nart 1991:86)

The aim of Mansoor's plan was to unite all Caucasian mountain people into one great family and to persuade them to fight against Russians. As a first initiating movement he declared a nation wide three-day-fast for all Muslims, then began a tour of the villages with his murids and was accompanied by religious zikr. Up to 1786, Mansoor's power had achieved great success and defeated Russian armies from the central Caucasia. A war occurred between the Ottoman and Russian Empires in 1787 during the Holly War of Mansoor in which there was a mutual military concession between Ottoman troops and Mansoor's movement. On the June 21st, 1790, a Russian commander, Cudowich, attacked the castle of Anapa, an Ottoman military location, in which Mansoor was trying to defend Ottoman soldiers, but he was captivated and one year after his captivity he died in 1794 (ibid. 91).

After the death of Mansoor, while Muridizm in Caucasian Mountains continued its existence by the efforts of local sheiks, its active characteristics re-emerged after forty years by the organization of Ghazi Muhammad who became the second leader of the movement. Similar to Mansoor, he was educated in the religious schools (madrasas) of Daghistan and then became one of the great ulema of the region. Since he was aware of the achievements of Mansoor's struggle against the Russian powers in Caucasia, he believed that the defeat of the Russian troops from all Caucasia could be achieved through uniting all Caucasians under the banner of Holly War Therefore, to revive Muridizm again, he dedicated himself to one of the most notorious Naqshbandi Sheik, Ismail-I Kurdemiri who was the Khaliph of Khalid-i Baghdadi. After he had completed his Sufi education in Şirvan, he returned to Daghistan in 1823 and then began to his preaching among the people and the tribes of his region. At the same time, he was influenced from the Shaik Cemaleddin al-Kumuki who was father-in-law of Sheik Shamil and the writer of Al Adab-ul Merziyya Tarikat-I Naqshbandiyya, considered as one of the main handbook of Naqshbandism. (Bice 1990:17-18). After these years, the independence movement of Caucasia was named as Ghazavat. In order to prepare individuals to their Ghazavat-battles, he continued his long religious preaching among the mountain tribes and then he himself through sending messages invited all the leaders of great tribes to have consultation with them, in which Sheik Saybani the Khan of Avar, Mulla Hajı Yusuf, the Khan of Tarkho, Mulla Muhammed, the Khan of Ghazi Kumuk and other Khans were present and all of them elected Ghazi Muhammad as their political and religious leader. During this election, besides the tribal leaders, there were great religious scholars and personalities such as Sheik Shamil,

and then the leaders of each tribe as well as mullas spread to all parts of the Caucasia to gather people under the banner of Ghazavat. After a long preparation for the Holly War, Imam Ghazi Muhammad with the approval of his Murshid Ismail-i Kürdemir-i, invited all the members of Caucasia to Holly War against Russia by publishing a declaration of independence in 1828. However, three years after his leadership, he died in a combat in his birthplace, Gimri.

After the martyrdom of Imam Ghazi Muhammad, one of his murids, Imam Hamzat Bek was elected as the new leader of the movement, but he did not live as long as the preceding imams anyway. His mountain highlander brothers assassinated him as a result of their blood feud in the same year of the death of his Murshid.

After the death of Imam Hamzat Bek, Sheik Shamil was chosen as the Sheik and the leader of the movement. He was born in 1795 in Gimri Avul as the member of an Avar Tribe. Since his earlier ages he had been known as the most famous and the respected murid of Ismail-i Kurdemiri. During his religious and Sufi education, three important Sufi portraits had decisive effects; these masters were Sheik Muhammad Yarađi, Sheik Ghazi Kumiki who later became his father-in-law and Sheik Ismail-i Kürdemiri, all of whom were the devoted to Khalip of Khalidi Baghdadi (Bice 1990: 19). When Shamil came to the age of twenty-nine, he was elected as the leader of the movement. Despite his ethnic and tribal difference from other Caucasian tribes, the religious values were crucial in terms of his voluntary acceptance of the leader of Northern Caucasia. Shamil gathered a council in 1835, where, as a result of their common decision, the members proclaimed and initiated a fight against the Khans of that region, cooperated with Russia. One of the reasons of people's support to Shamil's movement could be result of his opposition to these Khans who made alliance with Russia. In the beginning, the first and the main followers of his movement were Chechens, Daghistanians and some other northeastern tribes. Through his success in the wars against Russian troops, he tried to spread his movement into other regions of Caucasia, mostly to northwest and central Caucasia, yet the opposition of some native feudal notables prevented his advance. For all the oppositional efforts of these notables, in a short period, his followers had even constituted a strong unity under the name of "national Salvation Assembly" in Sapsig region in 1839, in which they announced that the region between Black and Caspian Sea is the natural motherlands of a single, living nation and decided to initiate a Holly war against Russia until the exile of foreign troops from all parts of the Caucasia (Bice 1990:21). Despite the fact that Muridizm had gained a strong adherence in all parts of Caucasia, only some Christian tribes such as Ossetes, Georgians and some native notables had established intimate relation with Russian powers in Caucasia. During his imamate sheik Shamil had sent many appointed representatives



who were also his murids (naibs) to all parts of Caucasia. Yet, these representatives in the western region of Caucasia never became successful in terms of spreading Muridizm, the reason of which could be the late Islamization of the region, especially during the eighteenth century.

At his earlier years of Imamate, Shamil's naibs (murids) had great victories against Russian troops; however, subsequently, as a result of inadequate aids from the Ottomans, his movement lost its previous strength and power. Indeed, Shamil, by himself, wrote many letters to both Ottoman Sultan, namely Abdulaziz (Morin 1985:1-3) and Muhammad Shah of Iran (Gammer 1991: 173). However, neither of them brought up adequate and enough contribution to Shamil's movement.

The increase of the number of Russian soldiers in the central Caucasia after 1857 resulted in the great success of Russian armies in the battles against Shamil's murids. As a consequence of the success of Russian powers many local and the strategic parts of the Caucasian mountains were became subjects to the Russian control. Especially, after the occupation of Vedona in 1859 by Russian troops and the submission of Shamil on the September 6th, 1859, the Muridizm movement came to an end in North-West Caucasia, but other Sufi branches, especially Qadiriyya continued in both Daghistan and Chechnya (Bennigsen 1988: 89).

#### **THE DYNAMICS AND THE CHARECTERISTICS OF THE MURIDIZM MOVEMENT IN CAUCASIA**

In order to understand the main dynamics of Muridizm movement, which was initiated by Mansur in 1783 and, ended in 1864, after the captivity of Shamil, two crucial factors, namely the tribal structure of Caucasia and the Sufi tradition shaping the main bases of Muridizm movement were important. As a result of the collaboration of these two factors Muridizm movement had continued in the region at least one century. Therefore, in this part, the dynamics of Muridizm movement and its leaders will be evaluated in reference to the main peculiarities of Naqshbandism.

Although Naqshbandi Sufism came to eastern Caucasia through the zeal of Sheik Ismail Kürdemiri, its first Naqshbandi leader was Mansur whose definite Sufic chain and Murshid were unknown. While all the leaders of Muridizm after the Mansur were from the Khalidi origin and reflecting the peculiarities of this Naqshbandi tradition, in terms of their understanding of religion, Sufism, etc., there were not any difference between Mansur and the following leaders of the movement. Since, they had similar ground and bases in terms of the main peculiarities of all different branches of Naqshbandism throughout the history.

The Naqshbandiyya order was founded by Baha' al-Din Naqshband, who was born in a village near Bukhara in 1317, spent most of his life in that

region and died there in 1389. In fact, he did not found the order himself. As Hourani mentions, for the members of the order the different phases of the order was marked by the names of its leading figures. From Abu Bakr al-Siddiq to Abu Yazid Tayfur al-Bistami it was named as “Sıddıqiyya”; from al-Bistami to Abd al- Khaliq al-Ghujduvani, the “Tayfuriyya”; From Ghujduvani to Baha al-Din Naqshband, the “Khojaganiyya”; from Naqshband to Ahmad al-Sırhindi, the “Naqshbandiyya”; from Sırhindi to Khalid-i al- Baghdadi, the “Mujaddidiyya”; and after Sheik Khalid-i al-Baghdadi, the “Khalidiyya” (Hourani 1994: 77). Moreover, this Sufi tradition has some important principles that were set up by Ghujduvani (d. 1220) as eight principles, made it distinct from other Sufi traditions. These eight principles, as stated by Kadri (1994:80-87) are as follows:

Hush dar dam means “Awareness in breathing.”

Nazar bar Qadam means “Watching over one’s steps.”

Safar dar Watan means “Internal mystical Journey.”

Khalwat dar anjuman means “Solitude in the Crowd.”

Yad Kard means “Recollection.”

Baz gard means, “Restraining ones though.”

Nigah dasht means, “To watch ones thought.”

Yad Dasht means “Concentration upon God.”

In the history of Sufism, the Sufi traditions were divided into two main groups according to their way of “zıkr”, open and hidden/silent “zıkr.” The Naqshbandiyya is belonging to “hafi” hidden/silent “zıkr” tradition. Moreover, one of the other distinguishing features of the Naqshbandiyya is their doctrinal emphasis and attitude toward both Sharia and the traditions of the prophet. To illustrate their strict adherence to the traditions of the Prophet the book of the “Adab” that has been one of the primary sources of Naqshbandiyya, can be a good example. It was stated in the book “True Sufism is submission to God’s Book and the imitation of the sunna of His messenger; it is reliving, by inner state and outer deep, the auspicious age of the Messenger and his companions; it is the very essence of Islam” (Algar 1976: 123). In addition to their strict adherence to Sharia and Prophet’s traditions they, as Algar (1990: 15) mentions, “acted in various places as a barrier against the diffusion of antinomian sufism and marginal cults, such as Baktashism in Bosnia and Ahl-i Haqq in Kurdistan.” Moreover, they brought opposition to such practices such as listening to music and songs, dancing, ecstasy, and even the celebration of the Prophet’s birth day, all of which were conceived as, in the writings of the Sırhindi, illicit innovations because

these activities had not been practiced during the life of the prophet (Haar 1990: 85). Besides, despite earlier Naqshbandi leaders' great respects to Ibn Arabi's doctrine, Wahdat al-Wujud, Imam Rabbani criticized his doctrine and suggested the idea of Wahdat ash-Suhud in place of Wahdat al-Wujud. In relation to Imam Rabbani's opposition to Ibn Arabi's theory of unity, Schimmel states that "Ahmad Sirhindi has been praised primarily as the restorer of the classical theology of "Wahdat ash-Suhud," "Unity of vision," or "testimonial monism," as opposed to the "degenerate" – as the orthodox would call it – system of "Wahdat al-Wujud"" (Schimmel 1975: 368). As Algar (1990: 22) argues, Imam Rabbani even conceived in his book, *Maktubat*, the strict obedience to both Sunna and Sharia as the only way of realizing the spiritual development. Also, unlike to other Sufi traditions, he "makes of the tariqa a more servant of the Sharia which is sometimes compete and self sufficient, resisting division into husk and kernel." Like Imam-ı Rabbani, Khalid-i Baghdadi brought new dimensions to the tariqa and stressed the centrality of both Sharia and traditions of the Prophet for the spiritual realization and advancement. As a result of Baghdadi's insistence on both Sharia and traditions of the Prophet, during his life, he had tried to unite both "madrasas" and "tekkes" under the same roof. Thus, too many "madrasas" were established in the Middle East, in particular, in northern-Iraq and most of the his disciples had education in the areas of both Sharia and Sufism in these newly established religious schools. However, this unity between "madrasa" and "tekke", could not be attributable only to Khalidiyya branch of Naqshbandiyya since in the history of Naqshbandiyya, before and after Baghdadi there were many great religious scholars, for instance, as Algar (1990:15) mentions, "Sayyid Sharif Jurjani (d.816/ 1413), Abd al-Hakim Saalkoti (d.1067/1657), Abd al-Ghani an-Nablusi (d.1143/1731), Ibn Abidin (d.1270/1836) and Shihab ad-Din al-Alusi (d.1270/1854)" were the most famous ulema of their times.

Following their Naqshbandi tradition, the leaders of the Muridizm movement tried to "suppress non-Islamic customary law and to substitute for it and integral application of the Sharia, and to resist the extension of Russian rule into Daghistan." (Algar 1990: 36) Since the beginning of the Muridizm movement, the leaders had brought great insistence on the unity of Sharia and Sufism; they never considered any distinction between each of them, instead, as Henze pointed out "for the Sheik Shamil Islam is not a static belief system; however, it is the both the source of dynamism, renovation, improvement and the source of life and leadership. For Shamil, religion and politics are basic, inseparable elements of Islam." (Henze 1985:8) During this movement Naqshbandis were trying to replace the adap (the customary law) in all Caucasia by the ordinances of the Sharia. According to Gökçe (1979: 121) the reason of Russians' disgust with the Muridizm movement was a resulted of the establishment of the Sufi orders

(tariqa), based on oneness of religion, forcing the Caucasians to have one and the same action against the Russian powers. There can be many reasons of these movements' leaders' insistence on the Sharia and Sufism, through which we can bring adequate explanations.

Before explaining their insistence on Sharia we have to elucidate one of the main functions of Sufi organizations during the Western invasion of the Muslim territories. At the time of "European colonial expansion ... the onset of infidel rule presented an even greater threat and intrusion to believers within the ummah (the Muslim Community). The Sufi brotherhoods and other revivalist movements were more likely than the ulema to respond to the Qur'anic duty of either emigrating to Muslim territory or waging Jihad (Holly War) in order to return the lost territory to dar al-Islam (the sphere of Islam)." (Green 1976:217)

One of the main reasons of their insistence on the Sharia is that in the Sufi tradition, mostly in the Naqshbandiyya, if they were struggling for the independence of their society they emphasized the Sharia in such a way that they could create a speech and action ground by which they can invite and unite all the Muslims under the same flag. As Jersild (1995: 206) pointed out "Both (Algeria and Northern Caucasia) were on the distant fringes of the Ottoman Empire, and were subject at an early date to pressure from expanding Christian powers." Secondly, except Daghestan region, all other parts of the Caucasia became Muslim after the eighteenth century, which corresponded to the active existence of the Muridizm movement. In addition, the spread of Islam from Daghestan to these regions was maintained through the religious activities of that movement. Through the Islamization of both central and western Caucasia, the appointed caliphs of Sheik Shamil, as in the case of Naib Muhammad Emin, to teach the people the importance of the obedience to both Sharia and the Jihad for their freedom and independence (Bice 1990: 22).

Naqshbandi Sufism has existed in the Daghestan through the studies of Sheik Ismail-i Kürdemiri who was the khaliph-successor of al-Baghdadi (Memiş 2000:164-165). Therefore, Muridizm movements in this region reflecting the main characteristics of Khalidi branch of Naqshbandiyya, the leaders of the movement like Khalidi Baghdadi insisted not only Sufism, but also Sharia, and thus established so many madrasa (religious schools) all over Caucasia. The religious and the institutional effects of Muridizm movements could be notified in the book of Butbay (1990:43), visited Caucasia in 1918, states that "Mutayif, like other Caucasian Mullas, writes and reads in Arabic. In deed, Arabic is the writing language in both Daghestan and Chechnya. Mostly, in all villages, there were at least one or two persons who speak and write in Qur'anic language."

The leaders of movement were both great Sufis and ulema; they had religious education in the great madrasas of Daghistan before becoming a Sufi, for instance, the first leader of the movement, imam Mansur “at twenty... left his home to complete his studies in Daghistan...After a few years, having mastered all the subjects necessary to become a mullah, Ushürma” returned to his village (Nart 1991:85). In terms of religious education, Madrasas in Daghistan were so famous that many students from other regions of Caucasia, even some great ulema of Istanbul in the nineteenth century, were educated in these religious schools.

One of the main characteristics of Naqshbandiyya is that from its early inception, it was far more societal and inner-worldly in character because, as Eraydın (1994:378) indicates, for Bahaud-din Naqshband “charity is in society. Society is in chat.” Consequently, rather than isolation and seclusion, these leaders advised their disciples an active participation into social life and societal activities. Since they believed that the healthiness of an individual is the result of both the healthiness and the well-beings of the society, which is in harmony with the principles of religion. This understanding was, in fact, the reflection of one of the most well known principles of the sect, i.e., Khalwat dar anjuman (Solitude in the Crowd). On the other hand, if social structure and life is totally remote from the principles of religion, namely Sharia and the traditions of the Prophet, they aimed both renovations and the reorganization of the society and social structure in line with these principles of the religion, if required through invitation of people to Holy war. Therefore, the leaders of Muridizm movement in Caucasia spent their utmost energies and times to the organization of society according to the principles of Islam. For instance, in 1847, the naib of Sheik Shamil, Muhammad Emin organized a meeting with the leaders of northern Caucasia. He preached that they, on the one hand, were to arrange their lives according to the rules of Islam, and on the other hand, they had to abolish the social structure based on caste system and social hierarchy. Since, for him, all the believers are equal and only the one, who is the owner of sincerity to God, could be considered as superior among the believers (Bice 1990:22). Related to Shamil’s naibs preaching of equity, both local tribal leaders and upper strata members were against them and in cooperation with Russia (Barlas 1992: 23). Nevertheless, despite these oppositions, they were able to spread religion among the mountain tribes of Caucasia or reorganized tribal structures by the support of ordinary people of Caucasia. As a result, Just as Khalidi Baghdadi and his caliphs in North Iraq Shamil’s naibs became both religious and societal leaders of each tribe in Caucasia. Hence, in a short period of time the ruling power of society was taken from the native notables during and after the life of Khalidi Baghdadi and in the case of Caucasia the agents of Sheik Shamil became not only the Sufi-religious-leaders but also the ruling power of this society, through

which Muridizm movement in Caucasia brought a strong network of both power and organization. Gaining authority and leadership, the khaliphs of Shamil, by organizing a master-apprentice relation, had intimate and strong relational ties with the members of each tribe (Bennigsen 1984: 4). As a result, besides its earlier religious character, Muridizm movement, at this stage, had a political dimension; yet, the political dimension of the movement was not beyond its religious, especially Sufi character (Baddeley 1989: 233).

Muridizm movement, to establish a strong network of organization was consisted of two stages. First, if society is non-Muslim or if there is any kind of un-Islamic practices in society, they started to preach Sharia and tried to establish a religious atmosphere. Later on, when Islam is accepted in that society as a religion, the khaliphes of Shamil and earlier Imams invited people to their Sufi organization, by which after a short time later a great portion of this society became the murids of Naqshbandi Imams. As a reality, if a person enters into any Sufi sect he will have a master-apprentice relation, through which in the all areas of life he became dependent on his master's directions and orders. Moreover, throughout the history, from its inception to modern times, Islam did not completely eliminate the tribal factors and structure, in particular, tribalism in the Muslim world. Yet, Islam, on the one hand, became effective in terms eliminating such tribal customs like blood feud and wars among the tribes. On the other hand, it encouraged such factors of tribal spirit as freedom and solidarity, both of which were replaced into the wider circles of societal relations. During the Caucasian War, Muridizm movement had destroyed the master-slave relations and tribal wars, instead of which "Sheik-murid" relation was replaced in the discourse of Naqshbandism. In addition, it brought a new identity by which each tribe's members felt themselves as the member of one great nation. Through invoking both their devotedness to their freedom and solidarity against Russia, in a short time, all the small and big tribes of Caucasia had a strong unity and solidarity. They perceived Muridizm movement as a means of their freedom. As a result of this achievement of Muridizm, Sheik Shamil was accepted as their natural leader despite his tribal difference.

Since the beginning of the movement, each leader's aim was to unite all the people of Caucasia under the same banner and to persuade them to fight against the Russian powers in the Caucasia. Jersilt (1995: 206) thought that "Shamil's movement included the many different ethnic groups of the north east Caucasia and he tried to bolster his campaign by sending emissaries to the Adyge of the north-west Caucasia as well as to Ottoman territories near Erzurum." As a result of Shamil's Sufi organization and leadership, religion had the strongest claim to define the sense of unity between and within the various tribes probably more than any other aspect of life in Caucasia.

Religious gatherings have played a large role in bringing people in contact with one another. Consequently, in a short span of time, Muridizm movement brought a strong unity against Russian invaders in Caucasia.

### CONCLUSION

From pre-Islamic times to the rise of Muridizm movement the tribal solidarity and tribalism had been the main social peculiarity of Caucasian people. However, starting with the first Naqshbandi leader's campaign against the Russian invasions in Caucasia, it was only the Muridizm movement that, on the one hand, spread Islam together with Sufism among the Caucasian tribes, and on the other hand, transformed the enduring tribal structure of society, from master-slave relation into a more egalitarian structure. Thus, it created a religious unity among the natives of Caucasia against Russian invasions. Therefore, it can be claimed that Muridizm movement had been successful in terms of transforming tribal "asabiyya" (solidarity) into a more religious identity or religious nation in Caucasia. As a matter of fact, this practical and political peculiarity of Muridizm movement results from the character of Naqshbandi Sufism. For both Imam-ı Rabbani and Khalid-i Baghdadi's conception, Sufism was far more inner-worldly and active character, mobilizing people both in their lives and against the invasions of the Western powers, especially the Russian one. These dimensions of Naqshbandiyya more openly reflected itself during the independence struggle of Circassians under the guidance of the Sufi leaders of Muridizm movement against Russian Powers in Caucasia.

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