

# Cultural Sufism: A Social Construction Of Defense Heritage Of The Nation's Ancestors

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## Abstract.

*Cultural Sufism, as an integral part of Indonesia's culture and spirituality, not only functions as a mystical practice but also plays a significant role in the social construction related to defense. This study aims to demonstrate the relationship between Sufism and the cultural values inherited from ancestors and how cultural Sufism can become a force in preserving the nation's identity and integrity amidst the currents of globalization and modernization. Using an interdisciplinary approach, this research analyzes cultural Sufism through the lens of the social construction of reality, focusing on the Nusantara version of Sufi teachings to strengthen the collective awareness that the cultural heritage of ancestors remains strategic in the contemporary era. The study reveals that cultural Sufism functions not only as a spiritual practice but also as a form of cultural defense that unites social values, traditions, and wisdom in confronting the challenges of the times. The findings offer new insights into how cultural Sufism can serve as one of the tools of defense against threats to diversity, national integrity, and the ideals of defending the nation.*

**Keywords:** Cultural Sufism; social construction; cultural defense and ancestral spirituality.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, with all its diversity, has an ancestral heritage that is rich in deep spiritual and cultural values. One important aspect of this heritage is the cultural Sufism teachings that teach kanuragan and self-purification through processes such as qolwat and uzla; the practice of purifying oneself by distancing oneself from the hustle and bustle of the world in order to get closer to God. In this context, Sufism is not only a mystical teaching that aims to achieve closeness with God, but also as a means to forge oneself and strengthen personal and social resilience. The ancestral ideology that leans towards spiritualism and teaches the noble value of chivalry, a value that prioritizes honor, courage, and fortitude, has a strong foundation in Indonesian culture. These values also shape a view of life that opposes all forms of oppression and violence, and emphasizes the importance of harmony between individuals, society, and nature. In the teachings of cultural Sufism, kanuragan is a metaphor for the process of purifying oneself, strengthening oneself, and preparing oneself to face the challenges of the world with wisdom and courage. In an era of globalization and modernization that is increasingly changing Indonesia's social and cultural landscape, challenges to the diversity and integrity of the nation are increasing. Many ancestral values are in danger of being eroded by this current of change. Therefore, it is important to re-explore cultural Sufism, which not only offers spiritual depth, but also as a cultural defense strategy that strengthens the character of the nation. Cultural Sufism with the approach of kanuragan, qolwat, and uzla can become a social force that strengthens the love of the homeland and the identity of the Indonesian nation.

This teaching teaches how to purify oneself in order to face all threats, both from within and without, with determination, wisdom, and chivalrous spirit. Through this approach, cultural Sufism can function as a cultural defense fortress, strengthen relations between citizens, and strengthen the unity of the Indonesian nation in facing the challenges of the times. On the other hand, the cultural Sufism teachings that developed in the archipelago are very closely related to the role of the guardians in the spread of Islam in Java and its surroundings. The guardians, with their wisdom and leadership, not only teach the spiritual dimension of Islam, but also bring teachings that emphasize character formation and self-purification through kanuragan. They view that in order to achieve closeness to God, an individual must go through a process of purification of the soul that involves physical and mental efforts, one of which is realized through the practices of kanuragan. Kanuragan, in a tradition inherited by ancestors, is not just a martial art, but also a deep spiritual

practice. In contrast to just physical exercise for physical strength, kanuragan sports in the context of cultural Sufism are a form of effort to unite the soul, body, and mind in complete harmony. This includes values such as inner calm, self-control, patience, and sincerity. Through this practice, one is not only directed to master physical strength, but also to control lust and ego, as well as to seek peace within oneself. For guardians, kanuragan is a means to build the resilience of the soul and mental strength needed to face a world full of temptations and challenges.

The chivalrous values contained in this teaching—such as courage, steadfastness, and justice—are a reflection of the principles taught in Sufism. Wali Songo, as a central figure in the history of the spread of Islam in Java, is known for their teachings that not only lead to worship, but also to how to form noble character and morals. They teach that true spirituality cannot be separated from daily life, including in the way one interacts with others, as well as in the way one maintains the noble values of the nation and culture. One of the clear examples of Sufism teachings practiced by our ancestors is the concept of *qolwat* and *uzla*—the praxis of solitude to get closer to God. Guardians often teach that in solitude, one can focus more on organizing one's heart and deepening spiritual understanding. More than that, this teaching also includes mastery of the self in the face of a life full of social and political pressures. In the context of cultural defense, the teachings of Sufism brought by the guardians and practiced by these ancestors have a very relevant meaning. *Olah kanuragan*, as part of cultural Sufism, not only strengthens the spiritual dimension, but also strengthens the nation's fighting power in maintaining its cultural identity and integrity. The ancestors through the teachings of cultural Sufism have instilled a spirit of chivalry and a strong determination to overcome all forms of oppression. In an emergency, when the nation is faced with threats, the values contained in this kanuragan process become the moral foundation and collective strength in defending the homeland. Overall, the Sufism teachings brought by the guardians, with an emphasis on kanuragan and self-purification, remain relevant as part of the cultural defense that unites all elements of the nation.

This teaching teaches that true defense is not only about physical strength, but also spiritual strength that is able to overcome the temptations of the times and maintain harmony between humans, nature, and God. This heritage, embedded in every ancestral value and practice, can be a source of strength in maintaining the continuity of Indonesian culture, especially in the face of increasingly complex global challenges. In this context, the main question in this study arises, namely: How can cultural Sufism as a social construction play a role in strengthening the defense of national culture and identity? Therefore, the purpose of this study is to analyze the role of cultural Sufism as a social construction in strengthening the cultural defense and identity of the Indonesian nation.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 1. Social Construction Theory of Reality (Berger and Luckmann)

The Social Construction Theory of Reality developed by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann argues that social reality is not something objective or fixed, but something that is shaped through human social interaction. According to this theory, society shapes and creates a collective understanding of the world through the process of internalization, socialization, and institutionalization. In other words, what is considered "reality" is the result of social constructions formed through communication, norms, and shared practices within a group or society. (Masha & Ashaf, 2022) (Ariansyah, 2021) (Hasyim, 2022)

In the context of cultural Sufism, this theory can explain how the teachings of Sufism, with values inherited from ancestors, are not only understood as spiritual teachings, but also as part of a social construction that strengthens the nation's identity and cultural defense. The teachings of Sufism, which involve the practice of kanuragan, chivalry, and self-control, are understood by the community as part of the values that make up their social and cultural structure. Therefore, cultural Sufism is not only individual, but also collective, forming relevant patterns of behavior, norms, and perceptions to strengthen the social resilience of the Indonesian nation.

## 2. Teachings of Sufism

Sufism is a spiritual teaching in Islam that aims to get closer to God by cleansing the soul from bad qualities and deepening the essence of oneself. In Sufism, there are many teachings and practices that focus on inner purification, control of desires, and the achievement of peace in relationships with God, others, and nature. The teachings of Sufism are often seen as the path to deeper spiritual enlightenment, which demands self-discipline, simplicity, and connection to God. (Scott, 2020)

In the context of cultural Sufism in Indonesia, these teachings not only lead to personal spiritual achievements, but also contain social values that strengthen solidarity, togetherness, and collective resilience in society. Kanuragan, for example, is a form of physical exercise that can be seen as a way to develop personal and spiritual resilience, as well as as part of an effort to maintain a balance between the physical and spiritual dimensions. This cultural Sufism teaching, inherited by the guardians and ancestors, emphasizes the importance of character and ethics in living life, and serves as a foundation in maintaining the nation's culture and identity. (Nashihin et al., 2022)

## 3. Various Rituals and Rituals to Get It

In the cultural Sufism tradition, *ajian* and ritual are important means to achieve spiritual goals and life balance. *Ajian*, in this context, refers to certain knowledge or mantras used in the practice of *kanuragan* or to gain mental and physical strength. These rituals often involve the recitation of specific prayers, meditation, or chanting (*uzla*) to cleanse oneself of worldly distractions and attain inner peace. (Chasanah, 2020). Some of the teachings known in this tradition include teachings passed down by the guardians in their spiritual journey, which are practiced by disciples or followers to maintain self-balance, strengthen determination, and avoid all forms of temptation of the world. These rituals, such as *dhikr*, *suluk*, and *khalwat*, serve to purify the soul and direct attention to God, as well as strengthen mental and spiritual resilience in facing life's challenges. In addition to prayers and prayers, other rituals that are often carried out in cultural Sufism are physical exercises or *kanuragan* exercises, which are intended to hone physical and spiritual abilities at the same time. This practice teaches the importance of discipline, self-control, and harmony between body and soul. Through these teachings and rituals, a person is expected to achieve a higher level of awareness, both in the spiritual and social dimensions, which in turn strengthens personal and collective resilience in the face of changing times. (Nashihin et al., 2022).

## III. METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive design to describe the role of cultural Sufism as a social construct that strengthens the defense of culture and identity of the Indonesian nation, based on ancestral heritage which includes the values of *kanuragan* and chivalry. This approach was chosen because the focus of the research is on an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of cultural Sufism related to cultural values, spirituality and social resilience. The qualitative approach allows researchers to explore the meaning and understanding contained in cultural Sufism and the social constructs it constructs. This method is suitable for analyzing complex social and cultural aspects, as well as making room for new discoveries related to the phenomenon being studied. (Fadli, 2021)

The units of analysis in this study include:

- Communities that practice cultural Sufism teachings, such as martial arts colleges, Islamic boarding schools and arts organizations that maintain the values of *kanuragan* and chivalry.
- Cultural and spiritual figures involved in the preservation of cultural Sufism teachings and cultural defense, such as *kyai*, *ulama*, or traditional community leaders.
- Sufism practices in daily life related to *kanuragan* and chivalric values, as well as how it affects the collective awareness of the defense of culture and national identity.

### Data Collection Techniques

Data will be collected using the following techniques: (Suggestion, 2018) (Luthfiah, 2020)

- In-depth Interviews. Interviews were conducted with cultural leaders, Islamic boarding school leaders, *kanuragan* practitioners and community members involved in the implementation of cultural Sufism. The

interview aims to explore their views on the relationship between cultural Sufism and cultural defense, ancestral values and social resilience.

- **Participatory Observation.** Researchers will be directly involved in community activities that practice cultural Sufism, such as training in kanuragan processing, religious activities, or certain rituals that contain Sufism teachings. Participatory observation allows researchers to understand social and cultural contexts directly and in-depth.
- **Document Study.** The researcher will analyze literature related to cultural Sufism, Sufism teachings, as well as various historical documents, writings, and spiritual texts that reflect ancestral values and kanuragan cultivation. It also includes research related to the concepts of cosmology and cultural defense inherited by ancestors.

Thus, the technique for determining informants in the study is *purposive sampling*, which is a method of deliberately selecting informants based on certain criteria relevant to the purpose of the research. These criteria can include factors such as involvement in the community, experience, or social position that allows them to provide in-depth and comprehensive information regarding the phenomenon being researched (Prasetyo et al., 2023) (Demartoto et al., 2020). Through *purposive sampling*, it is hoped that the data obtained will be richer, focused, and able to provide in-depth insights into the dynamics of the interaction of ethnic Chinese communication with the local community in Tangerang Fort. The details of the informants are as follows:

NO	INITIALS	STATUS/PROFESSIONS	AFFILIATE
1.	IB	Cultural Figures	Kampung Betawi Setu Babakan South Jakarta
2.	AXLE	Cultural Figures	Idem
3.	GH	Islamic Boarding School Leaders	Ponpes Madinatul Qur'an Depok
4.	MZ	Islamic Boarding School Leaders	Idem
5.	AM	Spiritual Medicine Practitioner	IBI-K57 Lecturer South Jakarta
6.	BN	Feng-Shui Practitioner	Ditto
7.	ML	Kanuragan Art	New Land of Depok
8.	LY	Martial Arts Community	IBI-K57 South Jakarta Students
9.	FA	Martial Arts Community	Ditto
10.	CP	Martial Arts Community	Ditto

### **Data Analysis**

The collected data will be analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. The thematic analysis process includes:

- **Categorization.** Researchers will identify key themes that emerge in interviews and observations, such as chivalrous values, kanuragan cultivation, spirituality, and cultural defense.
- **Coding.** Each relevant data will be coded to group information based on emerging themes.
- **Interpretation.** The data that has been categorized and encoded will be interpreted to understand the relationship between cultural Sufism, ancestral values, and the nation's cultural defense.
- **Triangulation.** Researchers will triangulate the data by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and document studies to increase the validity of the research results.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, the researcher will use source triangulation techniques and (Satvikadewi & Hamim, 2018). In addition, researchers will involve community members in the data validation process to ensure accuracy and fair representation of their views. Researchers adhere to research ethical standards that involve data collection through interviews and observations. All participants will be provided with an explanation of the purpose of the study, as well as their rights to participate voluntarily and can stop participation at any time without consequences. In addition, the information provided by participants will be kept confidential and used only for research purposes.

### **Research Limitations**

This research is limited to communities that still maintain the teachings of cultural Sufism, so it does not cover the entire community of a wide society. The research will also focus on the teachings of Sufism

related to the practice of chivalric values, which may not be found in all schools or practices of Sufism in Indonesia. With this methodology, it is hoped that the research can provide a comprehensive picture of the role of cultural Sufism as a social construct that strengthens the defense of culture and identity of the Indonesian nation, as well as its contribution in facing the challenge of "colonialism" in a broad sense in the postmodern era.

#### IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Cultural Sufism in the context of this research is understood as a spiritual practice that has been assimilated into the local culture and passed down from generation to generation as part of the nation's identity. This study illustrates how cultural Sufism values not only persist in religious aspects but also in the social life of the community. Through interviews with various informants, it was found that the practice of cultural Sufism is part of social defense that reflects local wisdom in facing the challenges of modernity and globalization. The IB states that "Cultural Sufism is not only a spiritual practice, but also a strategy of society in maintaining the cultural identity inherited by the ancestors." The U.S. added that "The principles of Sufism have merged with the values of daily life, making society calmer and more harmonious." Cultural Sufism acts as a social mechanism that not only shapes the spiritual dimension of individuals, but also strengthens cultural resilience in the face of changing times. The IB statement emphasized that cultural Sufism is not just a mystical practice or personal worship, but also a cultural strategy that is inherited from generation to generation to maintain the identity and existence of society in the midst of modernization. This shows that cultural Sufism has a broader social function, namely as a defense tool that allows people to stay connected to their cultural roots. Meanwhile, the U.S. perspective deepens this understanding by showing that the values of Sufism have been internalized in everyday life, creating social harmony and collective resilience. When the teachings of Sufism are applied in social behavior, such as in communication patterns, decision-making, and conflict resolution, it contributes to the formation of a more stable society oriented towards ancestral wisdom.

This is in line with the concept of social construction of Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966), who emphasized that social reality is formed through continuous human interaction. In this context, cultural Sufism is an important element in building collective awareness and maintaining the continuity of the nation's cultural heritage. Thus, cultural Sufism functions not only as a religious practice, but also as a social instrument that strengthens national identity and cultural integrity. Through the internalization of Sufism values in people's lives, ancestral heritage remains relevant and can be used as a cultural defense strategy in facing the challenges of globalization and social disruption. Cultural leaders and pesantren leaders highlighted how cultural Sufism teaches the values of simplicity, wisdom, and social harmony that strengthen community integrity. GH explained that "In Islamic boarding schools, we teach how Sufism is not only an individual worship, but also strengthens social relations in society." MZ corroborates this opinion by saying that "Cultural Sufism in Indonesia is unique because it is able to unite various values of local wisdom with Islamic spirituality." Cultural Sufism serves as a bridge between spiritual teachings and social practices, creating a value system that is not only oriented towards a vertical relationship with God, but also a horizontal relationship in social life. GH's statement emphasizes that Sufism is not solely individual, but has a strong social dimension. In the context of pesantren education, Sufism teachings play a role in shaping the character of students so that they are not only obedient in rituals, but also able to contribute to social harmony and solidarity in their community. This shows that cultural Sufism provides a foundation for the formation of mindsets and behaviors that prioritize wisdom and social peace.

Furthermore, MZ highlighted the unique characteristics of cultural Sufism in Indonesia that are able to absorb and harmonize local values with Islamic spiritual teachings. This reflects the flexibility of Sufism in adapting to the local cultural context, making it a strategic instrument in maintaining the nation's identity. The integration between local wisdom and Sufism creates a form of spirituality that is not only oriented towards esotericism, but also has a pragmatic function in building a more inclusive and cultured society. From the perspective of social construction, as explained by Berger and Luckmann (1966), cultural Sufism can be understood as the result of a dialectical process between social and individual structures, in



which the values taught in Islamic boarding schools and cultural communities are constantly reproduced in social interactions. Thus, cultural Sufism is an element that not only preserves ancestral values, but also strengthens the nation's cultural defense in the midst of modernization and globalization challenges. On the other hand, practitioners of spiritual medicine and the art of kanuragan emphasized that cultural Sufism is also part of the traditional medicine and martial arts system that enriches the nation's cultural identity. AM states that "Sufism is not only about prayer and dhikr, but also a method of healing and mental strengthening for society." BN, a feng-shui practitioner, added that "The principle of balance taught in Sufism has similarities with the teachings of feng-shui in maintaining the harmony of life.

"The cultural dimension of Sufism is not limited to spiritual practices, but also plays a role in traditional medicine systems and martial arts as a form of holistic cultural defense. AM's statement emphasized that Sufism is not only oriented towards ritualistic aspects, but also becomes a healing method that touches on physical, mental, and spiritual aspects. In the practice of traditional medicine, the teachings of Sufism are often used as a means of therapy through prayer, meditation, and spiritual energy that are believed to help the healing process of diseases, both medically and non-medically. This is in line with the view that cultural Sufism is rooted in people's daily practices and serves as a comprehensive solution for the welfare of individuals and communities. BN, as a practitioner of feng-shui, highlighted that the concept of balance in Sufism has similarities with the feng-shui philosophy which emphasizes harmony between humans and the environment. This similarity reflects the intersection between the values of local wisdom of the archipelago and other spiritual traditions that have developed in Indonesia, showing that cultural Sufism is inclusive and adaptive to various belief systems and cultural practices. In the context of defending ancestral heritage, this awareness of balance and harmony is the key in building social and cultural resilience in the midst of the challenges of modernity. From the perspective of social construction by Berger and Luckmann (1966), the relationship of Sufism with the system of medicine and self-defense shows that social reality is not only shaped through religious structures, but also through cultural practices that are passed down from generation to generation.

Cultural Sufism functions as a medium that integrates spirituality with practical aspects of life, strengthening the nation's identity through a traditional heritage that remains relevant today. Thus, cultural Sufism is an important instrument in maintaining ancestral values, both in terms of health, mental resilience, and social harmony. The martial and feng-shui communities participate in maintaining and developing these spiritual practices to remain relevant to modern life. ML mentioned that "The kanuragan art that we learned also contains the values of Sufism, which teaches patience and self-control. The LY of the martial arts community affirms that "Cultural Sufism helps us understand the importance of balance between body and soul in martial arts." Cultural Sufism not only survives in the realm of religious rituals, but is also rooted in traditional martial practice, which serves as a means of mental and physical strengthening. ML's statement shows that the art of kanuragan inherited from generation to generation not only relies on physical skills, but also instills Sufism values such as patience and self-control. In the context of cultural defense, martial arts based on cultural Sufism became more than just a fighting technique; It acts as a form of self-discipline that teaches inner balance and emotional resilience. LY added that cultural Sufism helps martial practitioners understand the importance of balance between body and soul. This reflects that Sufism is not just an abstract religious practice, but also has an applicative dimension that can be applied in various aspects of life, including in the development of character and personal resilience. In the perspective of social construction, integrated Sufism in martial arts shows how spiritual practices form habitus (Bourdieu, 1990), in which individuals unconsciously construct certain mindsets and behaviors based on inherited values in their communities.

In addition, the involvement of the martial arts and feng-shui communities in preserving and developing cultural Sufism shows the synergy between local traditions and other belief systems that are developing in the archipelago. This reflects that cultural Sufism is not a static entity, but a value system that continues to undergo adaptation and revitalization to remain relevant in the face of modernity. Thus, cultural Sufism is not only an instrument of spiritual defense, but also a foundation in building social harmony, strengthening cultural identity, and national resilience in the midst of globalization. If viewed based on the

social construction approach of Berger and Luckmann, who see social reality as the result of social processes constructed by individuals and groups in society. In the context of cultural Sufism, this social construction can be analyzed through three main stages:

1. Externalization. The process by which cultural Sufism teachings and practices are inherited and socialized in the community through various mediums such as Islamic boarding school teaching, spiritual medicine practices, and martial arts that have spiritual values. Cultural leaders and pesantren leaders play an active role in transmitting these values to the community. GH emphasized that "We at the pesantren continue to teach Sufism as part of moral and spiritual education." Internalization is the stage when individuals and communities begin to live and implement the teachings of cultural Sufism as part of their identity. Values such as simplicity, balance, and mental resilience are no longer just cultural symbols, but are truly internalized in everyday attitudes and behaviors. AM, as a practitioner of spiritual medicine, explains that "People who understand Sufism are not only looking for physical healing, but also trying to maintain their mental and spiritual balance." This statement shows that the teachings of Sufism are not only memorized or studied theoretically, but also carried out in the practice of life. This strengthens the function of Sufism as a cultural defense mechanism that protects society from the negative influences of modernization that can erode traditional values. In the context of martial arts, LY from the martial arts community affirmed that "Cultural Sufism helps us understand the importance of balance between body and soul in martial arts." This indicates that Sufism not only provides spiritual enlightenment, but also forms self-awareness and strengthens character in facing life's challenges.

2. Objectivity. The practice of cultural Sufism is part of a social system that is recognized and accepted by the community. For example, the use of Sufism in spiritual medicine and feng-shui shows how mystical values can be integrated into everyday life. In addition, the existence of a martial community that internalizes the teachings of Sufism as part of physical and mental training is concrete evidence of this objectification. BN added that "Sufism is not just a spiritual practice, but also a part of the culture of society." The process of objectification in cultural Sufism occurs when values that have been inherited through various mediums begin to become part of a social reality that is widely recognized and accepted by society. Practices such as recitation in Islamic boarding schools, spiritual medicine, and martial arts based on Sufism are not only considered as individual activities, but also as social institutions that have cultural legitimacy. MZ emphasized that "Cultural Sufism in Indonesia has been fused in the traditions of the community. His values are present in daily life, ranging from the attitude of mutual cooperation, wisdom in resolving conflicts, to the way we interact with the surrounding environment." This statement shows that Sufism is not just a practice of worship, but also forms a collective mindset that directs society to a harmonious life based on spirituality. BN, as a practitioner of feng-shui, added that "The balance taught in Sufism has a lot in common with the feng-shui philosophy of maintaining harmony in life." This shows that the process of objectification does not only occur within the scope of the Muslim community, but also in broader cultural interactions. With the similarity of values between cultural Sufism and other belief systems, a common understanding has been formed that makes Sufism a unifying tool in a multicultural society in Indonesia.

3. Internalization. Individuals in the community live and apply Sufism values in their daily lives, forming a collective awareness that cultural Sufism is not just an ancestral heritage, but also a defense strategy in maintaining social identity and integrity in the modern era. The FA affirmed that "We in the martial arts community understand Sufism as a way to control emotions and maintain balance in everyday life." The process of internalization in cultural Sufism reflects how spiritual values are not only understood as normative teachings, but also become an inherent part of the mindset and actions of individuals in the community. The collective consciousness formed from this internalization allows people to make Sufism a strategy for adapting to various social and cultural challenges in the modern era. CP, as a member of the martial arts community, added that "In our practice, Sufism is not only about physical endurance, but also the formation of a strong mentality to face life's various obstacles." This shows that cultural Sufism not only teaches the values of spirituality, but also has a practical dimension that can be applied in everyday life. This awareness encourages individuals to better understand the role of Sufism in forming mental resilience and

social resilience. Furthermore, LY explained that "In our community, Sufism is taught as a principle in building harmonious relationships with others, both in the context of martial arts and community life." This statement affirms that the internalization of cultural Sufism is not only about personal spiritual quests, but also forms social norms that support harmony and stability in the community. Thus, the internalization of cultural Sufism strengthens the social identity of the community and makes it a fortress of defense in the face of changing times. This process not only preserves the sustainability of ancestral heritage, but also provides solutions to various contemporary problems, such as value disorientation, identity crises, and social fragmentation. This internalization is proof that cultural Sufism is an adaptive and relevant defense strategy in building a balanced civilization between spirituality and modernity.

From the process of externalization, objectification, to internalization, it can be concluded that cultural Sufism has a strategic role in maintaining the nation's ancestral heritage. Not only as a form of spiritual practice, but also as a foundation in building social and cultural resilience in the midst of the changing times.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Chemical composition of artist paints commercialized in Brazil varies greatly. Therefore, a multi-component characterization requires multi-technique analyses. Advantages of each technique (FTIR, Raman, Py-GC/MS and SEM-EDS) were pointed out to present a broader knowledge of the paints used by Brazilian contemporary artists. FTIR and Raman are, complimentary, able to rapidly identify the main binders, while Py-GC/MS provides further information of copolymers, even in minor concentration levels. SEM-EDS successfully identifies pigments and extenders. Brazilian paints of *student* grade are composed of PS binding media and low pigment ratio, whereas the *professional* grade paint is composed of P(S/MA) binding media, higher pigment ratio and extenders such as TiO<sub>2</sub> and Ce. Conservation concerns over the ageing processes of these paints will be addressed in future studies. In conclusion, this initial study provides conservators, artists and conservation scientists information on the composition of artist paints manufactured in Brazil.

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