Marta Dominguez Diaz


Dominguez Diaz belongs to a new generation of anthropologists who have appropriated the well-trodden Moroccan field of research, to analyze the impact of migrations, globalization and new communication technologies on what was considered by the Anglo-Saxon anthropology of the 1960s and 1970s as a reserve of traditional forms of religious piety and authority. In her introduction (Chapter 1), the author recalls the 2008 CESNUR (International Conference on New Religious Movements) that pointed to the lack of research into new forms of religiosity as developed in Islam, such as the ways in which some forms of Sufism have entered the arena of global religious movement. *Women in Sufism* aims to address questions raised by such globalization movements through the case study of the Qâdiriyya Bûdshîshiyya Sufi order which has spread in the last quarter of the twentieth century from its native northeastern province of Morocco to major cities of the country and then to western Europe, the US and Canada. As a consequence of this geographical development, the Bûdshîshiyya has integrated a diversity of followers with different religious, social and cultural identities: the vast majority of its membership are Berbers from the mountainous region of northeastern Morocco, with the remainder being urbanized and educated middle and upper class Moroccans and Moroccan labor migrants, as well as converts and reverts to Islam in western Europe. The book explores the ways in which religious meaning and symbols accommodate such a diversity of identities and social realities.

The main source of information for the study is personal narratives collected through casual conversations and interactions in ritual gatherings and social meetings in multiple sites. By conducting a multi-sited fieldwork, the author identifies a Sufi order constituted “of the characteristic eclectic religiosities typical of glocalized religious hybridity”; *glocalized* is defined as “worldwide exchange of social and cultural ideas that contribute to the transformation of local realities and cultural behavior” (p. 4). As an anthropologist, she believes that it is more appropriate to focus on situated religious practice, embodiment and material culture than texts and doctrine, particularly in the case of the Bûdshîshiyya which places importance on the experience over the textual and the intellectual (p. 6). The same method is applied at the high level in the Sufi order in trying to understand how religious authority functions.
**Women in Sufism** is a short book of 152 pages (text and notes) divided into 8 chapters. Chapter 2 *An Historical Overview* provides an historical development of the Bûdshîshiyya from a local to a transnational order and situates its expansion geographically and socially with a brief presentation of what is called “officialdom”, the leadership of the order, and the “authorized discourse”. Chapter 3 *The Bûdshîshiyya Today* describes the diversity of discipleship inside the Bûdshîshiyya, arguing that it is difficult to identify clearly defined Bûdshîshî groups in northeastern Morocco. Meetings are held weekly in numerous towns “but they are not perceived to be exclusively Bûdshîshî despite the professed devotion of its attendants for the family” (p. 40). These groups share a similar geographical, ethnic and religious identity; “in fact the mere idea that the Bûdshîshiyya is an organization feels odd to many” (p. 41). They rarely call themselves Sufis and refer to themselves as Muslims. Another group is made up of Moroccan migrants in Europe which shows the same cultural and religious homogeneity. This majority of Moroccan devotees in the northeast of the country and abroad is described as a silent one that does not participate in the production of the Bûdshîshiyya's public image. Then the author distinguishes a plethora of small—some very small—groups in Morocco's big cities and in the West of heterogeneous “hybrid” groups: converts to Islam, revert Muslims, and re-affiliated Muslims. Hybrid and non-hybrid groups do not congregate together.

Chapter 4, *Bûdshîshiyya Online* is an insightful analysis of the use by the order of new forms of communication such as the internet, assessing its impact on devotees' relationships with the order and with their master. It provides an inspiring discussion of how a religious movement based on spiritual experience and distance from any written form of religious knowledge has used the internet to post large amounts of material online. It shows how the Bûdshîshiyya has managed to find a form of coexistence with both the great changes prompted by the internet and traditional ways of communicating in the pre-digital era. The study underlines the concomitance of three phenomena with the first appearance of the internet in Morocco: the expansion of cities, the rise of an urban middle class during the 1990s and 2000s, and increased access to university education. There is a contrast between the small size of the Bûdshîshî groups in Europe and their prolific activity online (chats, forums, news groups, blogs, etc.). The choice to build various websites for the Bûdshîshiyya instead of putting all materials into one single portal gives the false impression of the existence of a multiplicity of organizations, suggesting a much more sizeable following overall when in reality all these groups with different names are just one. However, it is still more through personal