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Project title: 'Storytelling and Imaginal in Sufism: Narratives of Islamic Environmental Ethics from Children and Parents in Sufi Families,' & 'Construction of Islamic Environmental Ethics through Sufi Narrative Traditions in Family Life'

The following files have been archived:

File name	File description (Short description of content, sample size, format, any linking between different types of data, i.e. survey and interviews/focus groups)
Sufi Stories_The Family Archive of Sufi Narratives	The Family Archive of Sufi Narratives is an oral history collection of Sufi literature shared by parents and children in the United Kingdom. These narratives were recorded through interviews with parents and children conducted as part of a broader social science research project led by Dr Hamide Elif Üzümcü at the University of Edinburgh. The Family Archive of Sufi Narratives comprises two collections: (1) Sufi stories and (2) Sufi concepts. This file contains the collection of Sufi stories. The file is provided in PDF format. Please find below information on the project, methods, and samples for both collections.

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Sufi Concepts_The Family Archive of Sufi Narratives	The Family Archive of Sufi Narratives is an oral history collection of Sufi literature shared by parents and children in the United Kingdom. These narratives were recorded through interviews with parents and children conducted as part of a broader social science research project led by Dr Hamide Elif Üzümcü at the University of Edinburgh. The Family Archive of Sufi Narratives comprises two collections: (1) Sufi stories and (2) Sufi concepts. This file contains the collection of Sufi concepts. The file is provided in PDF format. Please find below information on the project, methods, and samples for both collections.

Publications: Not yet

About the Research Project:

The ‘Sufi Storytelling Project’ also referred to as ‘Storytelling and Imaginal in Sufism: Narratives of Islamic Environmental Ethics from Children and Parents in Sufi Families,’ & ‘Construction of Islamic Environmental Ethics through Sufi Narrative Traditions in Family Life’ is part of a postdoctoral research project conducted by Dr Hamide Elif Üzümcü, IASH–Alwaleed Postdoctoral Research Fellow (2024-2025) & Nominated Fellow (2026) at the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, and TÜBİTAK 2219 International Postdoctoral Fellow & Associate Fellow (2026) at the Alwaleed Centre for the Study of Islam in the Contemporary World at the University of Edinburgh.

The project explores the Sufi perspectives on morals of socio-ecological interactions through narrative interviews with children and their parents in the UK. Sufism (*tasawwuf*), a mystical and esoteric Islam, offers an ‘ethics of the environment,’ that considers the environment as a

reflection of the Oneness of Being (tawhid). This holistic view of the environment is often negotiated by Sufi families and children through the Islamic culture of storytelling.

The project documents and archives contemporary Islamic environmental anecdotes and sayings, from Hadith and Quranic parables to centuries-old Sufi literary heritage, exploring the contexts in which this oral culture is involved in everyday child-parent relationships in Sufi families. It contributes to making visible the intangible, living cultural heritage of Sufism in a contemporary Western context.

The Family Archive of Sufi Narratives is part of the displays at [the Digital Museum of Sufi Stories and Art by Children and Families](https://www.iash.ed.ac.uk/digital-museum-sufi-stories-and-art-children-and-families), a public engagement exhibition emerging from the Sufi Storytelling Project: <https://www.iash.ed.ac.uk/digital-museum-sufi-stories-and-art-children-and-families>

The Family Archive of Sufi Narratives presents recorded oral narratives shared within family contexts. It comprises two collections: **(1) Sufi stories and (2) Sufi concepts**.

The Sufi Stories collection includes individual stories accompanied by detailed metadata, including Story ID, storyteller, date and place of collection, keywords, storytelling context, moral and ethical teachings identified by the storyteller, source tradition, and an archival citation for referencing the story.

The Sufi Concepts collection includes individual concepts accompanied by detailed metadata, including Concept ID, storyteller, date and place of collection, theme, context in which the concept was shared, the conceptual meaning described by the storyteller, and an archival citation.

Both collections are organised by family, allowing the stories and concepts to be explored within their respective family contexts.

The archive aims to preserve and make accessible contemporary oral storytelling within Sufi family life. It highlights how stories are used to explore relationships between humans, nature, and wider ethical and spiritual worlds.

Methodology:

Research technique: The archived stories and concepts were collected through narrative interviewing, an approach that recruits participants as storytellers and encourages them to share their experiences through open-ended prompts and questions (Gubrium and Holstein,

2012). It provides access to highly contextualised accounts of lived experience and helps reveal the intersections between biography and storytelling (Bernhard, 2015).

Interviews were conducted online and separately with parents and their children, providing each participant with dedicated time and space to express their experiences, reflections, and interpretations. This approach also reflects the project's commitment to recognising children as agents, with distinct perspectives and interpretative approaches to their experiences and the stories they share.

Sample: The sample comprised 11 families living in the United Kingdom who engage with Sufi-related traditions or are part of a Sufi order. The target participants were parents and children aged 11–15 years. The current collections draw on data from 19 encounters with these families, comprising 11 parent interviews and 8 child interviews.

The table below presents the participating families alongside the pseudonyms, genders, and ages of the participating children, providing an accessible overview of the sample represented in the collections.

Family No	Child Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Participating Parent
1	Khalid	Boy	12	Father
2	Layla	Girl	14	Mother
3	Bilal	Boy	13	Father
4	Zain	Boy	13	Father & Mother
5	Rania	Girl	14	Mother
6	Nabil	Boy	13	Mother
7	Amina	Girl	14	Mother
8	Tariq	Boy	14	Mother
9	Fatima	Girl	11	Mother
10	Yasmin	Girl	10	Mother
11	Huda	Girl	11	Mother

Ethics:

In Scotland, conducting academic research with children required not only university approval but also compliance with Scottish Government safeguarding regulations. In this context, I

registered with the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme, which was mandatory for working with children and other protected groups.

Ethical approval for the research was sought from the Ethics Committee of the Department of Literatures, Languages and Cultures (LLC) at the University of Edinburgh. Consent and assent procedures were therefore carefully structured. Template consent forms prepared by the Children and Young People Thematic Hub within the Moray House School of Education and Sport at the University of Edinburgh were used for child participants and their guardians.

All data contained within the collections have been anonymised and pseudonymised.

Notes on Reading the Family Archive of Sufi Narratives

The following notes provide guidance for reading and navigating the collections within the Family Archive of Sufi Narratives.

- **Story titles:** Titles have been assigned by the researcher to make individual stories easily identifiable, searchable, and citable within the archive. The titles are descriptive and are not necessarily the original titles used by the storytellers.
- **Islamic and Sufi concepts:** Islamic and Sufi terms and concepts are accompanied by brief English definitions in brackets to support accessibility and ease of reading. These terms are also listed in the Glossary section of each collection, alongside their descriptions.