

On a trip to Morocco along with my daughter, I had the opportunity to attend a religious gathering which was influenced by Sufism, a branch of Islam rooted in mysticism. There I had an interesting conversation with a scholar about Sufism, its roots in North Africa, and how some of its followers deviate from orthodox Islamic law. His answer to me was that groups such as ISIS, while perpetrating devious acts of terrorism and accusing all other Muslims of apostasy, were born from the womb of Wahhabism. So does that mean one can generalize all of Wahhabism with the criminal acts of one group? The same could be said for the Sufi, they too have extremists who have deviated from the right path. We also discussed how, like Kuwait, the prevailing school of Islamic thought in Morocco is the Maliki. In Morocco, however, the authority to issue a *Fatwa*—a ruling on matters of faith—is not granted to anyone unless they complete a stringent course of studies in Sharia law and the Arabic language. Thus, the authority to declare a *Fatwa* is not as easy as it is for many of us in the East.

These were his observations, not mine; but still the fact remains that here in Kuwait we need to limit the authority to issue a fatwa to the appropriate committee affiliated with the Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs. At present there are several such committees in all public institutions, such as the Public Authority for Minors Affairs and Bayt Zakat, and at institutions in the private sector such as Islamic banks. Soon, The Central Bank will impose legal audits on banks, which means that financial institutions will have to appoint external auditors to verify their compliance with the law. In this case, it will be necessary to have legitimate auditing offices that are competent and qualified to check a financial institution's compliance with Islamic law. The standards for such auditors should be codified and overseen by the Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs, otherwise we face