Sufi beliefs or practices are not distinct from Sunni or Shi’a Islam in the Muslim world, but rather a form of religious worship that is prevalent in both sects. The number of practising Sufis in Egypt is not known, though some estimates put it at 15 million or even higher.

Although prominent institutions such as Al-Azhar include Sufi practitioners, their political visibility has traditionally been low, with their position more associated with secularist and established politics than Islamism. This is accentuated by their relatively limited formal organization and even self-identification as a group, according to some commentators.

However, since 25 January 2011 there has been some sign of increasing political involvement from Sufi groups, though this nevertheless remains limited. More troublingly, there have been a rising number of incidents against Sufi places of worship in the post-revolutionary period, with the Secretary-General of the Union of Sufis in Egypt claiming that more than 100 attacks against shrines had taken place. Their future situation therefore remains an area of concern in Egypt’s current context.