

Hybrid Identity Formations in Muslim America: The Case of American Sufi Movements¹

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The minimal attention given to Sufi movements in much previous scholarship on Muslims in America² is indicative of the assumption that these movements were marginal to the concerns of most Muslims living in the United States and insignificant in terms of their impact on American culture and institutions.³ At the same time, organizations and publications sponsored by the American Muslim community have largely ignored Sufism.⁴ One academic study called Sufis “the hidden Muslims” of America since they had been largely overlooked by the few sociological studies of American Muslim communities, and because, in many cases, adherents do not attend mosques or belong to mainstream Islamic organizations.⁵

The following study contends that these movements are worthy of attention and that their impact in terms of both the Muslim community and American culture is significant and increasing. The literary output of American Sufi movements is by now so vast that it would require a volume rather than an essay to adequately present the history and doctrines of each of the groups in detail. I therefore aim to provide an overview of major groups, their history and their activities.

There is a range of movements that can be considered Sufi-oriented, or that have been influenced to various degrees by the tradition of Islamic mysticism. It is not within the scope of this paper to evaluate the authenticity of any movement or individual. However, if the standard for terming a movement “Sufi” were to mean the practice of Islamic law, not all of these movements would be included.

Scholars have categorized the development and range of Sufi

groups active in the U.S. and Canada in various ways. Gisela Webb suggests a chronological framework of three phases: one, the early 1900s, in which Americans and Europeans first took an interest in "Oriental" wisdom; two, "the sixties" counter cultural movement, in which large numbers of (mostly) young middle-class Americans located the cause of racism, the Vietnam War, and the evils of technocracy in a spiritual sickness that establishment religions in America had not only failed to solve but had fostered; and third, the continuation of these groups coupled with the phenomenon of increasing numbers of immigrants arriving from traditional Muslim societies.⁶ Jay Kinney also developed a chronological schema of four periods: 1910-1959, 1960-1969, 1970-1989, and post-1990 developments.⁷ William Chittick, as part of an encyclopedia article on "Sufism,"⁸ characterized some aspects of prominent American movements. He says, for example, that Inayat Khan had taught a form of "drunken" Sufism, while other more sober teachings were disseminated by groups such as the followers of Frithjof Schuon. This typology has the advantage of using terminology drawn from within the Sufi tradition. At the same time, it carries the author's evaluation that intellectual discernment, Shari'a-based practice, and a sober outlook are the superior forms of Sufi practice, thereby attempting to establish standards by which Western Sufi movements may be evaluated.⁹

Andrew Rawlinson has studied the impact of Eastern inspired religious and spiritual movements in the 20th century West.¹⁰ Rawlinson is particularly interested in the phenomenon of Westerners becoming recognized spiritual teachers in the esoteric traditions of Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam. He elaborates a developmental paradigm for the emergence of these movements in the West under the rubrics "sowing the seed" (1875-1916), "consolidation" (1917-1945), "propagation" (1946-1962), and "full bloom" (1963-present).¹¹

In an earlier paper on American Sufi movements, I pursued a garden metaphor of "hybrid" and "perennial" movements.¹² My contention was that while "hybrids" melded the practice of Islam with at least some concessions to the American context, the "perennial" movements stressed the unity of religions and consequently did not generally require the formal practice of Islam by members. While "hybrid" seemed a generally acceptable image for groups that combined elements of traditional Islamic practice with adaptations to the American context, the category of the "perennial" was more often contested by some of my readers, since it engaged a more complex history. The Sufi-influenced intellectual movement that deliberately espouses the "perennialist" title,¹³ as articulated by Rene Guenon¹⁴ and later Frithjof Schuon and his intellectual circle, seems to have advocated adherence to

the Shari'a, at least in principle.¹⁵ But, at the same time, this orientation acknowledged the possibility of an individual following any one of the traditional religious paths as a legitimate way to realization. This group of Perennialists has been characterized by an anti-modern and somewhat millenarian vision. Some of the other perennial groups who call themselves "Sufi" in the West have taken another position, which is that spiritual practices from various religious traditions may be combined since they all emerge from the same true source, which is, in fact, primarily esoteric and gnostic rather than exoterically religious.¹⁶ Thus it is necessary to differentiate the strain of perennialism that maintains adherence to the Shari'a from other "perennial" Sufi-inspired movements in the West, which take a more "universal wisdom" approach to spirituality. It should also be noted that the former group's focus on "intellectual discernment" or gnostic perennialism combined with adherence to Shari'a practices has a certain appeal today, even in Muslim societies.¹⁷

Sociological approaches to "new religious movements" have posited the categories of "world-affirming," "world-accommodating," and "world-rejecting" as possible aids in understanding the tenor or style of their relationship to "mainstream" society. In the case of American Sufi movements, one may see that nearly all are "world-accommodating," specifically to the style of mainstream American culture. No special dress requirements, exoteric name-changes, etc. are required of participants and most join in order to heighten their experience of the transcendental, the divine.¹⁸ Certain Islamically-oriented movements may be more "world-accommodating" of Muslim cultural styles, which would in turn involve adopting behaviors that challenge traditional American dress and naming patterns.

These observations must be considered a caveat to Wallis' (or Weber's) typology of religious orientation, since in the present era of cultural hybridization a movement may be simultaneously culture-accommodating and world-rejecting. The term "world-rejecting" may, in fact, be a misnomer since adopting cultic or conspicuously alien or challenging styles may actually increase the attention paid to individuals and thereby generate a kind of ego-satisfaction in the contemporary context. Thus, the individual is affirming an ego attachment to the world while rejecting the dominant culture. There is an interesting tension in identity among the various Sufi groups, since some hold that blending into the existing culture is spiritually preferable and more authentic than adopting dress or behavior that may be "traditional" in a Muslim context but is "alien" in America. Some movements argue that the authenticity of a Sufi movement lies in its *not* adopting alien cultural ways. Idries Shah often states this explicitly. In an early work spon-

sored by Shah we are told that this is a universality of Sufi activity, "whether it is carried out in Afghanistan or the Shetland Islands," and that this does not involve adopting specifically Islamic or Eastern cultural practices.¹⁹

The appeal of Sufism to Americans usually occurs before formal acceptance of Islam, and many persons involved in Sufi movements never come to formally practice Islam. This initial appeal seems to take place largely through an attraction to certain cultural elements influenced by Sufism, such as poetry or music, or through the writings of Western-based Sufis such as Idries Shah. Shah's early work, *The Sufis*, is often cited by Americans as that which first interested them in Sufism.²⁰

For Americans, belonging to some sort of Sufi organization provides fellowship and a support system of like-minded spiritual seekers. In many American Sufi orders, Islamic traditions such as demonstrating respect for the teacher by standing when he enters, sitting erect during lectures, deferring to others, and separating males and females are experienced as positive factors. Most orders offer some form of personal instruction in spiritual practices such as meditation, and recognize the rather "elusive" quality of spiritual progress through conferring ranks or acknowledging heightened responsibilities in certain followers who are advancing on the path. The intensity of this training varies with the type of order, its leadership, and the size of its organization.

Finally, over the past several years, a burgeoning cyber community has made information about Sufi groups in the West much more accessible. Even the smaller movements are now able to make their publications and their ideas public. Several general sites exist that maintain links to Sufi resources. Among them is , with a list of Sufi related resources on the Internet.

Sufi Lineages in America

It was not until the late 1960s that immigration to the United States became more feasible for a new generation of Sufi teachers born in Muslim societies. It is therefore only after this time that we see the establishment of most American branches of traditional Sufi orders. In the following section, a brief listing of movements functioning in America will be given, arranged insofar as possible according to Sufi order (*tariqa*) affiliation.²¹

A feature of contemporary Western spiritual teachers and movements is their independent and eclectic outlook. It should therefore be recognized that many individuals and movements fall outside of or across the categories of a *tariqa*-based schema. It is only since the 1980s that attempts have been made to order these movements according to *tariqa*-based affiliation, possibly as a result of increased influence by immigrant Islamic

movements. Internet listings seem to favor the *tariqa*-base as an organizing principle.

Chishti Order²²

This order was founded by Hazrat Inayat Khan (1880-1927), a Chishti Sufi and musician from India who first came to the West in 1912.²³ His son, Pir Vilayat Khan (b. 1916), is the current leader of this Sufi Order in the West. Vilayat reads widely and was raised and educated in Europe. His teachings embrace an interest in contemporary science and psychology. He is also eclectic in his Sufi practices, continuing his father's teachings such as the "universal worship," a service where selections are read from all of the world scriptures, and leading his disciples in chants and meditation practices based on various traditions including alchemy and other hermetic sciences. His meditations resemble Jungian-inspired or psycho-synthesis "wakeful dreaming," where the listeners go into a trace-like state and Pir Vilayat talks them through various images and moods.²⁴

Practices of the Sufi Order members include Islamic *dhikrs*²⁵ but not necessarily the five daily prayers. Pir Vilayat Khan's knowledge of Sufi thought and practice is based on his work with masters in India as well as on *interpretations* of Sufism by Western scholars such as Henry Corbin. Disciples take initiation from Pir Vilayat or from his deputies and are often given a new spiritual name that may be Islamic, Hindu, mythological, etc. They do personal practices such as the *dhikr* and *wazifas*.²⁶ In areas where there is sufficient membership, higher level initiates may gather to read certain unpublished writings of Hazrat Inayat Khan called Gathas, Githas, Sangathas, and Sangithas. Currently there are different concentrations within this Sufi Order, including the universal worship and healing order; an individual may be an initiate in one or more of these. It is estimated that some 10,000 people in North America have become initiated into this order, although perhaps only 2,000 are currently participating in regular Sufi Order activities.²⁷ In February, 2000, Pir Vilayat officially passed the leadership of the Sufi Order to his son, Zia Inayat Khan.

The International Sufi Movement

This group follows the teachings of Hazrat Inayat Khan under the leadership of another of his sons, Hidayat Inayat Khan (b. 1917). The movement was previously headed for a short time by his son Fazal Inayat Khan (b. 1917).²⁸ Fazal headed this movement for only two years, 1967-68, and was then forced out of leadership. He then started his own organization in England, called "The Sufi Way." The Sufi Movement is based in Holland and up to now has been more active in Canada than in the U.S. The U.S. repre-

sentative is a woman, Murshida Rabia Ana Perez. Members of the order hold weekly classes and *dhikr* and cooperate with other movements such as Sufi Islamia Ruhaniat Society and the Sufi Order in joint activities.

Sufi Islamia Ruhaniat Society (SIRS)

This is the branch of Sufi teaching founded by Murshid Samuel Lewis (d. 1971). Lewis was born in 1896 in San Francisco, and studied with spiritual teachers in various traditions such as Zen Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam. He became a disciple of Hazrat Inayat Khan in 1923 and studied in Pakistan with Sufis in the early 1960s.²⁹

The organization continued by Lewis' disciples is closely associated with the Sufi Dance Movement and also has links to the branch of the Mevlevi Order in the United States under the leadership of Jelaluddin Loras. After Lewis' death in 1971, his followers briefly joined Pir Vilayat Khan in the Sufi Order, but in 1977 chose to go their own way.³⁰ The present Pir is Moineddin Jablonski, who lives in Hawaii.³¹ The Sami Mahal is a Sufi Center in San Rafael, California, associated with this order, which is under the leadership of Vasheest Davenport and publishes a newsletter called "The Sound."³²

Chishti Mission to the West

This order is headed by Hakim Muinuddin Chishti of the Chishti Sabiri line.³³ According to his autobiographical statement,³⁴ Hakim Muinuddin first began corresponding with a Chishti teacher in Ajmer, India, named Sufi Wahiduddin Begg (d. 1979).³⁵ He studied traditional Islamic medicine in Afghanistan and the Indian sub-continent and later with Syed Safdar Ali Shah Chishti of Lahore. From a center in upstate New York, Hakim Muinuddin created a series of videotapes giving instructions in traditional healing.

Association of Spiritual Training/Sufi Foundation

Wahid Bakhsh Sial Rabbani (1910-1994), was a *khalifa* of Syed Mohammad Dhauqi Shah (d. 1951), an Indian Chishti in the Chishti-Sabiri line.³⁶ Rabbani was based in Rahimyarkhan, Pakistan, and had disciples in the West and in Malaysia, whom he guided with teachings in English. These are published in the form of a booklet series entitled *The Sufi Path*.³⁷

Dar al-Ihsan

This movement is based in Bristol, Connecticut, and currently operates out of a small strip mall center. A deputy (*khalifa*) of the late Pakistani Sufi Barakat Ali heads the group, which holds weekly *dhikr* meetings and

has attracted a number of American followers. Plans for a larger center are in the making. The group has a website and publishes a monthly newsletter.

Chishti Foundation

This is primarily a South Asian group of followers of the Sufi Shaykh Afzal al-Din Nizami of Chicago (formerly of Hyderabad, India). The group is Chishtiyya-Nizamiyya and holds bi-monthly *dhikr* sessions and, when musicians are available, has sponsored *qawwalis*.

Helveti-Jerrahi

The Helveti-Jerrahi, a Turkish order known for its robust *dhikr*, was brought to America by Shaykh Muzaffer Ozak (1916-1986) of Istanbul who first came to the U.S. in 1980, although many Western students of Sufism had previously visited his bookshop in Istanbul.³⁸ In 1980, Shaykh Muzaffer toured a number of American cities performing an elaborate Helveti-Jerrahi *dhikr* with his disciples.³⁹

The strongest base of the order is the New York City area. The main representatives have been Tosun Bayrak⁴⁰ and Shaykh Nur (Lex Hixon, 1941-1995). In the San Francisco Bay area, the main leader is psychologist Ragip Frager, who runs a transpersonal institute in Redwood City, California. Shaykh Nur was in charge of Masjid al-Farah on Mercer Street until his death. This property had been presented by a disciple, Fariha Friedrich du Menil, in 1980.⁴¹ Another branch of the order, characterized as "more orthodox," meets in Spring Valley, NY, under the Turkish-American Shaykh, Tosun Baba. Rocher and Charqaoui assess the current wave of conversions of Westerners to Islam. They describe activities of the *tariqa* in the early 1980s, including the Helveti-Jerrahi mosque, a *dhikr* ceremony and dinner, and a public performance of the *dhikr* in New York at the cathedral of Saint John the Divine.⁴²

Shaykh Nur (Hixon) is a prominent figure in a number of American spiritual movements. He has a Ph.D. in religion from Columbia, where he specialized in comparative mysticism. He met Shaykh Muzaffer while the latter was a guest on a radio program he hosted in New York on which a number of spiritual leaders were featured. Nur eventually became his disciple and accepted Islam while maintaining his universalist orientation. Rocher and Charqaoui comment, "This gentle and affable man is an orthodox priest on Monday, a Buddhist lama on Tuesday, a Khalifa on Thursday "Christian among the Christians, Muslim among the Muslims."⁴³ This orientation seems to have led to some friction among members of the *tariqa* that became more evident after the death of Muzaffer Effendi, whose successor

in Istanbul, Safer Effendi (d. 1999), was said to be more strict.⁴⁴

Naqshbandi Order

Naqshbandi-Haqqani

The Naqshbandi-Haqqani order is headed by Shaykh Nazim al-Kibrisi (b. 1922), and is probably the most popular and fastest growing of the hybrid or Islamically-oriented movements.⁴⁵ Unlike many other Sufi teachers, Shaykh Nazim is well known in his native Cyprus,⁴⁶ in Turkey, and in other parts of the Muslim world, where he has a number of prominent disciples.⁴⁷ Since the late 1970s, Shaykh Nazim has initiated an increasing number of European and American disciples.⁴⁸ Of all the Sufi movements, Shaykh Nazim's seems to have the greatest appeal to Muslims, both in immigrant communities and in Muslim societies. Each Ramadan he holds a special retreat in a mosque in Peckham in London, England, which is attended by hundreds of European and American followers. His movement acquired a priory in London, reportedly bought for Shaykh Nazim by his disciple, the Sultan of Brunei. In America, the success of his movement is attested to by the opening in August, 1993 of a "Da'wa Convention Center" in Fenton, Michigan, which was attended by hundreds of guests and disciples. The order is active in the Bay Area of California, Chicago and Montreal. The Shaykh's deputy in America is his son-in-law, Shaykh Hisham Kabbani, who settled in Los Altos Hills near San Francisco in 1991.⁴⁹ Shaykh Hisham presently resides at the Fenton, Michigan center.

Male followers of Shaykh Nazim often wear distinctive traditional dress including green robes and large turbans. The turbans are often color-coded to signify the ethnic origin of those wearing them. For example, African Americans wear red-wrapped turbans while those of Latino origin may wear gold-wrapped ones.⁵⁰ While Naqshbandis traditionally practice only the silent *dhikr*, this branch of the order teaches that a vocalized group practice is also suitable for the current spiritual and cultural environment.

A significant development involving the relationship between Sufi movements and the growing Muslim community in North America was the major dispute between Shaykh Hisham Kabbani of the Naqshbandi-Haqqani and the leadership of many mainstream Sunni Muslim organizations, for example, ISNA and the American Muslim Council. Shaykh Hisham made a public statement in which he denounced American Islamic centers as being controlled by extremists. This naturally offended many Muslims associated with these centers, in particular because such accusations reinforced negative perceptions held by the American public. A joint statement signed by the leadership of most major American Muslim organizations on February 25, 1999 condemned statements made by the Shaykh before an

American State Department forum. While a long standing debate has been carried on between Hisham's followers and the "Wahhabi" opponents of Sufism over the Internet, this expansion of the conflict to a broader American public represented an escalation of tensions which could not be ignored. Normally, groups such as ISNA have resisted participation by avowed supporters of Sufi interpretations. As the head of the highest profile Sufi group in the immigrant Muslim community, Shaykh Hisham's conflict with the mainstream leadership may signal a new trend in which American Sufi movements with a significant membership of Muslim immigrants compete for recognition, leadership, and resources with established associations of Muslims who are anti-Sufi or neutral to Sufism.⁵¹

The Society for Sufi Studies

This movement is centered on the work of Idries Shah (1924-1996). While Shah has claimed Sayyid status and noble Afghan ancestry, his antecedents seem to be Afghans who received a land grant in India from the British and settled near Delhi. His father, Ikbal Ali-Shah, immigrated to England and married a British woman.⁵² In the mid 1950s Idries Shah worked as secretary-companion to the director of the Museum of Magic and Witchcraft on the Isle of Man and published his first book, *Oriental Magic*.⁵³ Both Idries Shah and his brother Omar Ali Shah were involved in the leadership of the movement.⁵⁴ In the United States, Shah's main deputy is Stanford University psychologist Robert Ornstein. Omar Ali-Shah, known to his followers as "Agha," essentially formed his own movement in the 1970s and is somewhat more Islamically oriented in his teachings than was his brother.⁵⁵ Omar Ali-Shah's disciples read the books and study the Sufi stories together. Initiates also participate in special exercises designed to transform awareness. They hold annual meetings, the most recent of which was near Granada, Spain.

Both Shah brothers seem to rely heavily on the tradition of Gurdjieff⁵⁶ in their teachings and in their eventual organization building, primarily in Europe and in South America. Idries Shah had as one of his goals the dissemination of Sufi ideas to a broad Western audience, understood as only incidentally connected to an Islamic cultural context.⁵⁷ Shah groups in America advertise their existence through addresses printed in the back of their many publications.⁵⁸ It is likely that they exist in most major cities of the United States, although details are difficult to establish since the movement is secretive.⁵⁹ Shah's followers hold discussions of Sufi stories in what are called "preparatory study groups."

The training agenda of Shah groups is set out in an early publica-

tion, which claims that Sufism is universal and can be analyzed in the following five steps: (1) The potential Sufi first hears about Sufism. (2) The aspirant makes contact with Sufis. If he makes the right contact, he will be given further guidance, an interview, a reading or an assignment of some kind. (3) People meet regularly and may be grouped in enterprises that bear no resemblance to spiritual activities known elsewhere. (4) People from the groups are carefully selected with the leader's approval and assigned to carry out specific tasks and certain exercises. (5) The individual may be sent on a journey and given opportunities to develop his or her "inner life." "At any one of the five stages anyone may withdraw or be dismissed as unsuitable."⁶⁰ While the study-group meetings seem to have been discontinued by Idries Shah followers in America, pre-existing groups continue to meet to carry on the "work" through fund-raising activities such as promoting books sponsored by ISHK book services. At one time, this fund-raising was done for Afghanistan relief, but now it seems to be more oriented to getting the group's message out. At present, since the group meetings seem to have been annulled, members respond to periodically mailed Sufi stories by writing to a post officer box in the Bay Area.

Omar Ali-Shah terms his teaching "The Tradition" and explains that Sufism is "Neither a cult nor a religion: it is a practical philosophy."⁶¹ He has followers in the greater Los Angeles area. Meetings are an important part of his teaching, which stresses "harmonious group energy."⁶²

The Golden Sufi Center

Although they trace their lineage to the Naqshbandi Sufi order, the Golden Sufi Center is a "perennial" Sufi movement. This movement was inspired by the teachings and writings of a female teacher, Irena Tweedie,⁶³ who travelled to India and became the disciple of a Hindu Naqshbandi, itself a highly unusual if not unprecedented combination. Tweedie chronicled the process of her instruction in *Chasm of Fire*, first published in 1985, and since available in an expanded version as *Daughter of Fire*.⁶⁴ Once the book was published, she began to give lectures at the Theosophical Society in London and started a small meditation group. Her followers later expanded to Germany and Switzerland. She first visited the United States in the role of a spiritual teacher in 1985 and again in 1987 when she came to the Bay Area accompanied by fifty disciples from London. She appointed Llewellynh Vaughan-Lee as her successor before her retirement in 1992.⁶⁵ Vaughan-Lee started a group in Inverness in Marin County, California, and now visits the United States regularly to give seminars on Jungian dream interpretation.

There are an estimated 500 to 600 members of this movement in Germany and Switzerland, 300 in England, and 200 in the United States. Members state that there is no external hierarchy or structure and that there is, in fact, "no such thing as a Sufi." Tweedie's teacher was the first Hindu in the line: clearly, there is no longer a need for followers to become Muslims.⁶⁶

Naqshbandi Foundation for Islamic Education

This is not a Sufi order in the sense that it requires initiation and following a specific teacher, but rather an organization committed to the purpose of bringing scholars of Islam and genuine Sufi teachers together to work for the moral and spiritual uplifting of the Muslim community. It is organized by Dr. Ahmad Mirza of Peoria, Illinois. The main spiritual advisor in the United States is Khwaja Muhammad Masum, a Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi Sufi from Kurdistan, who lives in Texas. The foundation has sponsored two annual conferences in Chicago in honor of the 'Id Milad al-Nabi (birthday of Prophet Muhammad).⁶⁷

Several other Naqshbandi groups are worthy of mention, such as those with connections to the Mufti of Syria, Ahmad Kuftaru, the Naqshbandi-Owaidi, and the followers of Maulana Zulfikar Ahmad.⁶⁸

Rifa'i Order

Al-Hayyati ar-Rifa'i al-Hussaini

A Rifa'i branch in New York is connected to the Rifa'is of Kosovo and Bosnia. The work entitled *The Writing on the Water: Chronicles of a Seeker on the Islamic Sufi Path* by Muhyiuddin Shakor,⁶⁹ a followers of this order, describes some of the activities and teachings of this order but does not provide historical details or the name of the Shaykh.

Qadiri-Rifa'i (Ansari)

The Qafiriyya-Rifa'i of the San Francisco Bay Area, led by Shaykh Taner Vergonen, originated in Tarsus, Turkey.⁷⁰ Shaykh Taner first came to the United States to study at Western Michigan University in the 1970s. He returned to Turkey from 1977 to 1992, and then came back to the United States. He is currently Pir (leader) of the Qadiri-Rifa'i *tariqa* of the Americas. There are centers of this order in Berkeley, Marin County, Santa Fe, and Los Angeles. At present, some 400 persons comprise the mailing list. Activities of Shaykh Taner include *dhikr* circles, public lectures, and intensive personal instruction of *murids*.

Association of Islamic Charitable Foundations

This group is based in Lebanon. It was formally registered in the United States in 1990. In the U.S. and Canada there are centers in Philadelphia, Miami, Anaheim, Montreal, Ottawa and Vancouver. At present the movement appeals primarily to Arab Muslims who follow the teachings of Shaykh al-Habashi, a hadith scholar. The focus seems to be on a strict adherence to the creed of Shafi'i-Ash'ari theology.⁷¹ In Philadelphia there are activities such as a 24 hour FM radio station with Islamic programming, and a school with 120 K-6 pupils. Several centers train "religious chanting teams" of young men who wear white robes with green sashes and chant devotional hymns. While participating in Sufi gatherings, they have provoked other participants by criticizing accommodations to the American context and any Sufi doctrines which imply an anthropomorphic sense of the deity.⁷² They have also generated controversy among mainstream Muslims by contending that the direction of prayer (*qibla*) in the Americas has not been properly determined and that all individuals and institutions should reorient the direction of their prayers.⁷³

The Rifa'i Ma'rufi Fellowship of Chapel Hill, North Carolina

This order is guided by Sufi Shaykh Sherif Chataalkaya who originally came to the U.S. in 1992 at the invitation of the Manhattan center of the Halveti-Jerrahis, specifically of Salik Baba, one of Shaykh Muzafer's khali-fas.⁷⁴ Sherif Baba's Shaykh was Burhan Efendi of Izmir. Sherif had studied with Shaykh Muzafer Ozak in Istanbul beginning in 1968, as well as with other guides in the Sufi tradition.⁷⁵ A businessman who owned a carpet store, he was invited by a store called "The Silk Road" in North Carolina that featured Sufi books and music to move there. Sufi activities around the Fellowship have been gradually expanding since then, including teaching sessions of the Shaykh, *dhikrs*, and performing devotional songs known as *ilabis*. The order has built bridges to other Sufi organizations including the Bawa Muhaiyuddeen Fellowship and the Sufi Order. It is still a relatively small movement with a membership of about 50 in 1995. The group has been active in supporting the annual Rumi festival in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, in 1998 and 1999.

Shadhili Order

Shadhiliyya-Miriamiyya

This group was headed by Frithjof Schuon until his death in 1998. Schuon, more privately known as Shaykh Isa Nur al-Din,⁷⁶ was originally from Switzerland and moved to Bloomington, Indiana in the 1970s. He was

connected with the Shadhiliyya-Alawiyya of Algeria. Many prominent scholars of Islam such as Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Martin Lings, Titus Burchhardt, Victor Danner and William Stoddart have been associated with his teachings. After briefly studying with Shaykh Ahmed al-'Alawi,⁷⁷ Schuon seems to have had his own visionary inspiration to connect with Mary and Jesus in his spiritual practices. For some time his movement has been known as the "Tariqa Miriamiyya," or path of Mary, which perhaps one could associate with the eternal feminine principle. While the practices of the *tariqa* are Islamic, there is also a certain eclecticism featuring terminology and other practices from Christian, Hindu and Native American traditions, on which Schuon had also written. Schuon chose not to lecture publicly and to remain personally secluded, but apparently taught a circle of followers in Bloomington.

Habibiyya

The Darqawiyya-Habibiyya movement is led by 'Abd al-Qadir al-Murabit, formerly Ian Dallas. Dallas, a scriptwriter who played the part of the magician in Fellini's movie "8 1/2," was initiated by Moroccan Sufi Shaykh Muhammad ibn al-Habib al-Darqawi in 1967.⁷⁸ By 1976, he had enough followers to establish a Sufi community in Norwich, England. After a period of promoting Maliki fiqh as the ideal legal system, he adopted a more strict and militant Islamic position. This development can be traced in his writings, which move from *The Book of Strangers* by Ian Dallas, a mystical quest novel,⁷⁹ to *The Sign of the Sword* by 'Abd al-Qadir al-Sufi,⁸⁰ to *Jihad: A Groundplan*,⁸¹ and then to *The Sign of the Sword* by Shaykh 'Abd al-Qadir al-Murabit.⁸² He first brought the movement to the U.S. in 1973 and his followers established a center in Berkeley in 1977. His next venture was a community in Spain,⁸³ which was initially part of a broader movement to restore Islam to Andalusia. The group became increasingly rigid and cult-like, adopting the name "the Murabitun," and minting their own gold coins to try to avoid the contamination of the interest-based international banking system. The community convulsed during the late 1980s amid hints of financial scandal and abuses of polygamy.⁸⁴ A strongly Islamically-oriented international community of less than 100 persons near Granada maintains links to 'Abd al-Qadir. They interact with immigrant Muslims in the area and visiting Sufi Shaykhs from Morocco. 'Abd al-Qadir continues to have followers active in Spain, South Africa, England, Holland, and Germany, and in the U.S. in North Carolina and Los Angeles.

Shadhiliyya Center

This movement focuses on the teachings of Shaykh Muhammad Jamal al-Rifa'i as-Shadhili, a Palestinian from Jerusalem. A small group of Sufi Order in the West members who were inclined to Islam came to Jerusalem to study with "Sidi" in 1974. In 1992, the Shaykh began to visit the U.S. in person. He now has clusters of followers in Santa Fe, Philadelphia and the Bay Area. While as many as 300 people have taken initiation at his hand, a much smaller number, perhaps 20, are following a specifically Islamic Sufi path under his teachings.⁸⁵

Mevlevi Order

The Beshara Foundation

This is a Sufi-inspired movement based in Roxburghshire, U.K., which is characterized as primarily gnostic rather than devotional. This organization was founded in England by a Turkish teacher, Bulent Rauf. About 30 graduates of the Beshara School live in the U.S.

Mevlana Foundation

Another Sufi teacher who studied with Bulent Rauf is Reshad Feild. Feild was raised in London where he studied in the Gurdjieff-Ouspensky tradition, including Druids and other occult movements. In the 1960s he was initiated in the Sufi Order by Pir Vilayat Khan. He seems to be describing his Sufi training of the late 1960s and early 1970s with Bulent Rauf and in the Mevlevi order of Turkey in his book *The Last Barrier*.⁸⁶ He founded the Mevlana Foundation in 1976. At present, Feild has a training institute in Switzerland, although he was for a time teaching disciples in the American Southwest and has been influential in other American Sufi movements.⁸⁷

Mevlevi Order of America

Yet another branch of the Mevlevi order is headed by Jelaluddin Loras, the son of the late Shaykh of the order in Konya, Turkey, Suleyman Dede (d. 1985). This group is active in the San Francisco Bay Area and teaches the whirling dance to students. Shams Friedlander's *The Whirling Dervishes*⁸⁸ reflects an early Mevlevi influence. Friedlander has been active in a number of American Sufi movements.

Threshold Society

Kabir Helminski is a teacher in the Mevlevi Order who studied with Samuel Lewis, Ram Das, Reshad Feild, Tosun Bayrak, and Murat Yagan, among others.⁸⁹ Kabir and his wife Camille have received recognition as

teachers of the Mevlevi way from Jelaluddin Celebi, the leader of the Mevlevi Order in Turkey. A small Sufi circle has met in Vermont for the past twenty years. Since the publication of Kabir's book, world-wide demand for spiritual instruction has led him to design a 99-day correspondence course, which is currently being followed by several hundred persons.

Tijani Order

Membership in the American branch of the Tijaniyya Order is about 80% African immigrant Muslims and 20% African American Muslims.⁹⁰ Branches operate in cities such as New York, Chicago, Washington, Atlanta, Philadelphia, Baltimore, New Orleans, Los Angeles and Oakland. Shaykh Ahmed Tijani ben-Omar, who is originally from Ghana, is the Chicago *muqaddam* (section head).⁹¹ In Chicago, a weekly *dhikr* is held at the Nigerian Islamic Mosque under the direction of Imam Shakir al-Nasir. The majority of African American members of this order follow Shaykh Hassan Cisse, who is based in Senegal but began missionary work in the U.S. in the late 1970s. In this order, contacts are maintained with the African centers and some American members support and send their children to Qur'anic school in Senegal. Activities of the order in the U.S. are not coordinated, since many of the African immigrants owe their primary allegiance to leaders in various African countries. African Americans who become involved in Sufism seem to be drawn to the Islamically-oriented rather than the universal Sufi orders, and generally come into the orders after participation in non-Sufi Islamic activities.

Bektashi Order

In some instances, traditional Sufi teachers from Muslim societies residing in the U.S. have developed circles of disciples almost exclusively within immigrant communities. A notable example is Baba Rexheb (d. 1995), an Albanian Bektashi master who established a small Sufi lodge (*tekke*) near Detroit in the 1950s.⁹²

Qadiri Order

While the Qadiri order has been one of the most widely dispersed world-wide, in the United States it is not that well known. Some of the Shaykhs living in the U.S. have Qadiri affiliations along with a primary one, such as Taner Ansari of the Qadari-Rifa'i and Shaykh Muhammad Ma'sum Naqshbandi. Here, one could also include the eclectic lineage of Adnan Sarhan. Sarhan, originally from Iraq, claims initiation in the Naqshbandi, Rifa'i, Qadiri and Mevlevi orders.⁹³ His teaching combines body work, yoga, dance, fellowship and *dhikr*.⁹³ He also calls his teaching "Shattari" because it

is supposed to work quickly.⁹⁴ Sarhan heads the Sufi Foundation of America in New Mexico and leads seminars around the country where participants practice movement, breathing, drumming and twirling as a path to transformation. He holds an annual two month summer camps in New Mexico. Only a small number of his followers are Muslim, as it is not required in his teachings.⁹⁵

The Bawa Muhaiyadeen Fellowship

This movement is more difficult to place within the lineage rubric. The teacher is Bawa Muhaiyadeen. The Qadiri affiliation, however, is enshrined in writing at the entrance to the mosque built by the Bawa Muhaiyadeen fellowship in Philadelphia. The anniversary of the death of 'Abd al-Qadir Jilani (1077-1166) is also commemorated annually by this group.

The Bawa Muhaiyadeen Fellowship was founded by a Singhalese teacher, Guru Bawa Muhaiyadeen, who first came to the United States in 1971 at the invitation of a young American woman.⁹⁶ He gradually gathered a group of Western disciples at his Fellowship in Philadelphia.⁹⁷ This is particularly remarkable since he was already quite elderly and never learned to speak more than rudimentary English. Guru Bawa did not formalize the practice of *dhikr* in America until 1976, and it was not until 1981 that he instituted the five Islamic daily ritual prayers among his disciples. After approximately 12 years, a mosque was built by and for his community.⁹⁸

According to Gisela Webb, tension arose in the Fellowship community after the teacher's death. This centered on the issue of whether Bawa intended a gradual movement toward the practice of Islam "as an outer manifestation of inner maturity and discipline or a concession to the human need for cultural forms, despite the 'illusory' quality of all religious distinctions."⁹⁹ No formal successor as a Shaykh was appointed by Bawa and the pattern of the community has been to continue its activities in various cities, to increasingly interact with the Islamic establishment, and to maintain a close communal structure while making extensive efforts in the publication and distribution of the teacher's works.

Dar al-Islam Movement

This movement has a primarily African American membership. They follow Shaykh Mubarak Shah Jilani of Pakistan, who is a Qadiri Sufi. This movement has been associated in the press with certain radical activities. They publish a newsletter called "The Quranic Open University."

Shi'i Sufi Movements

Nimatullahi Order

Dr. Javad Nurbakhsh, an Iranian psychiatrist, is the head of the order. He was invested with this position in 1953, and in Iran there are Nimatullahi centers in more than one hundred cities and an estimated 30,000 members of the order.¹⁰⁰ Nurbakhsh first came to America in 1974, having noted an interest in Sufism on the part of Americans he had met in Iran and among Iranians who had studied in the U.S. He rented a house in the San Francisco area for a brief period. Early gatherings were assembled through small fliers advertising his presence posted in the Shambhala bookstore on Telegraphy Avenue in Berkeley.

In 1975 he began to ask his deputy, the Shaykh of Shiraz, to come to the U.S. every summer. A house was acquired in San Francisco and one in New York to serve as *khaneqahs* of the order. After the Iranian revolution, Nurbakhsh lived in Los Angeles for a time. The order has since expanded worldwide. Dr. Nurbakhsh has resided in England since 1983. There are Nimatullahi centers in nine American cities. The majority of the disciples are Anglo-American, but a significant number are Iranian. According to William Chittick's assessment, Nurbakhsh "pays little attention to the Shari'a, but he discusses the importance of Sufi communal activities such as sessions of *dhikr*."¹⁰¹

Khanegah Maleknia Naser Ali Shah

Another branch of the Nimatullahis is led by Naser Ali Shah, who is based in Istanbul and Paris. There are *murids* of this order in New York, Boulder, and North Carolina. In this branch, followers must accept Islam. Ali Shah's nephew, who lives in Rhode Island, is the American leader or *khalifa*.

Nimatullahi-Gunabadi

The Nimatullahi-Gunabadi Sufi order under Sultan Husayn Tabandah, Rida Ali Shah (b. 1914) has branches in Orange County and Toronto. The current leader succeeded his father and was appointed *khali-fa* of the order in 1960.¹⁰² He normally resides in Iran; the followers in North America are members of the Persian community.

Ja'fari-Shadhili

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri is an Iraqi engineer and a Shi'i Muslim who had been affiliated with 'Abd al-Qadiri al-Sufi's group, the Habibiyya, during the 1970s. In 1980, he and a group of followers established a Sufi com-

munity, the Zahra Trust, in Blanco, Texas, near San Antonio. In 1981 a mosque and *madrassa* were begun as the nucleus of a community known as the "Bayt al-Deen" (home of religion), to be modeled on the first Islamic community at Medina. In winter 1981, the first "Bayt al-Deen Sufi Gathering" was convened in this location. By the late 1980s, however, Haeri had decided to move his organization to England.¹⁰³

Oveyssi-Shahmaghsoudi

Another Sufi movement of Iranian Shi'a origin is the Oveyssi order,¹⁰⁴ which has influenced two groups functioning in the U.S., both descended from Shah Maghsoud Angha (d. 1980).¹⁰⁵ The larger movement, known as the Shah Maghsoudi Order, is headed by the son of Shah Maghsoud Angha, Molana Salaheddin Ali Nader Shah Angha, known to his followers as "Hazrat Pir."¹⁰⁶ In the line of succession of this order, he is listed as the 42nd teacher and an affiliation to the Kubrawiyya line is indicated.¹⁰⁷

The order, which is also known as Maktab Tarighat Oveysi, or the School of Islamic Sufism, has many centers throughout the world, including the U.S., Canada, Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. There are at least 50 centers in California. While each center is somewhat autonomous, all activities are coordinated through the main office, which is located in San Rafael, California. A number of the center directors are women, some are American, and some are American women. Meetings held by Molana Salaheddin Angha and his deputies often attract audiences, mainly Iranian, of hundreds for *dhikr* and meditative practices. At centers in Burbank and Concord, California, meetings are held on alternate evenings to accommodate the large crowds. In addition to weekly services, various educational and community service programs, such as meditation classes, children's programs, and prison outreach, are offered through the centers.

International Association of Sufism

This movement, derived from the teachings of Shahmaghsoud, is headed by his daughter, Dr. Nahid Angha,¹⁰⁸ and the wife of another Sufi, Dr. Ali Kianfar.¹⁰⁹ Together they have founded this association, based in San Rafael, California, which aims to facilitate communication and cooperation across many Sufi orders. According to Nahid Angha, this movement was established in 1983 to introduce Sufism to the public and provide a forum for dialogue among Sufi orders, and to carry on the message of Sufism in a changing world. This organization publishes a journal, called *Sufism: An Inquiry*, and has sponsored two annual international conferences on Sufism in the Bay Area in 1994 and 1995. Its membership is predominantly

American and the formal practice of Islam is not required.

Sufism in Canada

According to one source, Sufism was first brought to Canada by Maulana Abdul Abeem Siddiqui, who in 1939 traveled and spoke in Edmonton and Toronto.¹¹⁰ In Toronto, one of the early Sufi teachers was Dr. Mirza Qadeer Baiq of Amjer, India, who was a professor in the Islamic Studies Department of the University of Toronto from the late 1960s until his death in the 1980s. He was the deputy of the Guderī Shahī branch of the Chisti Order of Amjer in Toronto. He founded organizations such as the Society for the Understanding of the Finite and Infinite (acronym SUFI), later the Sufi Circle of Toronto. Among his followers were both South Asians and Canadians who accepted Islam. There are also Alawiyya, Qadiri, and Naqshbandi orders in Toronto. The Rifa'i order was brought to Toronto by Dr. Asaf Durakovic who later moved to the U.S. but maintains followers in Canada.¹¹¹ Activities of the first Sufi Order in the West began in Toronto in 1973.

In Montreal, one of the first Islamic *tariqas* to become established was the Burhaniyya of Egypt and the Sudan after a number of followers from those countries moved to the city. One of the leaders is a French-Canadian Muslim. A center was established in 1987 where a *badra* (*dhikr* ceremony) is held on Saturday nights attended primarily by Egyptians, Sudanese, Somalis and French-Canadians.¹¹² Followers of Pir Vilayat Khan's Sufi Order in the West, under the leadership of French-Canadian Jean-Pierre (Junayd) Gallien, began holding public meetings and teaching sessions in 1974.

Since its introduction to Montreal in the early 1980s, the Naqshbandi-Haqqani order has been growing most rapidly, holding *dhikr* sessions at a mosque on St. Laurent Street. It has even been featured in articles in the most prominent English newspaper, *The Gazette*.¹¹³ In 1991, the Naqshbandi Sufi Center opened at 5405 Park Avenue; currently there are over 300 followers in Montreal. The leader of activities is a bilingual Tunisian; there is a strong outreach to the French Canadian community. Public meetings are held at centers that feature a range of other activities along New Age spirituality lines. Since contemporary Quebec society is still in the throes of an anti-church, anti-religion reaction, the more formal aspects of the tradition have been introduced gradually. At a meeting that I attended in Montreal at Centre Castelnau, a crowd of over 400 persons, mostly French-Canadians, assembled to hear a talk by Shaykh Nazim.

In western Canada, the Sufi teaching of Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat

Khan was first introduced by his friends and student, Shamcher Bryn Beorse in the early 1970s. Shamcher was living near Seattle at the time, and made contact through the mail with a seeker in Edmonton named Carol Sill. After meeting Shamcher in person, and with his encouragement, Sill began to hold meetings, and a number of *mureeds* were initiated. Centers were subsequently started in Calgary and then in Banff.

The Sufi seekers in western Canada were for a time associated with the Sufi Order, and had some contact with teachers Junayd Gallien, Anna Paloheimo and Shahabuddin David Less. Pir Vilayat also visited Calgary in those years. However, before his death in 1980, Shamcher introduced the small group to Hazrat Inayat Khan's younger son, Hidayat Inayat Khan, and under his guidance they joined the International Sufi Movement in the early 1980s. Within the Sufi Movement, the first national representative for Canada was Sufia Carol Sill.

The Sufi Movement in Canada now has centers in Edmonton, Calgary, Banff, Salmon Arm, Vancouver, Victoria and Toronto, with a membership of approximately one hundred. The present national representative, Nawab Pasnak, also edits the International Sufi Movement magazine, *Caravanserai*, which is published twice yearly from Sufi Movement headquarters in The Hague. Apart from local Center activities, the Sufi Movement in Canada also holds a yearly camp, under the direction of Pir-o-Murshid Hidayat Inayat-Khan, in the Rocky Mountains near Banff. In Vancouver, both the Sufi Order and the Sufi Movement are active.¹¹⁴ As previously mentioned, the Rafa'i affiliated Association of Islamic Charitable Projects has centers in Vancouver, Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal. The Naqshbandi-Haqqani movement is represented in Victoria, B.C., by a woman leader who conducts a regular *dhikr* for some 25 female participants.

Murat Yagan is a teacher based in Vernon, British Columbia, who claims both Bektashi and Caucasus Mountain origins for his teachings.¹¹⁵ In 1978 a group of students who had begun as students of Mevlevi Reshad Feild and Suleyman Dede went on to follow Yagan, who had moved to Canada in the 1950s. While Yagan had studied with the Bektashis in Istanbul, he gave more attention to a "pre-Islamic" Sufi teaching called "Ahmusta Kebzeh," which was said to originate in the Abkhazian region.¹¹⁶ This teaching seems to resemble Gurdeffian thought rather than traditional Sufi attitudes, as in Yagan's assertion that "Sufism is not a lifestyle, and it is not a religion," followed by his discussion of technical exercises "to activate the responses of the nervous system to specific vibrations."¹¹⁷

Areas of Intersection

I contend that there are two principal areas of intersection of Muslim and American cultural styles and practices that are fostered by American Sufi movements. (1) The sphere of translation; *haafis*, arts and intellectual activities, including psychology, holistic health, dance, music, literature, poetry and publishing. This sphere represents at least some influence of Islam via Sufism on American culture. (2) The sphere of sites and ceremonies-space, including mosques, *maqams*, *mazars*, and *khanqahs*.

The Sphere of Translation

The influence of the perennial Sufi movements is broader in mainstream Western culture, although a visit to any “metaphysical” bookstore will demonstrate the increasing volume of works by Islamic Sufis and their disciples. The Islamically-oriented movements favor translations and commentaries on classical Sufi texts, while the perennial Sufi movements favor quest narratives, teaching stories and transpersonal psychology.¹¹⁸

Idries Shah aimed at disseminating Sufi ideals to a broad and influential Western audience.¹¹⁹ His success in this regard has been outstanding, and he seems to have achieved it by targeting groups at the “high end” of the Western intellectual spectrum, such as writers and psychologists.¹²⁰ Among the notable literary figures associated with his movement are Doris Lessing, the late Robert Graves, and Ted Hughes. While none of these figures is American, their works are clearly influential all over the English-speaking world. In England, magazine articles and books hinting that Shah possessed miraculous powers and was the recognized head of the World Sufi movement were planted beginning in the 1960s, creating a certain mystique around him and his organization. Shah is a noted author in his own right. His many works are distributed by major trade publishers.¹²¹ Shah’s early deputy in the United States, Stanley Ornstein, cast traditional Sufi materials into the idiom of the psycho-therapeutic community. In the 1970s, Ornstein’s book, *The Psychology of Consciousness*,¹²² met with an enthusiastic reception in the academic psychology community. Its release coincided with the rising interest in studying bio-feedback and other techniques for shifting moods and awareness. Ornstein has continued to produce books in this field over the years and recently teamed up with James Burke, host of the well-known television series “The Day the Universe Changed,” to write *The Axemaker’s Gift: A Double-Edged History of Human Culture*.¹²³

The Sufi Order in the West, under the direction of Pir Vilayat Khan, has held annual symposia since 1978 under the auspices of the Omega Institute, which draws together prominent teachers in holistic healing, New

Age and Eastern spirituality, and humanistic science. Another Sufi order which has as its goal an audience broader than immediate disciples, in this case academic scholars of Sufism in the West and their readers, is the Nimatullahi order led by Nurbakhsh. In the 1990s Nurbakhsh invited noted professors of Islamic and Sufi studies to a series of conferences in Washington D.C. and London.

The Muhiyuddin Ibn Arabi Society is yet another Sufi-inspired organization active in Great Britain and America. Among their activities in the U.S. is the sponsorship of an annual academic conference held at the University of California, Berkeley, to which academics in the field of Sufi studies are invited to give learned papers. The purpose of these activities is the dissemination of the work of Ibn 'Arabi rather than recruiting or training disciples.¹²⁴

The perennialist school of Frithjof Schuon and his followers has had a wide impact on both the academic study of religion in the West and Muslim circles in the West and abroad. The studies of Schuon on *Understanding Islam* and *Islam and the Perennial Philosophy* have inspired many with an appreciation for the spiritual dimension of Islam. Martin Lings and Seyyed Hossein Nasr, as has been noted, are two Schuon-influenced scholars who exemplify the perennialist position and also address a Muslim audience in their writings. Their impact on Islamically-inclined youth¹²⁵ as well as intellectuals in Muslim societies such as Turkey, Pakistan and Malaysia has been significant. It is not an overstatement to call Nasr the most prominent spokesperson of Islam to Western audiences.

Those in American Sufi movements who are spiritual seekers naturally also take a strong interest in contemporary psychological approaches to personal growth, especially those of humanistic and transpersonal psychology. Idries Shah and Vilayat Khan are two perennialist Sufis who are conversant with psychotherapeutic discourse and who contribute to it at some level.¹²⁶ In addition, attempts to bridge Islamic and contemporary psychological models have been made by the Western-trained psychologists Reza A. Arasteh,¹²⁷ Muhammad Shafii,¹²⁸ and more recently by Laleh Bakhtiar.¹²⁹ Bakhtiar, who is based in Chicago, plans to expand her Institute of Traditional Psycho-Ethics and Guidance into a training institute for Muslim counselors using transpersonal perspective. Jungian psychology, because it incorporates a spiritual dimension and involves dream work, has been of particular interest in American Sufi movements. The Enneagram movement,¹³⁰ a form of spirituality assessment that is very popular in transpersonal psychology circles well beyond the American Sufi movements, is claimed by some to be based on the teachings of the Naqshbandi Order.

Arts and Performance

The spread of Islam is often associated with Sufi teachers who learned the local idiom and couched their message in vernacular poetry and popular musical tradition. Music and the arts as a source for Sufi transmission in America should not be overlooked. The first Sufi teacher in America, Hazrat Inayat Khan, was a musician in the classical Hindustani tradition. His son, Pir Vilayat, is accomplished in Western music. Various Sufi Order choirs have recorded inspirational and devotional vocal music. A study of music used in *dhikr* performances at the Chisti-influenced Sami Mahal concluded that, "Sufi music at the Sami Mahal is distinctively American, yet its *dhikr* shares essential mystical goals, texts, aspects of tradition, form and method with counterparts in Islamic Sufism."¹³¹ This would be true of most music produced by American Sufis.

Sufi tours of the Mevlevi and Helveti-Jerrahi dervishes have been one very successful way of stimulating American interest in Islam. At a more general level, Sufi musicians from the U.S. and abroad have produced widely available recordings. The popularity of World Beat music, especially the Qawwali music of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, has become another means for Sufism to infiltrate Western popular culture. Qawwali is the traditional form of Sufi music in the Indian subcontinent, where its performance was considered a religious ritual by the Chisti order. One observer sees the current popularity of Qawwali music in the East and West and its "disco-ization" as an example of "third World post-modernism." "The postmodern revival of Qawwali owes a good deal to Martin Scorsese's film, 'The Last Temptation of Christ,' where Qawwali and other Islamic music provided passionate musical backing to a narrative that, ironically, tried to undermine the religious sanctity of its subject matter."¹³² The use of Qawwali in movie scores, in particular the music of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, continues. A recent example is "Dead Men Walking."

Also responsible for the popularity of Sufism through art, music, and poetry are the new English translations of Sufi poets. These are increasingly popular and are also available in audio versions. A new type of American Sufi fusion poetry is being written by the American Abd al-Hayy Moore. Moore has adapted traditional Sufi forms of poetry such as praises of the Prophet which are chanted at Maulid celebrations to expression in the English language. He has also been invited by Muslim groups such as the Islamic Circle of North America to compose and recite poetry on themes such as the situation in Bosnia.¹³³

Sufi Dancing

In contemporary America, most people know of Sufism by having had some contact with "Sufi dancing," whether in the form of spotting "I love Sufi dancing" bumper stickers or seeing postings on church bulletin boards or community newspapers. In traditional Islamic practice, music and dancing are generally frowned upon. Classical Sufi texts often discuss the permissibility of audition (*sama*'), whether musical instruments can be used for accompaniment, and so on. Among the classical Sufi orders, it is well-known that the Naqashbandis advocate a society which militates against music as part of ritual or spiritual practice, while the Indian Chishtis tend to use music as a vehicle for "moving the heart" to more ecstatic and refined states. Orchestrated dancing, as opposed to swaying or convulsing in ecstasy, is relatively rare, a notable exception being the *sema* of the Mevlevi order of dervishes which earned them the sobriquet of "Whirling dervishes."

The Sufi dance movement was inspired by the American Chishti Sufi, Samuel Lewis (d. 1971), based on "traditional practices of the Middle East,"¹³⁴ although in its current form it seems more like folk or round dancing. Unlike regular folk dances, Sufi dancing incorporates meditation, periods of focusing on sound or vibration, or "attuning" to one's own center or to the moods and symbols evoked in the chants and dances. According to Samuel Lewis, the purposes of the dances are both "moral development" and "psychic purification."¹³⁵ Most of the dances are performed in concentric circles with musicians and a "caller" or leader standing in the middle. The dancers perform simple movements, turning back and forth and expanding and contracting the circles. The leader introduces the chants that accompany the dances, explaining how the symbolism of the movements corresponds to the meaning of the chants, which may come from a variety of the world's religions. Some examples are, "La illaha illa Allah (there is no God but God)" from Islam, "Hare Krishna Hare Rama" from Hinduism, "Kyrie Eleison" from Christianity, and "Shema Yisrael" from Judaism. There are supposed to have been 2000 dances, of which 200 are still commonly practiced.

The Sufi dance movement has spread far beyond the San Francisco Bay area and the initial group of "Sufi" Sam's disciples, most of whom are in the Sufi Islamiyyat Ruhaniyyat Society (SIRS), a universal Sufi movement.¹³⁶ Sufi dance is now also popular with church groups and people who work in therapeutic and other organizations. Dance workshops are held in a variety of locations. One can even receive a "mentor teacher" certificate. Members of Pir Vilayat Khan's organization, the Sufi Order, also practice

these dances. The SIRS disciples of Sam Lewis were very active in the Sufi Order in the early 1970s, when Lewis told his disciples to join Pir Vilayat's movement and accept his leadership, Sam himself having been a student of Hazrat Inayat Khan.

The dances provide some opportunity of "attuning" to maleness and femaleness as distinct qualities.¹³⁷ In some cases, the women chant different choruses from the men or form separate circles, but in general there is no segregation and participants of both sexes join hands or circle with each other as in other folk dances. The Islamically-oriented Sufi orders in America do not practice this type of dancing, although neither do they explicitly condemn it.

Lewis also created a repertoire of "spiritual walks" that foster attunement to the planets, prophets, elements, and so on, and involve imaginative use of pacing, breath and movement in order to evoke a mood and instill permanent qualities in the practitioner.

Publishing

The number of distributors and publishers of Sufi books is impressive and still expanding. Among the well-known publishers specializing in Sufi materials are Kazi Publications in Chicago, Threshold Books in Vermont, Sufi Books/Pir Press in New York, Inner Traditions, the Islamic Texts Society, Octagon Press, and the Foundation for Traditional Studies. Some of these publishers are affiliated with specific Sufi orders. Some specialize in particular perspectives, for example perennialism. More and more American Sufi groups disseminate information in Sufi cyberspace, including maintaining Sufi Order web pages and discussion lists.

The Sphere of Institutions

Mosques, Mazars and Maqams

Each American Sufi movement has its own form of organization and a different concept of hierarchy and leadership. In this section I will concentrate on articulations and transformations of traditional Sufi institutions of the *khanqah* (*khanegah*), the mosque and the shrine.

According to Samuel Lewis, the first American Sufi *khanqah* was the "Kaaba Allah" in San Rafael, California, established by disciples of Inayat Khan in the 1920s.¹³⁸ It seems to have been more a meeting place than a residential teaching center. Disciples of Sam Lewis have often lived communally, as did those of Pir Vilayat in *khankahs* established in various cities. In the mid-1970s, the Sufi Order purchased land at New Lebanon in upstate New York for the site of "The Abode of the Message," a seminar and retreat

center. Sufi summer camps had previously been held nearby. Today a community of some 50 adults and 15 children live and maintain a school at this location.¹³⁹ The Nimatullahi order also has established *khaneqahs* in nine American cities.

Islamic Sufi orders in some cases have established mosques of their own. While the mosque of the Bektashis may be the first "Sufi" mosque, the first built by a predominantly American Sufi community was probably that of the Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship in Philadelphia, built in 1984. This institution is not restricted to members of the Fellowship and involves Sufis in broader local and international Muslim networks. Webb mentions that some of the newer members of the "mosque congregation" who have had traditional Islamic training have become resources for those in the community who wish to know more about the traditional Islamic sciences.¹⁴⁰ The Fellowship mosque leader participates in city-wide meetings of the Imams of the Philadelphia mosques, and there have been visits from representatives from Islamic countries and educational institutions who take an interest in understanding the goals and work of the Fellowship. Other Muslim Sufi orders who have established mosques are the Mevlevi in Fairfax, Virginia; the Helveti Jerrahi in New York City, Newark and Palo Alto; and the Naqshbandi-Haqqani of Shaykh Nazim.

Tomb shrines are typical of popular Sufism in the Middle East and South Asia. These are also called *turbe*, *mazar*, or *dargah*, depending on the language. Perhaps the first indigenous American Sufi tomb is that of Samuel Lewis, who died in 1971 in San Francisco at the age of 75. He is buried at the Lama Foundation, a New Age retreat and conference center in New Mexico. "The grave itself is a simple affair; a neat pile of stones and simple marker. On the grave there are many objects that have been left by pilgrims. These include strings of beads, the remains of incense and candles and pieces of thread or yarn tied around stones on the funeral mound."¹⁴¹

Another *ziarat*, or place of visitation, is the tomb of Shah Maghsoud Angha (d. 1980) in Novato, California. Members of the Oveysi Shah Maghsoudi order organize weekly memorial visits to his shrine every Sunday.¹⁴²

Guru Bawa's *mazar* (shrine) is located in Coatesville, Pennsylvania, where the Fellowship community purchased land for a farm and a burial ground. "The community has built a *mazar* reflecting traditional Islamic architectural style. It is a simply white stucco room with a cupola and a green marble floor. The specific area under which Bawa is buried is covered with a dark green cloth embroidered with golden calligraphy of Quranic verses. An *Urs* ceremony is held at the *mazar* in the month of

Rabi'uth Thani each year to commemorate Bawa's death. The *mazar* is used for private prayer and serves as the focal point -- the 'well-spring' -- around which the individual and communal 'farming' is maintained."¹⁴³ Webb notes that Guru Bawa's room at the Fellowship in Philadelphia has become a sort of sacred space or shrine on its own where disciples may engage in private reflection and meet with each other to discuss spiritual matters, and where many pause to kiss the pillow which has been left on the bed he used to use.

Another type of Sufi shrine that may become popular among American Sufis is the *maqam*. A *maqam* is a sacred space dedicated to a Sufi saint in a location the saint has probably never visited in the flesh, or at least he is not buried there. Recently Shaykh Nazim's followers dedicated a small building which Shaykh Nazim asked to be constructed at the Haqqani Da'wa Center in Michigan as a *maqam* of his teacher, Shaykh Abdullah al-Faizi al-Daghestani. "It is considered a power station, a location for our grand Shaykh's presence twenty-four hours a day. It is of great spiritual benefit to visit such a *maqam*."¹⁴⁴

The *maqam* concept has been used to create American Islamic sacred space. As one American Sufi remarked, "It might be useful to have a *maqam* of Junayd in Berkeley, Baha al-Din Naqshbandi in St. Louis, 'Abd al-Qadir Jilani in Atlanta, Hallaj in New York City."¹⁴⁵

Dar al-Islam in Abiquiu, New Mexico, is a unique American Muslim institution founded in 1979. It has gone through a number of transformations. This small Islamic village was designed by the famous Egyptian architect Hasan Fathy, and built with money raised in Saudi Arabia by Abdullah Noorudeen Durke. Noorudeen is one of the American Sufi pioneers, responsible for several counterculture classics, including "Be Here Now," and has been associated with the New Age Lama Foundation. Noorudeen held a high rank in the Sufi Order and produced Vilayat Khan's book *Toward the One*.¹⁴⁶ He and his followers returned to Abiquiu in the mid-1970s. While in Saudi Arabia, Noorudeen made contact with prominent Saudi patrons and brought the Dar al-Islam concept into reality. Nooradeen lived for a long period in Alexandria, Egypt, and returned to the U.S. in 1994. His most recent publishing venture is *The School of the Shadhiliyya: 1 Orisons*.¹⁴⁷ He is now working on a two volume spiritual autobiography entitled, "Embracing Islam."¹⁴⁸

The successive leadership of the Dar al-Islam institution has oscillated between Sufi and more conservative Islamic orientations. In 1993, the first "American Muslim Powwow" was held at this site, bringing together American Muslims of all persuasions, including Native American Muslims.

While Sufism is not stressed as part of the orientation of the Dar al-Islam facility, many of the residents and leadership have been involved in Sufi movements.

Ceremonies and Conferences

Some of the Islamic Sufi orders hold sessions for reciting poems in praise of the Prophet Muhammad, a devotional tradition of both Sufi and some non-Sufi Muslims. These ceremonies are known as *maulids*, and may eventually constitute a bridge between participants in Sufi orders and the larger immigrant Muslim community.¹⁴⁹ Despite resistance from some segments of the immigrant Muslim community, Sufis such as Shaykh Hisham Kabbani and Shaykh Jamal have given Friday sermons in mainstream mosques. At the same time, very traditional Muslim Sufi teachers from abroad have spoken at universal Sufi conferences to largely non-Muslim audiences.

Social Organization of the Tariqas

Quite a significant number of the participants in the Islamic Sufi movements requiring a formal acceptance of Islam and a degree of adherence to Islamic law are former "perennials" or "universalists." In traditional Islamic Sufism, allegiance to a Shaykh and taking his hand in the ritual of *bay'a* or oath of allegiance was a life-long and uniquely binding commitment, and eclecticism in practice or allegiance was generally frowned upon. Today, even the Islamically-oriented Sufi Teachers in America accept initiates who have attended a single event or lecture. In fact, claims have been made that over a hundred persons may have taken initiation on a single occasion. What this means in terms of Muslim identity or even loyalty to that particular shaykh is unclear. What seems certain is that this practice is part of a gradualist policy, an adaptation to the American context. Since repeating the Muslim profession of faith is usually part of the initiation formula, Americans are at least at some level brought into Islam through this ritual.

In the American context, the popularity of certain spiritual movements seems to ebb and flow. Some members of the counter culture generation will even admit to a tendency to look for the most powerful wave of charismatic spiritual leadership and community available at a given time. Several of the movements have imploded or self-destructed when the integrity of leadership was called into question or a hint of scandal was raised, sending some members on a renewed quest. The sphere of American Sufi movements varies greatly. For some, it is restricted to members, and even members of a fairly homogeneous immigrant community.

Some of the Islamically-oriented *tariqas* may reach out more broadly to members of other *tariqas*, to Muslims generally, or to the New Age community, i.e. to non-Muslim spiritual seekers. More broad still is an appeal to academic and intellectual audiences through publishing and seminar activities. Broadest of all would be activities of universal orders such as the Sufi Order and Shah groups to include all bookstores, those interested in psychology, Sufi dances, etc. Thus, these spheres range from the national and even international integration of the Perennial/universal movements to the local base of transplant groups.

There is also a kind of post-*tariqa* or extra-*tariqa* Sufism which exists among American Muslims who have studied with one or more teachers but feel dissatisfied with *tariqa*-based Sufism while still inclined to pursue what they consider to be authentic Islamic spirituality. It is interesting to note that several Sufi teachers of American or European backgrounds have in the last half of the 20th century attracted followers from ethnic Muslim backgrounds, including Shahidullah Faridi (1915-78), an Englishman who was appointed the successor to Syed Mohammad Dhauqi Shah,¹⁵⁰ Samuel Lewis, who had at least some Pakistani disciples, and Frithjof Schuon. This augurs well for the incorporation of Sufism into American Islam, and American Sufis into the larger Muslim Sufi community. Within many American Sufi movements, some aspects of the traditional authority structure are maintained, such as when leaders act as deputies with their own authority to guide and initiate disciples in the master's name. This aspect of traditional hierarchy and authority seems particularly appealing in contemporary Western culture, where the sense of "confirmation" or spiritual authority in an arena removed from American status markers such as profession and wealth is refreshing. There may, however, be a sense in which expediency plays into the appointment of *khalifas* based on their geographic location, as when the order wants to expand into a certain region, or on their wealth and ability to influence others. This probably existed in traditional Islamic contexts as well. How succession issues will play out in these orders over the next generation of leadership will be of great interest. For instance, there are indications that *khalifas* of the Helveti order appointed by American leaders need to be confirmed by the leadership in Turkey.

It is still too early to do more than speculate about the *tariqa*-specific nature of activities engaged in by particular orders in the West and whether it has any relationship to the traditional socio-cultural position of those orders in Muslim social contexts. At the same time, it is intriguing to note that the orders having cultural and political interests both in the West and abroad are Naqshbandi-inspired. These are the Naqshbandi-Haqqani

order and the Idries Shah movement. The Naqshbandi order has been known historically to participate in political activities and have more intense contact with rulers and those wielding influence. On the other hand, the Chishti order is known in India for its openness to existing forms of musical and poetic expression and, in some cases, its acceptance of non-Muslim followers. Some Chishti-inspired movements such as the Sufi Order in the West and SIRS can be seen as continuing this tradition in an even more intense form in the American context.

How significant are the American Sufi movements? In terms of North American membership, I would estimate at most a total of 25,000 persons have been involved in all Sufi movements combined over the past two decades. Perhaps 10,000, at most, are still involved. Overall, the perennial Sufi movements have had more of an impact than the hybrids on artistic, cultural, and intellectual trends in contemporary American religious thought but less direct contact with the immigrant Muslim community in the U.S.

American Sufis who practice the Islamic religion are definitely a minority. Shaykh Nazim's group is probably the largest hybrid movement, but only a few thousand members can be confirmed at this time. It has been suggested that the total number of Anglo-American Muslims, Sufi or non-Sufi, is around 80,000.¹⁵² My own estimate is that the number is less than 40,000. Among Euro-American Muslims, I estimate that more than 10% are Sufi-oriented.¹⁵³ Euro-American females are more likely to become Muslim through marriage to males from an Islamic background, since marriage with "People of the Book" is permitted to Muslim males. Therefore, while more Euro-American women than men are becoming Muslim, one would expect that the percentage of Sufi-oriented women among Euro-American women is lower than that of their male counterparts. Some Euro-American Sufi males have intermarried with Muslim immigrant women, but this is still relatively rare. The fact that Euro-Americans are coming to Islam through Sufi movements does have the effect of somewhat legitimizing Sufism in the eyes of certain immigrant Muslims. I further estimate that less than one in a thousand of the two million African Americans who are Muslim are Sufi-inclined, although that percentage is likely to increase.

Some observers have suggested that there is an "American" quality to some Sufi activities taking place in the U.S., such as a fondness for public performance, making use of the media and Sufi dancing. This is in contrast to the more sober and retiring attitude of Sufi orders operating in Western Europe. Hybridization, however, is not limited to the middle ground of a mixture of Islamic and American elements, since the Perennial/universal movements may serve as a conduit for Islamization, while even the

transplanted or “ethnic” Sufi groups also attract a certain number of Westerners.

The other area of hybridization is the increasing interaction of American Sufi Muslims with members of immigrant cultures, especially Turks and South Asians. Immigrants from these areas brought with them a certain type of Islamic worldview and set of ritual practices that involve devotion to Prophet Muhammad and the Islamic saints. These “Ahl al-Sunna”⁵⁴ communities are returning to a higher profile role in the American Muslim framework with the decline of influence of the more literalist and politicized Muslim organizations. This decline may be attributed in part to the drying up of money from Saudi Arabia. By supporting a certain cadre of leadership and organizations, as well as by building mosques and paying partial or full salaries to ideologically-correct Imams, Saudi Arabia was able to influence the general tenor of Islamic activities in the U.S. On the other hand, the “new generation” of Muslims who are now reaching adulthood basically take one of three routes: minimal commitment to Islamic activities, strong conservative and politicized Islamic attitudes, and practicing Islam as a spiritual path. Immigrant parents who are Sufi-inclined observe this phenomenon and are increasing their formal religious participation in order to strengthen the religious bond with their children and keep them practicing Islam. Within the new generation of children of Muslim immigrants reaching adulthood in America, Sufism is less popular than more politically-oriented, activist perspectives. Young born-in-America Muslims who are attracted to Sufism tend to be of South Asian background and overwhelmingly prefer Islamically-oriented orders to universal ones.

Traditional Sufi teachers from abroad are often able to reach out to the younger generation, Muslim or American, in ways that more strict and conservative teachers from abroad cannot. These interactions, however, are predominantly in individual and personal settings. Sufi teachers as yet do not have large institutions behind them such as Islamic centers, Muslim student organizations, or mosque youth groups. They are often viewed with suspicion by these bodies and therefore their impact is not widespread in the Muslim community at large.

In terms of the integration of Muslim into American society, Sufism may be considered a positive force in the sense of providing an alternative perception of Islam that is spiritually and culturally rich and appealing. Americans have become interested in Sufism and in learning about it, often forming positive impressions of Muslim cultures and the Islamic religion. Because Sufism draws North Americans to Islam while adapting in many ways to local contexts, Sufism creates a space of “hybridization” of Islamic

and American elements. Overall, its role in Islamisizing Americans seems greater than its role in Americanizing Muslims.

Endnotes

1. In an earlier paper, Marcia K. Hermansen, "In the Garden of American Sufi Movements: Hybrids and Perennials": *New Trends and Developments in the World of Islam*, ed. Peter B. Clarke (London: Luzac, 1997), 155-78, I surveyed some of the same movements; therefore certain information and bibliographical citations are duplicated in the current study.
2. Exceptions are the two articles which appeared in the collection *Muslim Communities in America* (Albany: SUNY, 1994), ed. Yvonne Y. Haddad and Jane I. Smith: Gisela Webb, "Tradition and Innovation in Contemporary American Islamic Spirituality: The Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship," 75-108 and Francis Trix, "Bektashi Tekke and the Sunni Mosque of Albanian Muslims in America," 359-80.
3. For example, Larry Poston, in his study of conversion to Islam in *Islamic Da'wa in the West: Muslim Missionary Activity and the Dynamics of Conversion to Islam* (New York: Oxford, 1992), pays little attention to the role of Sufism. He writes, "Sufism...has not (at least in a direct sense) been a significant force in the establishment of a Muslim witness in North America. I have found no allusions to any Sufi Order in any of my discussions with Muslims or in the literature of the various organizations actively involved in da'wa activity...", 63.
4. Exceptions are the *American Muslim Journal*, produced by American Muslims, and the *American Muslim Resource Directory*.
5. David Nicolson Friedberg, "The Naqshbandis in America." M.A. thesis, Religious Studies, University of Colorado, Boulder, 1994.
6. "Sufism in America," in Timothy Miller, ed., *America's Alternative Religions*. Albany: SUNY, 1995, 107-8.
7. Jay Kinney, "Sufism Comes to America," in *Gnosis* (Winter 1994): 18-23.
8. *Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World* IV, ed. John L. Esposito. New York: Oxford, 1995, 107-8.
9. Thus, according to Chittick, the Jerrahis are "more focused on love than intellectual discernment," Shaykh Nazim's works reflect "love and the shariati basis of Sufism," and Guru Bawa taught "a synthesis of Sufism and Hindu teachings that is recognizable as Islamic only in its terminology." Ibid, 108.
10. *The Book of Enlightened Masters*. Chicago: Open Court, 1997.
11. Ibid., 37-63.
12. "In the Garden of American Sufi Movements: Hybrids and Perennials," in Peter Clarke, ed., *New Islamic Movements*.
13. "The philosophia perennis has come to signify for those devoted to traditional studies an eternal truth at the heart of all traditions..." "It has in fact been given its most profound and genuine meaning...in the writings of Frithjof Schuon, which, following upon the work

initiated by Rene Guenon and then Ananda Coomeraswami, may be said to be the most noble and complete expression of the philosophia perennis available in the contemporary world." Sayyed Hossein Nasr, preface to Frithjof Schuon, *Islam and the Perennial Philosophy*. London: World of Islam Publishing, 1976, vii-viii.

14. A recent study on Guenon in English is Robin Waterfield, *Rene Guenon and the Future of the West*. London: Crucible, 1987. See also M. Valsan, *L'islam et la fonction de Rene Guenon*. Paris: Editions de l'oeuvre, 1984. Both Guenon and Idries Shah seem to have had links with occult movements and freemasonry.

15. Brief bio-bibliographies of Guenon, Schuon and his circle may be found in Jean Borella, "Rene Guenon and the Traditionalist School," in *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, ed. Antoine Faivre and Jacob Needleman. New York: Crossroad, 1992, 330-58.

16. Some perennialists, such as Seyyed Hossein Nasr, while asserting the unitive essential truth underlying all traditions, would counsel against attempting to mix or mingle their discrete manifestations and spiritual practices. See Jane I. Smith, "Seyyed Hossein Nasr: Defender of the Sacred and Islamic Traditionalism" in *Muslims of America*, ed. Yvonne Y. Haddad. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991, 87-88.

17. Andrew Rawlinson traces these two strands of perennialism back through the respective Sufi lineages of Inayat Khan and the Shadhili-Akbaris which were, in fact, the first Sufi movements to impact the West early in the 20th century.

18. Most, if not all, American Muslims have Islamic names, but many Euro-Americans do not use them in mainstream American cultural contexts.

19. Arthur Butterfield, "The Pattern of the Sufis," in *The Diffusion of Sufi Ideas in the West*, ed. L. Lewin. Boulder: Kynsign Press, 1972, 208-210.

20. Idries Shah, *The Sufis*. New York: Doubleday, 1964.

21. The Sufi Orders are initiatic lineages, which trace the transmission of spiritual practices and transferred charisma back to the Prophet Muhammad. They are usually named after prominent saints in the lineage and often are regionally dispersed in traditional Muslim societies.

22. A Sufi order mainly found in the Indian Sub-continent, named after Abu Ishaq Chishti, and a number of subsequent saints in the lineage affiliated with the same town in central Afghanistan. This order permits listening to music as a spiritual practice, as well as the participation of non-Muslims. The two major branches, the Sabriyya and the Nizamiyya, are both represented in American Sufi movements.

23. James Jervis, "The Sufi Order in the West and Pir Vilayat Khan," in Peter B. Clarke, *New Islamic Movements*, 211-60.

24. A Jungian-inspired personal growth technique developed by Roberto Assagioli which became popular in the 1970s. It has been reported that Assagioli studied under Hazrat Inayat Khan at one point.

25. Repetitions of the pious litanies or the Names of God.

26. Individual Sufi practices involving repetition and concentration on pious phrases, the divine names, etc.

27. The Sufi Order Secretariat in Seattle maintains a mailing list of some 8,000 names.

28. Fazal Inayat Khan, *Old Thinking: New Thinking*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979); James Jervis, "The Sufi Order in the West," 218-19.

29. For a chronology of his life see *Sufi Vision and Initiation: Meetings with Remarkable Beings*. San Francisco: Sufi Islamia, 1986, 351-60. Andrew Rawlinson dedicates a biographical article to him in "The Book of Enlightened Masters," 396-403.
30. Koszegi, "The Sufi Order in the West," 213-14.
31. Jay Kinney, "Sufism Comes to America," 21.
32. The musical aspect of the *dhikr* of this center has been studied in a Ph.D. dissertation in music completed at U.C.L.A. "Music and Meaning in American Sufism: The Ritual of Dhikr at Sami Mahal, a Chishtiyya-derived Sufi Center" by Daniel Atesh Soneborn, 1995.
33. This is a branch of Chishti Sufis in the line of Ala al-Din ibn Ahmad Sabir (d. 1265), a disciple of Baba Farid Shakar Ganj, who was also the teacher of Nizamuddin Auliya (d. 1236) of the Chishtiyya-Nizamiyya line of Chishtis.
34. Hakim Muinuddin Chishti, *The Book of Sufi Healing*. New York: Inner Traditions, 1985, 6-7.
35. Author of *The Holy Biography of Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti*. Tucson: Chishti Sufi Mission of America, 1977; and *The Big Five of India in Sufism*. Amjer, n.p., 1972.
36. Author of *Islamic Sufism*. Lahore: Sufi Foundation, 1982; and *Maqam-e-Ganjshakar*. Bahawalpur: Sufi Foundation, 1979.
37. W.B. Sial Rabbani, ed., *The Sufi Path*. Rahimyarkhan: Association of Spiritual Training, 1989.
38. An autobiographical statement is found at the beginning of *The Unveiling of Love*, tr. Muhtar Holland. New York: Inner Traditions, 1981, 1-2.
39. This is available on audiocassette, as "Calling Out to Allah: Prayers and Chants in the Sufi Tradition." The Halveti-Jerrahi Dervishes. New York: Inner Traditions, 1981. For background on Turkish *dhikr* performances, see Walter Feldman, "Musical Genres and *Dhikr* of the Sunni Tarikats of Istanbul," in Raymond Lifchez, ed., *The Dervish Lodge. Architecture, Art and Sufism in Ottoman Turkey*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992, 187-202.
40. *The Most Beautiful Names*. Putney, VT: Threshold Books, 1985. Bayak has authored commentaries on several Sufi classics as well.
41. Lisbeth Rocher and Fatima Cherqaoui, *D'une foi l'autre: Les conversions a l'islam en Occident*. Paris: Seuil, 1986, 165.
42. Ibid., 165-74.
43. Ibid., 175.
44. Ibid., 174.
45. David Nicholson Friedberg has studied this order from the perspective of the teachings and membership in "The Naqshbandis in America," M.A. thesis in religious studies, University of Colorado, Boulder 1994. See also Semra Galip, "Un Gourou Nakshbandi: Sheyh Nazim Kibrisi," 437-440 and Daphne Habibis, "Mahdism in a Branch of a Contemporary Naqshbandi Order in Lebanon," 603-619 in *Naqshbandis Chimenments et situation actuelle d'un order mystique musulman. Actes de la table ronde de Sevres. 2-4 mai 1985*, eds. Gaborieau, Popovic, and Zarcone. Istanbul: Isis, 1991. For a biography of Nazim see Shaykh Muhammad Kabbani, *The Naqshbandi Sufi Way*. Chicago: Kazi, 1994, 374-408.
46. In 1995 Shaykh Nazim opposed local government efforts in Cyprus to turn mosques into museums.

47. Disciples are said to include Malasian royalty and the Sultan of Brunei. Some have claimed that Nazim has an influence on the Prime Minister of Cyprus, Rauf Denktash. S. Galip, "Un Gorou Naqshbandi," 438.
48. A Naqshbandi publication mentions that 60 people became Muslim (took *shahada*) during a visit of Shaykh Hisham to Montreal, while over 300 became disciples of Shaykh Nazim. An additional 40 became Muslim during Nazim's visit to Chicago. *Al-Naseeha: Newsletter for the Haqqani Islamic Trust of Northern California* 2 (Dec. 1993): 11, 20.
49. Shaykh Hisham recently authored *The Naqshbandi Way: History and Guidebook of the Saints of the Golden Chain* (Chicago: Kazi, 1995), which is a comprehensive history of the order.
50. A Turkish magazine entitled its piece on Shaykh Nazim "United Colors of Shaykh Nazim," a take-off on the ubiquitous Benetton advertisement. *Tempo Magazine*, reprinted in *al-Naseeha: Newsletter for the Haqqani Islamic Trust of Northern California* 2 (Dec. 1993):4.
51. Eresa Watanabe, "A Holy War of Words in Islamic U.S." *Los Angeles Times*, April 15, 1999, A.
52. Ikbāl Ali Shah's book *Islamic Sufism* (New York: Weiser, 1971) shows a clear influence of Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi teachings.
53. Peter Washington, *Madame Blavatsky's Baboon: A History of the Mystics, Mediums and Misfits who Brought Spiritualism to America*. New York: Schocken Books, 1995, 396.
54. Idris Shah essentially retired after an illness in the late 1980s. Omar Ali-Shah is the author of *Sufism for Today*. Paris: Tractus, 1991, and *Course of the Seeker*, 15. See also his latest work, *The Sufi Tradition in the West*. Alif Publications, 1995.
55. For example, he refers to Sufism as developing "awareness of God" and signs himself Omar Ali-Shah "Naqshband" in the forward to *Course of the Seeker*, 15.
56. Gurdjieff (d. 1949) was a popular esoteric teacher who operated primarily in Europe. Many claim that his teachings were inspired by Sufi teachers whom he met in the Caucasus. See George Barker and Walter Driscoll, "Gurdjieff in America: An Overview" in *America's Alternative Religions*, ed. Timothy Miller. Albany: SUNY, 1995, 259-65.
57. *The Diffusion of Sufi Ideas in the West: An Anthology of New Writings by and about Idries Shah*. Boulder: Keysign Press, 1972.
58. They have their own publishing company, Octagon Press, which publishes translations of Sufi classics as well as Shah's own works. In America, Robert Ornstein is the president of ISHK Book Service, which distributes the works of Shah and his associates, together with other titles that support their position such as the works of Desmond Morris.
59. A defector from the movement estimated U.S. membership at between 1,000 and 3,000.
60. Arthur C. Butterfield, "The Pattern of the Sufis," in *The Diffusion of Sufi Ideas in the West*, ed. L. Lewin. Boulder: Keysign Press, 1972, 209-10.
61. *The Course of the Seeker*, 15.
62. *Ibid*, 46.
63. On Tweedie and female leadership see Sara Sviri, "Documentation and Experiences of a Modern Naqshbandi Sufi," in *Women as Teachers and Disciples in Traditional and New Religions*, ed. Elizabeth Puttrick and Peter B. Clarke. Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1994,

- 77-89. Tweedie is profiled in Rawlinson, 578-81.
64. *Chasm of Fire: A Woman's Experience of Liberation through the Teachings of a Sufi Master*. Tisbury: Element, 1979 and *Daughter of Fire*. Nevada City, CA: Blue Dolphin, 1986.
65. See Llewellyn Vaughn-Lee, *The Lover and the Serpent: Dreamwork Within a Sufi Tradition*. Rockport, MA: Element Books, 1991; *The Call and the Echo: Sufi Dreamwork and the Psychology of the Beloved*. Putney, VT: Threshold, 1991; *Sufism: The Transformation of the Heart*. Golden Sufi Center, 1995.
66. Most of the information about the Golden Sufis is based on their publications and on an interview with Michael Eccles at the International Association of Sufism Conference in San Rafael, March 26, 1994.
67. *Remembrances: Proceedings of the First International Milad al-Nabi Conference*, ed. A.H. Godlas, 1995.
68. Ahmad Kuftaru is mentioned by Frederik de Jong in "Les confreres mystiques musulmanes au Machreq arab," in *Les Orderes Mystiques dans l'islam: Cheminements et Situation Actuelle*, ed. A. Popovic and G. Veinstein. Paris: Editions de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 1985, 214. The Naqshbandi-Owaisi is a group under the guidance of Shaykh Akram Awan of Munara, Pakistan. Associated with a teacher from the Deoband madrasa, they plan a center near Baltimore. There is also a Naqshbandi group led by Maulana Zulfikar Ahmad from Jhang, Pakistan. Most of the followers are from the Indian subcontinent.
69. Element Books, 1994.
70. See Vargonen, *Between the Loved and the Beloved*. Napa, CA: Ansari Publications, 1994. This group publishes a newsletter, "The Call of the Divine," issued from Napa and maintains a computer home page.
71. Their publications feature the slogan, "Shafi'i in Fiqh, Ash'ari in Creed, and Rifa'i in Tariqa."
72. As in their pamphlet, "Allah Exists Without a Place." Anon. Philadelphia: A.I.C.P., 1994.
73. See the pamphlet by Riad Nachev and Samir Kadi, "The Substantiation of the People of Truth that the Direction of al-Qibla in the United States and Canada is to the Southeast." Philadelphia: A.I.C.P., A.H. 1414.
74. A biographical portrait of the Sherif Baba is included in Hugh Talat Halman's unpublished paper, "A Silk Road Runs in the U.S.: The Rifa'i-Ma'rufi Tekke in America," 7-8, presented at the first annual Islam in America conference, Chicago, Sept. 1995. Salik Baba is profiled in Steven Barboza, *American Jihad*. San Francisco: Harper, 1992, 187-89.
75. Talman, "A Silk Road...", 3.
76. Jay Kinney, "Sufism Comes to America," 21.
77. See Martin Lings, *A Sufi Saint of the Twentieth Century: Shaykh Ahmad al-Alawi*. London: Allen and Unwin, 1971. Sayyed Hossein Nasr mentions that Schuon met al-'Alawi in 1932. *The Essential Writings of Fritjof Schuon*. Amity, NY: Amity House, 1986, 53.
78. The Darqawis are in the same lineage as the Alawiyya-Shadhiliyya. See Abdallah Schleifer, "Sufism in Egypt and the Arab Middle East," in Nasr, *Islamic Spirituality* II, 194-205.
79. New York: Pantheon, 1972.

80. Berkeley: Diwan Press, 1975.
81. Norwich, England: Diwan Press, 1984.
82. Diwan Press, 1984.
83. Some of the international activities of 'Abd al-Qadir's movement, including centers established at least for a time in Pakistan and Nigeria, are mentioned in *Islamic Sufism* by Wahid Bakhsh Sial Rabbani. Lahore: Association of Spiritual Training, 1990, 197-8.
84. See Abdul Wahab el-Affendi, "A False Dawn," *Inquiry Magazine* (January 1988):50-56.
85. Interview, Amina Jamal, November 9, 1995. Publications of this order include *The Religion of Unity*, *Music of the Soul-Sufi Teachings*, *Fruits from the Tree of Life*, and *Stories of the Prophets*, which are all translations of Shaykh Jamal's teachings.
86. New York: Harper and Row, 1976.
87. Among his recent works are *Footprints in the Sand* (Longmead: Element, 1988) and *Reason is Powerless in the Expression of Love* (Seattle: Chalice Guild, 1990).
88. New York: MacMillan, 1975.
89. See his *Living the Presence: A Sufi Way to Mindfulness and the Essential Self*. New York: Putnam, 1991, vii.
90. The Tijaniyya Order is widespread in West Africa. For the history and doctrines of the order, see Jamil M. Abun Nasr, *The Tijaniyya*. London: Oxford, 1964. Tijaniyya activities in the U.S. are briefly reported in Amina Beverly McCloud, *African American Islam*. New York: Routledge, 1995, 93-94.
91. He performed the Qur'an recitation during the "Million Man March" on Washington in October 1995. A contingent of African American Sufis from Chicago participated in the March.
92. See Francis Trix, *Spiritual Discourse: Learning with an Islamic Master*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993, and "Bektashi Tekke and Sunni Mosque of Albanian Muslims in America," in Haddad and Smith, *Muslim Communities*, 359-80.
93. "Sufis – Die Reinen. Interview with Adnan Sarhan," in *Der Sufi-Weg Heute: Interviews und Information*, ed. Bruno Martin. Sudergellerse: Bruno Martin Verlag, 1983, 39.
94. This is the sense of the Arabic word, and is also the name of an existing Sufi order.
95. One of the group's publications is *The Way of the Spirit with Adnan Sarhan: Remarkable Experiences*. Torreon, NM: Sufi Foundation of America, 1989.
96. See Gisela Webb, "Tradition and Innovation in Contemporary American Islamic Spirituality: The Bawa Muhaiyadeen Fellowship," in Haddad and Smith, *Muslim Communities*.
97. The group has smaller branches in Iowa, Boston, Connecticut, Vermont and Sacramento.
98. A member of the community estimated that there are about 200 regular participants at Fellowship activities, with 25-50 people attending daily dawn prayers at the center and perhaps 1000 people involved in a less formal way.
99. Gisela Webb, "Sufism in America," in *America's Alternative Religions*, 256.
100. For a history of the Nimatullahi order, including a brief section on the biography of Javad Nurbakhsh and the history of the order in America, see Javad Nurbakhsh, "The Nimatullahi," in *Islamic Spirituality II*, ed. Hossein Nasr, 144-59. A further historical source is Nasrollah Pourjavady and Peter Wilson, *Kings of Love: The Poetry and History of the*

- Nimatullahi Sufi Order*. Tehran: Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, 1978. Nurbakhsh has written many books in Persian, of which a number are now available in English translation. See Nurbakhsh, *In the Tavern of Ruin*. New York: Khaniqahi Nimatullahi, 1978, and *In the Paradise of the Sufis*. New York: Khaniqahi Nimatullahi, 1979.
101. "Sufism," *Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World IV*, 108.
102. Shaykh Muhammad Hasan Salih Ali Shah, *The Illustrious Treatise of Salih's Advice*. Tehran: n.p., 1986, 10.
103. Haeri has published extensively on Islamic topics, including *Songs of iman on the roads of Pakistan: talks given during a tour of Pakistan*. Blanco: Zahra Publications, 1983. For a time the group issued a magazine entitled *Nuradeen, An Islamic Sufi Journal*. Blanco: Zahra Publications, 1983.
104. "Uvaysi" or "oveyssi" in Persian refers to a line of Sufis who have received their original initiatic transmission spiritually rather than through direct contact with the Prophet Muhammad. It is named after Uways al-Qarani, who was a contemporary of Muhammad and received such a transmission from him.
105. Shah Maghsoud was the 41st teacher in this line. He emigrated to the U.S. after the Iranian revolution and is buried in California. A work representative of his teaching is *Dawn*. Langham, MD: University Press of America, 1989.
106. Some of his works are *Peace* (Verdugo City, CA: MTO Shahmaghsoudi Publications, 1987), *The Secret World* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1989), *The Approaching Promise* (UPA, 1989), and *The Fragrance of Sufism* (UPA, 1996).
107. Shah Maghsoud Angha, *al-Rasa'el*, 119. Molana Salaheddin was appointed successor by his father in 1970.
108. Nahid Angha, *Principles of Sufism*. San Rafael, CA: International Association of Sufism, 1991, and *The Journey* (IAS, 1991).
109. Ali Kianfar, *The Zekr*. IAS, 1985.
110. Siddiq Osman Noormuhammad, "The Sufi Tradition in Toronto," in *The Message International* 6 (Aug. 1995):42.
111. *Ibid.*, 45.
112. Sheila McDonough, "Muslims in Montreal," in Haddad and Smith, *Muslim Communities*, 321-22.
113. See especially Oct. 22, 194, B-1; August 31, 1996, B-14; Sept. 4, 1996.
114. I am indebted to Nawab Pasnak for information on Sufi activities in Western Canada.
115. See his "Sufism and the Source," in *Gnosis Magazine* 30 (Winter 1994):40-47, and *I Come From Behind Kaf Mountain: The Spiritual Autobiography of Murat Yagan*. Putney, VT: Threshold Books, 1984, and *The Teachings of Kebzeh: Essentials of Sufism from the Caucasus Mountains*. Vernon, BC: Kebzeh Publ., 1995.
116. Kinney, "Sufism Comes to America," 20.
117. Yagan, *Teachings*, 4, 18-19.
118. In the 1990s there has been a trend toward more publication of spiritual autobiographies such as Muhiyuddin Shakor, *The Writing on the Water. Chronicles of a Seeker on the Islamic Sufi Path*. Element Books, 1994; Noorudeen Durkee, *Embracing Islam*, unpublished ms. Quest narratives include those produced by the Idries Shah circle.

119. *The Diffusion of Sufi Ideas in the West: An Anthology of New Writings by and about Idries Shah* (Boulder: Keysign, 1972) seems to be targeted to such an audience to convince them of Shah's claim to be head of all Sufis in the world.
120. For a highly critical expose of Shah and his intellectual spectrum, see L.P. Elwell-Sutton, "Sufism and Pseudo-Sufism," *Encounter* (May, 1975):9-17.
121. A remarkable collection of press clippings of reviews from around the world regarding Shah and his writings was issued by his organization under the title *Documentation* (1973-1979).
122. New York: Penguin, 1972.
123. New York: Putnam, 1995.
124. John Mercer, The Ibn Arabi Society, personal interview March 26, 1994. They publish the academic *Journal of the Muhyiuddin Ibn 'Arabi Society*, and sponsored the volume *Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi: A Commemorative Volume*, ed. S. Hirstenstien and M. Tiernan. Rockport, MA: Element, 1993.
125. See his *A Young Muslim's Guide to the Modern World*. Chicago: Kazi, 1993.
126. Pir Vilayat Khan, *Introducing Spirituality in Counseling and Therapy*. Santa Fe: Omega Press, 1982.
127. *Growth to Selfhood* (1980) and *Rumi the Persian*. London: Routledge, 1974. At some point, Aresteh seems to have become associated with the Idries Shah movement. See Elwell-Sutton, "Sufism and Pseudo-Sufism," in *Encounter* (May, 1975), 16; Aresteh's "Psychology of the Sufi Way to Individuation," in *Sufi Studies: East and West*, ed. L.F. Rushbrook Williams. New York: Dutton, 1973, 89-113.
128. *Freedom from the Self: Sufism, Meditation and Psychotherapy*. New York: Human Sciences Press, 1985.
129. *God's Will be Done I: Traditional Psychoethics and its Personality Paradigm; II: Moral Healer's Handbook: Centering the Self; III: Moral Healing Through the Most Beautiful Names*. Chicago: Kazi, 1993.
130. The connection of this movement to Sufism in the West may be partially traced through J.G. Bennett, *Enneagram Studies*. York Beach, MD: Weiser, 1983) and Claudio Naranjo, *Character and Neurosis: An Integrative View*. Nevada City, CA: Gateways, 1994.
131. Daniel Atesh Sonneborn, abstract published in *Ethnomusicology Research Digest* 6/29 (Oct. 12, 1995) for doctoral dissertation in music, University of CA, L.A., 1995.
132. *Postmodernism for Beginners*. Cambridge: IconBooks, 1995, 160.
133. Personal communication, Abd al-Hayy Moore, Nov. 10, 1995.
134. Lewis was assisted in the concept and choreography by the well-known American dancer Ruth St. Denis (1880-1968). Lewis, *Sufi Vision and Initiation. Meetings with Remarkable Beings*. San Francisco:Sufi Islamia/Prophecy Publications, 1986, 320.
135. *Ibid.*, 337.
136. Many membes in theSan Francisco Bay area are jointly affiliated with the Mevlevi Order of America.
137. The themes of distinctly "masculine" and "feminine" qualities is highlighted in a number of practices of the Sufi Order and SIRS. I believe that this is part of the appeal of American Sufism to some members of a generation where gender identities have become blurred, and who live in a society and age where there is a particular cultural antipathy to

the "feminine."

138. Lewis, *Sufi Vision*, 24-27.

139. Webb, "Sufism in America," 254.

140. Ibid, 83.

141. Friedberg, "An American Sufi," 6.

142. Personal Communication, Director of the MTO Shahmaghsoudi Center, Washington, D.C. Dec. 14, 1995.

143. Webb, "Tradition and Innovation," 24-25.

144. Taher Siddiqui. Computer posting, "Tariqas list," March 22, 1994.

145. Computer posting, "Tariqas list," March 22, 1994.

146. New York: Harper and Row, 1974.

147. Alexandria: Dar al-Kutub, 1991.

148. Posting by Abdullah Nooradeen Durkee, Tariqas computer discussion group , Feb. 28, 1995.

149. The Naqshbandiyya Foundation of Peoria, IL, for example, an organization founded by immigrant Muslims, included a number of American Sufi teachers in conferences they sponsored in Chicago in 1994 and 1995 to commemorate the birthday of the Prophet.

150. Faridi was perhaps the earliest Westerner to become a Sufi master, successor to Dhauqi Shah, an Indian Chisti Sufi. Among his English writings is *Everyday Practice in Islam*.

Karachi: Mahfil-e Dhauqiyya, 1979.

151. Teresa Watanabe, "Holy War of Words," stated that in 1999 the Naqshbandi-Haqqanis claimed 30,000 members in 23 North American cities, but that his phone checks could confirm only a dozen groups serving a few thousand.

152. Fareed H. Nu'man, *The Muslim Population in the United States*. Washington: AMC, 1992, 163.

153. Sheila Musaji, who published *The American Muslim Magazine*, said in a private communication that 20-50% would be an accurate estimate.

154. While Ahl al-Sunna or people of the Sunna is a term that could be applied to all Sunni Muslims, it has come among Indo-Pakistani Muslim to refer to those who advocate the practice of Sufism whether of the Brelvi or Deobandi persuasion. There are mosques and organizations sponsored by Muslims of this orientation in Toronto, Edmonton, Houston, Jersey City, Los Angeles, etc.