

SUFISM

Sufism or Taṣawwuf (Arabic: تصوف) is, according to its adherents, the inner, mystical dimension of Islam. A practitioner of this tradition is generally known as a ṣūfī (صوفي), though some adherents of the tradition reserve this term only for those practitioners who have attained the goals of the Sufi tradition. Another name used for the Sufi seeker is Dervish. Classical Sufi scholars have defined Sufism as "a science whose objective is the reparation of the heart and turning it away from all else but God."^[4] Alternatively, in the words of the renowned Darqawi Sufi teacher Ahmad ibn Ajiba, "a science through which one can know how to travel into the presence of the Divine, purify one's inner self from filth, and beautify it with a variety of praiseworthy traits."^[5]

During the primary stages of Sufism, Sufis were characterized by their particular attachment to zikr (a practice of repeating the names of God) and asceticism. Sufism arose among a number of Muslims as a reaction against the worldliness of the early Umayyad Caliphate (661-750 CE^[6]). The Sufi movement has spanned several continents and cultures over a millennium, at first expressed through Arabic, then through Persian, Turkish and a dozen other languages.^[7] "Orders" (ṭuruq), which are either Sunnī or Shī'ī in doctrine, mostly trace their origins from the Islamic Prophet Muhammad through his cousin 'Alī, with the notable exception of the Naqshbandī who trace their origins through the first Caliph, Abu Bakr.^[8] Other exclusive schools of Sufism distinctly describe themselves as 'Sufi'.^[9]

According to Idriss Shah, the Sufi philosophy is universal in nature, its roots predating the arising of Islam and the other modern-day religions; likewise, some Muslims consider Sufism outside the sphere of Islam.^{[1][10]} Mainstream scholars of Islam, however, contend that it is simply the name for the inner or esoteric dimension of Islam



Mawlaana Rumi's tomb, Konya, Turkey.

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Etymology

The lexical root of Sufi is variously traced to صُوفٍ *ṣūf* "wool", referring either to the simple cloaks the early Muslim ascetics wore, or possibly to صَفَا *ṣafā* "purity". The two were combined by al-Rudh̄abari who said, "The Sufi is the one who wears wool on top of purity."^[11] The wool cloaks were sometimes a designation of their initiation into the Sufi order. Sufism is known as "Islamic Mysticism," in which Muslims seek to find divine love and knowledge through direct personal experience of God.^[12] Mysticism is defined as the experience of mystical union or direct communion with ultimate reality, and the belief that direct knowledge of God, spiritual truth, or ultimate reality can be attained through subjective experience (as intuition or insight).^[13]

Others^[who?] suggest the origin of the word *ṣufi* is from *Aṣḥab aṣ-ṣuffa* "Companions of the Porch", who were a group of impoverished Muslims during the time of Muhammad who spent much of their time on the veranda of Al-Masjid al-Nabawi, devoted to prayer and eager to memorize each new increment of the Qur'an as it was revealed.

While all Muslims believe that they are on the pathway to God and hope to become close to God in Paradise—after death and after the "Final Judgment"—Sufis also believe that it is possible to draw closer to God and to more fully embrace the Divine Presence in this life.^[14] The chief aim of all Sufis is to seek the pleasing of God by working to restore within themselves the primordial state of *fiṭra*,^[15] described in the Qur'an. In this state nothing one does defies God, and all is undertaken by the single motivation of love of God. A secondary consequence of this is that the seeker may be led to abandon all notions of dualism or multiplicity, including a conception of an individual self, and to realize the Divine Unity.

Thus Sufism has been characterized^[by whom?] as the science of the states of the lower self (the ego), and the way of purifying this lower self of its reprehensible traits, while adorning it instead with what is praiseworthy, *whether or not* this process of cleansing and purifying the heart is in time rewarded by esoteric knowledge of God. This can be conceived in terms of two basic types of law (*fiqh*), an outer law concerned with actions, and an inner law concerned with the human heart.^[citation needed] The outer law consists of rules pertaining to worship, transactions, marriage, judicial rulings, and criminal law— what is often referred to, a bit too broadly, as *qanun*. The inner law of Sufism consists of rules about repentance from sin, the purging of contemptible qualities and evil traits of character, and adornment with virtues and good character.^[16]

To enter the way of Sufism, the seeker begins by finding a teacher, as the connection to the teacher is considered necessary for the growth of the pupil. The teacher, to be genuine, must have received the authorization to teach (*ijazah*) of another Master of the Way, in an unbroken succession (*silsilah*) leading back to Sufism's origin with Muhammad. It is the transmission of the divine light from the teacher's heart to the heart of the student, rather than of worldly knowledge transmitted from mouth to ear, that allows the adept to progress. In addition, the genuine teacher will be utterly strict in his adherence to the Divine Law.

Scholars and adherents of Sufism are unanimous in agreeing that Sufism cannot be learned through books. To reach the highest levels of success in Sufism typically requires that the disciple live with and serve the teacher for many, many years. For instance, Baha-ud-Din Naqshband Bukhari, considered founder of the Naqshbandi Order, served his first teacher, Sayyid Muhammad Baba As-Samasi, for 20 years, until as-Samasi died. He subsequently served several other teachers for lengthy periods of time. The extreme arduousness of his spiritual preparation is illustrated by his service, as directed by his teacher, to the weak and needy members of his community in a state of complete humility and tolerance for many years. When he believed this mission to be concluded, his teacher next directed him to care for animals, curing their sicknesses, cleaning their wounds, and assisting them in finding provision. After many years of this he was next instructed to spend many years in the care of dogs in a state of humility, and to ask them for support.^[18]

As a further example, the prospective adherent of the Mevlevi Order would have been ordered to serve in the kitchens of a hospice for the poor for 1,001 days prior to being accepted for spiritual instruction, and a further 1,001 days in solitary retreat as a precondition of completing that instruction.^[19]

Some teachers, especially when addressing more general audiences, or mixed groups of Muslims and non-Muslims, make extensive use of parable, allegory, and metaphor.^[20] Although approaches to teaching vary among different Sufi orders, Sufism as a whole is primarily concerned with direct personal experience, and as such has sometimes been compared to other, non-Islamic forms of mysticism (e.g., as in the books of Seyyed Hossein Nasr).

Sufism, which is a general term for Muslim mysticism, sprang up largely in reaction against the worldliness which infected Islam when its leaders became the powerful and wealthy rulers of multitudes of people and were influenced by foreign cultures. Harun al-Rashid, eating off gold and silver, toying with a harem of scented beauties, surrounded by an impenetrable retinue of officials, eunuchs and slaves, was a far cry from the stern simplicity of an Umar, who lived in the modest house, wore patched clothes and could be approached by any of his followers.^[21] The typical early Sufi lived in a cell of a mosque and taught a small band of disciples. The extent to which Sufism was influenced by Buddhist and Hindu mysticism, and by the example of Christian hermits and monks, is disputed, but self-discipline and concentration on God quickly led to the belief that by quelling the self and through loving ardour for God it was possible to maintain a union with the divine in which the human self melted away.^[22]

History of Sufism and Origins

In its early stages of development Sufism effectively referred to nothing more than the internalization of Islam.^[23] According to one perspective, it is directly from the Qur'an, constantly recited, meditated, and experienced, that Sufism proceeded, in its origin and its development.^[24] Others have held that Sufism is the strict emulation of the way of Muhammad, through which the heart's connection to the Divine is strengthened.^[25]

From the traditional Sufi point of view, the esoteric teachings of Sufism were transmitted from Muhammad to those who had the capacity to acquire the direct experiential gnosis of God, which was passed on from teacher to student through the centuries. Some of this transmission is summarized in texts, but most is not. Important contributions in writing are attributed to Uwais al-Qarni, Harrm bin Hian, Hasan Basri and Sayid ibn al-Mussib, who are regarded as the first Sufis in the earliest generations of Islam. Harith al-Muhasibi was the first one to write about moral psychology. Rabia Basri was a Sufi known for her love and passion for God, expressed through her poetry. Bayazid Bastami was among the first theorists of Sufism; he concerned himself with *fana* and *baqa*, the state of annihilating the self in the presence of the divine, accompanied by clarity concerning worldly phenomena derived from that perspective.^[25]

Sufism had a long history already before the subsequent Sufi teachings institutionalized into devotional orders (*tariqât*) in the early middle Ages.^[26] Almost all extant Sufi orders trace their chains of transmission (*silsila*) back to Muhammad via his cousin and son-in-law Ali. The Naqshbandi order is a notable exception to this rule, as it traces the origin of its teachings from Muhammad to the first Islamic Caliph Abu Bakr.^[8]

Different devotional styles and traditions developed over time, reflecting the perspectives of different masters and the accumulated cultural wisdom of the orders. Typically all of these concerned themselves with the understanding of subtle knowledge (gnosis), education of the heart to purify it of baser instincts, the love of God, and approaching God through a well-described hierarchy of enduring spiritual stations (*maqâmât*) and more transient spiritual states (*ahwâl*).

Formalization of doctrine

Towards the end of the first millennium CE, a number of manuals began to be written summarizing the doctrines of Sufism and describing some typical Sufi practices. Two of the most famous of these are now available in English translation: the *Kashf al-Mahjûb* of Hujwiri, and the *Risâla* of Qushayri. Two of Imam Al Ghazali's greatest treatises, the "Revival of Religious Sciences" and the "Alchemy of Happiness," argued that Sufism originated from the Qur'an and was thus compatible with mainstream Islamic thought, and did not in any way contradict Islamic Law—being instead necessary to its complete fulfillment. This became the mainstream position among Islamic scholars for centuries, challenged only recently on the basis of selective use of a limited body of texts. Ongoing efforts by both traditionally trained Muslim scholars and Western academics are making Imam Al-Ghazali's works available in English translation for the first time,^[28] allowing readers to judge for themselves the compatibility between Islamic Law and Sufi doctrine.



The tomb of Khoja Afaq, near Kashgar, China.

Growth of Sufi influence in Islamic cultures

The spread of Sufism has been considered a definitive factor in the spread of Islam, and in the creation of integrally Islamic cultures, especially in Africa^[29] and Asia. Recent academic work on these topics has focused on the role of Sufism in creating and propagating the culture of the Ottoman world,^[30] and in resisting European imperialism in North Africa and South Asia.^[31]

*Between the 13th and 16th centuries CE, Sufism produced a flourishing intellectual culture throughout the Islamic world, a "Golden Age" whose physical artifacts are still present. In many places, a lodge (known variously as a *zaouia*, *khanqah*, or *tekke*) would be endowed through a pious foundation in perpetuity (*waqf*) to provide a gathering place for Sufi adepts, as well as lodging for itinerant seekers of knowledge. The same system of endowments could also be used to pay for a complex of buildings, such as that surrounding the Süleymaniye Mosque in Istanbul, including a lodge for Sufi seekers, a hospice with kitchens where these seekers could serve the poor and/or complete a period of initiation, a library, and other structures. No important domain in the civilization of Islam remained unaffected by Sufism in this period.^[32]*

Contemporary Sufism

Currently active traditional Sufi teaching orders include the The Naqshbandiyya Order led by Grandshiekh Nazim al-Qubrusi, which has worldwide affiliates.

Currently active Sufi academics and publishers include Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee, Shawni, Nuh Ha Mim Keller, Hamza Yusuf, and Abdal Hakim Murad

In South Asia, Sufi orders include the Qadiriyyah, the Sarwari Qadiri, the Chishti Order, the Suhrawardiyya, the Barelwis and the Deobandi.^[33]

Sufism is popular in such African countries as Senegal, where it is seen as a mystical expression of Islam.^[34] Mbacke suggests that one reason Sufism has taken hold in Senegal is because it can accommodate local beliefs and customs, which tend toward the mystical.^[35]

Sufism suffered many setbacks in the modern era, particularly (though not exclusively) at the hands of European imperialists in the colonized nations of Asia and Africa. The life of the Algerian Sufi master Emir Abd al-Qadir is instructive in this regard.^[36] Notable as well are the lives of Amadou Bamba and Hajj Umar Tall in sub-Saharan Africa, and Sheikh Mansur Ushurma and Imam Shamilin the Caucasus region. In the twentieth century some more modernist Muslims have called Sufism a superstitious religion that holds back Islamic achievement in the fields of science and technology.^[37]

For a more complete summary of currently active groups and teachers, readers are referred to links in the site of Dr. Alan Godlas of the University of Georgia.^{[38][39]}

A number of Westerners have embarked with varying degrees of success on the path of Sufism. One of the first to return to Europe as an official representative of a Sufi order, and with the specific purpose to spread Sufism in Western Europe, was the Swedish-born wandering Sufi Abd al-Hadi Aqhili (also known as Ivan Aguéli). The ideas propagated by such spiritualists may or may not conform to the tenets of Sufism as understood by orthodox Muslims, as for instance with G. I. Gurdjieff.

Other noteworthy Sufi teachers who were active in the West in recent years include Bawa Muhaiyaddeen, Nader Angha, Sheikh Abdullah Sirr-Dan Al-Jamal, Inayat Khan, Javad Nurbakhsh, Bulent Rauf, Irina Tweedie, Idries Shah and Muzaffer Ozak.

Theoretical perspectives in Sufism

Traditional Islamic scholars have recognized two major branches within the practice of Sufism, and use this as one key to differentiating among the approaches of different masters and devotional lineages.^[40]

On the one hand there is the order from the signs to the Signifier (or from the arts to the Artisan). In this branch, the seeker begins by purifying the lower self of every corrupting influence that stands in the way of recognizing all of creation as the work of God, as God's active Self-disclosure or theophany.^[41] This is the way of Imam Al-Ghazali and of the majority of the Sufi orders.

On the other hand there is the order from the Signifier to His signs, from the Artisan to His works. In this branch the seeker experiences divine attraction (*jaḥb*), and is able to enter the order with a glimpse of its endpoint, of direct apprehension of the Divine Presence towards which all spiritual striving is directed. This does not replace the striving to purify the heart, as in the other branch; it simply stems from a different point of entry into the path. This is the way primarily of the masters of the Naqshbandi and Shadhili orders.^[42]

Contemporary scholars may also recognize a third branch, attributed to the late Ottoman scholar Said Nursi and explicated in his vast Qur'an commentary called the Risale-i Nur. This approach entails strict adherence to the way of Muhammad, in the understanding that this wont, or *sunnah*, proposes a complete devotional spirituality adequate to those without access to a master of the Sufi way.^[43]

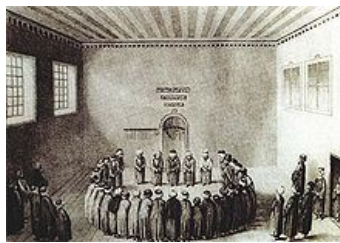
Contributions to other domains of scholarship

Sufism has contributed significantly to the elaboration of theoretical perspectives in many domains of intellectual endeavor. For instance, the doctrine of "subtle centers" or centers of subtle cognition (known as *Lataif-e-sitta*) addresses the matter of the awakening of spiritual intuition^[44] in ways that some consider similar to certain models of *chakra* in Hinduism. In general, these subtle centers or *latâ'if* are thought of as faculties that are to be purified sequentially in order to bring the seeker's wayfaring to completion. A concise and useful summary of this system from a living exponent of this tradition has been published by Muhammad Emin Er.^[40]

Sufi psychology has influenced many areas of thinking both within and outside of Islam, drawing primarily upon three concepts. Ja'far al-Sadiq (both an imam in the Shia tradition and a respected scholar and link in chains of Sufi transmission in all Islamic sects) held that human beings are dominated by a lower self called the *nafs*, a faculty of spiritual intuition called the *qalb* or spiritual heart, and a spirit or soul called *ruh*. These interact in various ways, producing the spiritual types of the tyrant (dominated by *nafs*), the person of faith and moderation (dominated by the spiritual heart), and the person lost in love for God (dominated by the *ruh*).^[45] Of note with regard to the spread of Sufi psychology in the West is Robert Frager, a Sufi teacher authorized in the Halveti Jerrahi order. Frager was a trained psychologist, born in the United States, who converted to Islam in the course of his practice of Sufism and wrote extensively on Sufism and psychology.^[46]

Sufi cosmology and Sufi metaphysics are also noteworthy areas of intellectual accomplishment.

Sufi practices



Sufi gathering engaged in Zikr

The devotional practices of Sufis vary widely. This is because an acknowledged and authorized master of the Sufi path is in effect a physician of the heart, able to diagnose the seeker's impediments to knowledge and pure intention in serving God, and to prescribe to the seeker a course of treatment appropriate to his or her maladies. The consensus among Sufi scholars is that the seeker cannot self-diagnose, and that it can be extremely harmful to undertake any of these practices alone and without formal authorization.^[47]

Prerequisites to practice include rigorous adherence to Islamic norms (ritual prayer in its five prescribed times each day, the fast of Ramadan, and so forth). Additionally, the seeker ought to be firmly grounded in supererogatory practices known from the life of

Muhammad (such as the "sunna prayers"). This is in accordance with the words, attributed to God, of the following, a famous Hadiss Qudsi:

My servant draws near to Me through nothing I love more than that which I have made obligatory for him. My servant never ceases drawing near to Me through supererogatory works until I love him. Then, when I love him, I am his hearing through which he hears, his sight through which he sees, his hand through which he grasps, and his foot through which he walks. It is also necessary for the seeker to have a correct creed (Aqidah),^[48] and to embrace with certainty its tenets.^[49] The seeker must also, of necessity, turn away from sins, love of this world, the love of company and renown, obedience to satanic impulse, and the promptings of the lower self. (The way in which this purification of the heart is achieved is outlined in certain books, but must be prescribed in detail by a Sufi master.) The seeker must also be trained to prevent the corruption of those good deeds which have accrued to his or her credit by overcoming the traps of ostentation, pride, arrogance, envy, and long hopes (meaning the hope for a long life allowing us to mend our ways later, rather than immediately, here and now). Sufi practices, while attractive to some, are not a means for gaining knowledge. The traditional scholars of Sufism hold it as absolutely axiomatic that knowledge of God is not a psychological state generated through breath control. Thus, practice of "techniques" is not the cause, but instead the occasion for such knowledge to be obtained (if at all), given proper prerequisites and proper guidance by a master of the way. Furthermore, the emphasis on practices may obscure a far more important fact: The seeker is, in a sense, to become a broken person, stripped of all habits through the practice of (in the words of Imam Al-Ghazali words) solitude, silence, sleeplessness, and hunger.^[50]

Zikr

Allah as having been written on the disciple's heart according to Qadiri Al-Muntahi order Zikr is the remembrance of God commanded in the Qur'an for all Muslims through a specific devotional act, such as the repetition of divine names, supplications and aphorisms from hadiss literature and the Qur'an. More generally, zikr takes a wide range and various layers of meaning.^[51] This includes zikr as any activity in which the Muslim maintains awareness of God. To engage in zikr is to practice consciousness of the Divine Presence and love, or "to seek a state of god wariness". The Qur'an refers to Muhammad as the very embodiment of zikr of God (65:10-11). Some types of Zikr are prescribed for all Muslims, and do not require Sufi initiation or the prescription of a Sufi master because they are deemed to be good for every seeker under every circumstance.

Some Sufi orders engage in ritualized Zikr ceremonies, or sema. Sema includes various forms of worship such as: recitation, singing (the most well known being the Qawwali music of the Indian sub-continent), instrumental music, dance (most famously the Sufi whirling of the Mevlevi order), incense, meditation, ecstasy, and trance.^[53]

Some Sufi orders stress and place extensive reliance upon Zikr, and likewise in Qadri Al-Muntahi Sufi tariqa, which was originated by Riaz Ahmed Gohar Shahi. This practice of Zikr is called Zikr-e-Qulb (remembrance of Allah by Heartbeats). The basic idea in this practice is to visualize the Arabic name of God, Allah, as having been written on the disciple's heart.^[54]

Muraqaba

The practice of muraqaba can be likened to the practices of meditation attested in many faith communities. The word muraqaba is derived from the same root (r-q-ḥ) occurring as one of the 99 Names of God in the Qur'an, al-Raqib, meaning "the Vigilant" and attested in verse 4: 1 of the Qur'an. Through muraqaba, a person watches over or takes care of the spiritual heart, acquires knowledge about it, and becomes attuned to the Divine Presence, which is ever vigilant. While variation exists, one description of the practice within a Naqshbandi lineage reads as follows:

He is to collect all of his bodily senses in concentration, and to cut himself off from all preoccupation and notions that inflict themselves upon the heart. And thus he is to turn his full consciousness towards God Most High while saying three times: "Ilahi anta maqsudi wa-ridaka matlubu—my God, you are my Goal and Your good pleasure is what I seek." Then he brings to his heart the Name of the Essence—Allāh—and as it courses through his heart he remains attentive to its meaning, which is "Essence without likeness." The seeker remains aware that He is Present, Watchful, Encompassing of all, thereby exemplifying the meaning of his saying (may God bless him and grant him peace): "Worship God as though you see Him, for if you do not see Him, He sees you." And likewise the prophetic tradition: "The most favored level of faith is to know that God is witness over you, wherever you may be."

Visitation

In popular Sufism (i.e., devotional practices that have achieved currency in world cultures through Sufi influence), one common practice is to visit the tombs of saints, great scholars, and righteous people. This is a particularly common practice in South Asia, where famous tombs include those of Khoja Afaq, near Kashgar, in China; Lal Shahbaz Qalandar, in Sindh, Pakistan; Moinuddin Chishti in Ajmer, India. Likewise, in Fez, Morocco, a popular destination for such pious visitation is the Zaouia Moulay Idriss II and the yearly visitation to see the current Sheikh of the Qadiri Boutchichi Tariqah, Sheikh Sidi Hamza al Qadiri al Boutchichi to celebrate the Mawlid (which is usually televised on Moroccan National television).

Islam and Sufism and Sufism and Islamic law



Tomb of Shaikh Salim Chisti, Uttar Pradesh, India.

Scholars and adherents of Sufism sometimes describe Sufism in terms of a threefold approach to God as explained by a tradition (*ḥadīṣ*) attributed to Muhammad, "*The Canon is my word, the order is my deed, and the truth is my interior state*". Sufis believe the canon, order and truth are mutually interdependent.^[56] The order, the 'path' on which the mystics walk, has been defined as 'the path which comes out of the Canon, for the main road is called *branch*, the path, *tariq*.' No mystical experience can be realized if the binding injunctions of the Canon are not followed faithfully first. The path, order, however, is narrower and more difficult to walk. It leads the adept, called *sālīk* (wayfarer), in his *sulūk* (wayfaring), through different stations (*maqāmāt*) until he reaches his goal, the perfect *tawḥīd*, the existential confession that God is One.^[57] Jalaluddin Ar Rumi, the initiator of the Mawlewi Tariqah, spoke of the Canon and Sufism in such terms, "To be a real Sufi, is to be to Muhammad, *salallahu alaihy wasallam*, just as Abu Bakr was to him, peace be upon him." Shaykh al-Akbar Muhiuddeen Ibn Arabi mentions, "When we see someone in this Community who claims to be able to guide others to God, but is remiss in but one rule of the Sacred Law - even if he manifests miracles that stagger the mind - asserting that his shortcoming is a special dispensation for him, we do not even turn to look at him, for such a person is not a sheikh, nor is he speaking the truth, for no one is entrusted with the secrets of God Most High save one in whom the ordinances of the Sacred Law are preserved. (Jami' karamat al-awliya)" The Amman Message, a detailed statement issued by 200 leading Islamic scholars in 2005 in Amman, and adopted by the Islamic world's political and temporal leaderships at the Organization of the Islamic Conference summit at Mecca in December 2005, and by six other international Islamic scholarly assemblies including the International Islamic Fiqh Academy of Jeddah, in July 2006, specifically recognized the validity of Sufism as a part of Islam.^[59]

Traditional Islamic thought and Sufism

The literature of Sufism emphasizes highly subjective matters that resist outside observation, such as the subtle states of the heart. Often these resist direct reference or description, with the consequence that the authors of various Sufi treatises took recourse to allegorical language. For instance, much Sufi poetry refers to intoxication, which Islam expressly forbids. This usage of indirect language and the existence of interpretations by people who had no training in Islam or Sufism led to doubts being cast over the validity of Sufism as a part of Islam. Also, some groups emerged that considered themselves above the Sharia and discussed Sufism as a method of bypassing the rules of Islam in order to attain salvation directly. This was disapproved of by traditional scholars. For these and other reasons, the relationship between traditional Islamic scholars and Sufism is complex and a range of scholarly opinion on Sufism in Islam has been the norm. Some scholars, such as Al-Ghazali, helped its propagation while other scholars opposed it. W. Chittick explains the position of Sufism and Sufis this way:

In short, Muslim scholars who focused their energies on understanding the normative guidelines for the body came to be known as jurists, and those who held that the most important task was to train the mind in achieving correct understanding came to be divided into three main schools of thought: theology, philosophy, and Sufism. This leaves us with the third domain of human existence, the spirit. Most Muslims who devoted their major efforts to developing the spiritual dimensions of the human person came to be known as Sufis.

Traditional and non-traditional Sufi groups



The mausoleum (gongbei) of Ma Laichi in Linxia City, China.

The traditional Sufi orders, which are in majority, emphasize the role of Sufism as a spiritual discipline within Islam. Therefore, the Sharia (traditional Islamic law) and the Sunnah are seen as crucial for any Sufi aspirant. One proof traditional orders assert is that almost all the famous Sufi masters of the past Caliphates were experts in Sharia and were renowned as people with great Iman (faith) and excellent practice. Many were also Qadis (Sharia law judges) in courts. They held that Sufism was never distinct from Islam and to fully comprehend and practice Sufism one must be an observant Muslim.

In recent decades there has been a growth of non-traditional Sufi movements in the West. Examples include the Universal Sufism movement, the Golden Sufi Center, the Sufi Foundation of America, the neo-sufism of Idriss Shah, Sufism Reoriented and the International Association of Sufism. Rumi has become one of the most widely read poets in the United States, thanks largely to the translations published by Coleman Barks.

The use of the title Sufi by non-traditional groups to refer to themselves, and their appropriation of traditional Sufi masters (most notably Jalaluddin Rumi) as sources of authority or inspiration, is not accepted by some Muslims who are Sufi adherents.

Many of the great Sufi masters of the present and the past instruct that: one needs the form of the religious practices and the outer dimension of the religion to fulfill the goals of the inner dimension of Sufism (Proximity to God). The exoteric practices prescribed by God contain inner meanings and provide the means for transformation with the proper spiritual guidance of a master. It is thought that through the forms of the ritual and prescribed Islamic practices (prayer, pilgrimage, fasting, charity and affirmation of Divine Unity) the soul may be purified and one may then begin to embark on the mystical quest. In fact it is considered psychologically dangerous by some Sufi masters to participate in Sufi practices, such as "zikr", without adhering to the outer aspects of the religion which add spiritual balance and grounding to the practice.

Some traditional Sufis also object to interpretations of classical Sufi texts by writers who have no grounding in the traditional Islamic sciences and therefore no prerequisites for understanding such texts. These are considered by certain conventional Islamic scholars as beyond the pale of the religion. This being said, there are Islamic Sufi groups that are open to non-Muslim participation,^[60] Sufi-Buddhism being one such group.

Preeminent Sufis

Abul Hasan al-Shadhili

Abul Hasan al-Shadhili, the founder of the Shadhiliyya Sufi order, introduced *zīkr jahri* (The method of remembering Allah through loud means). Unlike other Sufis who preached self-denial, Shadhili taught his followers to enjoy all permitted (*halal*) and thank Allah for that which attracted Muslims towards his Sufi order. For this, Shadhiliyya is also called *tarīqush shukr*. Shadhili gave eighteen valuable *hizbs* not only to the followers of his order, but to all Muslims out of which *Hizbul Bahr* is recited worldwide even today.

Bayazid Bastami

Bayazid Bastami is considered to be "of the six bright stars in the firmament of the Prophet", and a link in the Golden Chain of the Naqshbandi Tariqah. He was the first one to spread the reality of Annihilation (Fana'), whereby the Mystic becomes fully absorbed to the point of becoming unaware of himself or the objects around him. Every existing thing seems to vanish, and he feels free of every barrier that could stand in the way of his viewing the Remembered One. In one of these states, Bastami cried out: "Praise to Me, for My greatest Glory!" His belief in the unity of all religions became apparent when asked the question: "How does Islam view other religions?" His reply was "All are vehicles and a path to God's Divine Presence." From a young age, he left his mother stating to her that he could not serve Allah and his mother at the same time.^[62]

Ibn Arabi

Muhyiddin Muhammad b. 'Ali Ibn 'Arabi (or Ibn al-'Arabi) is considered to be one of the most important Sufi masters, although he never founded any order (*tarīqa*). His writings, especially *al-Futuhāt al-Makkiyya* and *Fusus al-hikam*, have been studied within all the Sufi orders as the clearest expression of *tawhīd* (Divine Unity), though because of their recondite nature they were often only given to initiates. Later those who followed his teaching became known as the school of *wahdat al-wujud* (the Oneness of being). He himself considered his writings to have been divinely inspired. As he expressed the Way to one of his close disciples, his legacy is that 'you should never ever abandon your servanthood (*'ubudiyya*), and that there may never be in your soul a longing for any existing thing'.^[63]

The following quotations give a flavor of his teaching: 'Whoever witnesses without ceasing what he was created for, in both this world and the next, is the Perfect Servant, the intended goal of the cosmos, the deputy of the whole cosmos'.^[64] 'The self is an ocean without a shore. There is no end to the contemplation of it in this world or the next'.^[65] 'God seeks from you your heart and gives to you all that you are. So purify and cleanse it [the heart] through presence, wakefulness and reverential fear'.^[66]

Junayd Baghdadi

Junayd Baghdadi (830-910 AD) was one of the great early Sufis, and is a central figure in the golden chain of many Sufi orders. He laid the groundwork for sober mysticism in contrast to that of God-intoxicated Sufis like al-Hallaj, Bayazid Bastami and Abusaeid Abolkheir. During the trial of al-Hallaj, his former disciple, the Caliph of the time demanded his fatwa. In response, he issued this fatwa: "From the outward appearance he is to die and we judge according to the outward appearance and God knows better". He is referred to by Sufis as Sayyid-ut Taifa, i.e. the leader of the group. He lived and died in the city of Baghdad.

Mansur al-Hallaj

Mansur al-Hallaj is renowned for his claim "Ana-l-Haq" (I am The Truth). His refusal to recant this utterance, which was regarded as apostasy, led to a long trial. He was imprisoned for 11 years in a Baghdad prison, before being tortured and publicly crucified on March 26, 922. He is still revered by Sufis for his willingness to embrace torture and death rather than recant. It is said that during his prayers, he would say "O Lord! You are the guide of those who are passing through the Valley of Bewilderment. If I am a heretic, enlarge my heresy."

Reception

Perception outside Islam



Zikr in Omdurman , Sudan. A choreographed Sufi performance on Friday, at Qadiriyya event.

Sufi mysticism has long exercised a fascination upon the Western world, and especially its orientalist scholars.^[68] Figures like Rumi have become household names in the United States, where Sufism is perceived as quietist and less political.^[68]

The Islamic Institute in Mannheim, Germany, which works towards the integration of Europe and Muslims, sees Sufism as particularly suited for interreligious dialogue and intercultural harmonization in democratic and pluralist societies; it has described Sufism as a symbol of tolerance and humanism - undogmatic, flexible and non-violent.^[69]

Influence of Sufism on Judaism

A great influence was exercised by Sufism upon the ethical writings of Jews in the Middle Ages. In the first writing of this kind, we see "Kitab al-Hidayah ila Fara'id al-Kouloub", Duties of the Heart, of Bahya ibn Pakuda. This book was translated by Judah ibn Tibbon into Hebrew under the title "Hovot ha-Levavot".^[70]

The precepts prescribed by the Torah number 613 only; those dictated by the intellect are innumerable.

This was precisely the argument used by the Sufis against their adversaries, the Ulama. The arrangement of the book seems to have been inspired by Sufism. Its ten sections correspond to the ten stages through which the Sufi had to pass in order to attain that true and passionate love of God which is the aim and goal of all ethical self-discipline. A considerable amount of Sufi ideas entered the Jewish mainstream through Bahya ibn Paquda's work, which remains one of the most popular ethical treatises in Judaism.

*It is noteworthy that in the ethical writings of the Sufis Al-Kusajri and Al-Harawi there are sections which treat of the same subjects as those treated in the "Hobot ha-Lebabot" and which bear the same titles: e.g., "Bab al-Tawakkul"; "Bab al-Taubah"; "Bab al-Muhasabah"; "Bab al-Tawaadu"; "Bab al-Zuhd". In the ninth gate, Bahya directly quotes sayings of the Sufis, whom he calls *Perushim*. However, the author of the *Hovot ha-Levavot* did not go so far as to approve of the asceticism of the Sufis, although he showed a marked predilection for their ethical principles.*

The Jewish writer Abraham bar Hiyya teaches the asceticism of the Sufis. His distinction with regard to the observance of Jewish law by various classes of men is essentially a Sufic theory. According to it there are four principal degrees of human perfection or sanctity; namely:

- (1) of "Shari'ah," i.e., of strict obedience to all ritual laws of Islam, such as prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, almsgiving, ablution, etc., which is the lowest degree of worship, and is attainable by all*
- (2) of *Tariqah*, which is accessible only to a higher class of men who, while strictly adhering to the outward or ceremonial injunctions of religion, rise to an inward perception of mental power and virtue necessary for the nearer approach to the Divinity*
- (3) of "Hakikah," the degree attained by those who, through continuous contemplation and inward devotion, have risen to the true perception of the nature of the visible and invisible; who, in fact, have recognized the Godhead, and through this knowledge have succeeded in establishing an ecstatic relation to it; and*
- (4) of the "Ma'arifah," in which state man communicates directly with the Deity.*

Abraham ben Moses ben Maimon, the son of the great Jewish philosopher Maimonides, believed that Sufi practices and doctrines continue the tradition of the Biblical prophets. He introduced into the Jewish prayer such practices as reciting God's names (zikr), prostration

, stretching out hands, kneeling, ablution of the feet. Some of these Sufi-Jewish practices are still observed in a few Oriental synagogues.

Abraham Maimuni's principal work is originally composed in Judeo-Arabic and entitled "כתאב כפא אלעאבדין" *Kitāb Kifāyah al-ʿĀbidīn* ("A Comprehensive Guide for the Servants of God"). From the extant surviving portion it is conjectured that Maimuni's treatise was three times as long as his father's *Guide for the Perplexed*. In the book, Maimuni evidences a great appreciation and affinity to Sufism (Islamic mysticism). Followers of his path continued to foster a Jewish-Sufi form of pietism for at least a century, and he is rightly considered the founder of this pietistic school, which was centered in Egypt.

The followers of this path, which they called, interchangingly, *Hasidism* (not to confuse with the latter Jewish Hasidic movement) or *Sufism* (*Tasawwuf*), practiced spiritual retreats, solitude, fasting and sleep deprivation. The Jewish Sufis maintained their own brotherhood, guided by a religious leader - like a Sufi sheikh.^[71]

Abraham Maimuni's two sons, Obadyah and David, continued to lead this Jewish-Sufi brotherhood. Obadyah Maimonides wrote *Al-Mawālā Al Hawādiyya* ("The Treatise of the Pool") - an ethico-mystical manual based on the typically Sufi comparison of the heart to a pool that must be cleansed before it can experience the Divine.

The Maimonidean legacy extended right through to the 15th century with the 5th generation of Maimonidean Sufis, David ben Joshua Maimonides, who wrote *Al-Mursīd ilā al-Tafarrud* (The Guide to Detachment), which includes numerous extracts of Suhrawardī's *Kalimat at-Tasawwuf*.^[72]

Popular culture

Films

The movie *Bab'Aziz* (2005), directed by Nacer Khemir, tells the story of an old and blind dervish who must cross the desert with his little granddaughter during many days and nights to get to his last dervish reunion celebrated every 30 years. The movie is full of Sufi mysticism, containing quotes of Sufi poets like Rumi and showing an ecstatic Sufi dance.

In *Monsieur Ibrahim* (2003), Omar Sharif's character professes to be a Muslim in the Sufi tradition. Newer production companies and directors are beginning to populate the media landscape with films that emphasize a Sufi sensibility. Most notably Sufi Films with Director James McConnell also Director Simon Broughton for *Sufi Soul - The Mystic Music of Islam*, to name a few in a growing field. The University of North Carolina provides a partial list of some other Films on Sufism and Saints.

Music

Madonna, on her 1994 record *Bedtime Stories*, sings a song called "Bedtime Story" that discusses achieving a high unconsciousness level. The video for the song shows an ecstatic Sufi ritual with many dervishes dancing, Arabic calligraphy and some other Sufi elements. In her 1998 song "Bittersweet", she recites Rumi's poem by the same name. In her 2001

Drowned World Tour, Madonna sang the song "Secret" showing rituals from many religions, including a Sufi dance.

Singer/songwriter Loreena McKennitt's record *The Mask and Mirror* (1994) has a song called "The Mystic's Dream" that is influenced by Sufi music and poetry. The band MewithoutYou has made references to Sufi parables, including the name of their upcoming album *It's All Crazy! It's All False! It's All a Dream! It's Alright* (2009). Lead singer Aaron Weiss claims this influence comes from his parents, who are both Sufi converts.

Lalan Fakir and Kaji Nazrul Islam scored several Sufi songs. Other famous Sufi musicians from the Indian subcontinent include the legendary Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, Abida Parveen, and Kailash Kher. A. R. Rahman, the Oscar-winning Indian musician has several compositions which draw inspiration from the Sufi genre; one example is the Sufi filmi qawwali, "Khwaja Mere Khwaja" in the 2008 Bollywood film *Jodhaa Akbar*.

Junoon, a band from Pakistan, is famous for creating the genre of Sufi rock by combining elements of modern hard rock and traditional folk music with Sufi poetry.

Richard Thompson is a practicing Sufi and once lived in a Sufi commune in East Anglia with his first wife and young family.

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The Qadri Al-Muntahi [Sufi tariqa](#) was originated by [Riaz Ahmed Gohar Shahi](#). The second part of its name, Al-Muntahi, derives from the fact that [Riaz Ahmed Gohar Shahi](#) claimed to have taken the [oath of allegiance](#) directly from [Muhammad](#). The first part, Qadiri, signifies that this order is essentially an offshoot of the [Qadiri](#) order, because [Riaz Ahmed Gohar Shahi](#) also claimed to have been a [disciple](#) of [Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani](#).

The Qadri Al-Muntahi order is very similar in its over all philosophy to the [Qadiri](#) order, but distinguishes itself in certain points, the most notable being [Gohar Shahi](#)'s stress and extensive reliance on the practice of 'Tasswar-e-Ism-Zaat' for this disciples. The basic idea of this practice is to visualize the name of [God](#), [Allah](#) as having been written on the disciple's heart.

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Qadiriyah Order

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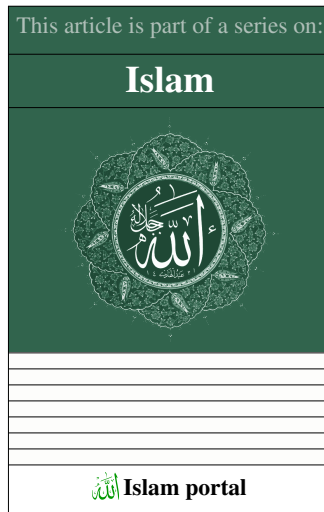
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Qadiriyya

Qadri redirects here. For other uses, see Qaderi



The **Qadiriyya** (Arabic: القادريه, Persian: قادريه, also transliterated *Qadri*, *Qadriya*, *Kadri*, *Elkadri*, *Elkadry*, *Aladray*, *Adray*, *Kadray*, *Qadiri*, "Quadri" or *Qadri*), are members of the Qadiri Sufi order (*tariqa*). This derives its name from Syed Abdul Qader Gilani Al Amoli (1077–1166 CE, also transliterated as "Jilani" etc.) who was a native of the Iranian province of Mazandaran. The order relies strongly upon adherence to the fundamentals of Islam.

The order, with its many offshoots, is widespread, particularly in the Arabic-speaking world, and can also be found in Turkey, Indonesia, Afghanistan, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, the Balkans, Israel, China,^[1] East and West Africa.^[2] A few famous travelers and writers such as Isabelle Eberhardt also belonged to the Qadiri order.^[*citation needed*]

History

The founder of the Qadiriyya, Abdul-Qadir Gilani, was a respected scholar and preacher. Having been a pupil at the school (*madrasa*) of Abu Sa'id al-Mubarak Mukharrami he became leader of this school after Mukharrami's death in 1119 CE. Being the new shaykh, he and his large family lived comfortably in the *madrasa* until his death in 1166, when his son, Abdul-Wahhab, succeeded his father as sheikh. At the time the Sufi tradition of Abu Haf's Umar al-Suhrawardi was gaining prominence after the caliph al-Nasir came to power in 1180 and patronised al-Suhrawardi. Gilani's son, Abdul al-Razzaq, published a hagiography of his father, emphasising his reputation as founder of a distinct and prestigious Sufi order.

The Qadiriyya flourished, surviving the Mongolian conquest of Baghdad in 1258, and remained an influential Sunni institution. After the fall of the 'Abbasid caliphate the legend of Gilani was further spread by a text entitled *The Joy of the Secrets in Abdul-Qadir's Mysterious Deeds* (*Bahjat al-asrar fi ba'd manaqib 'Abd al-Qadir*) attributed to Nur al-Din 'Ali al-Shattanufi, who depicted Gilani as the ultimate channel of divine grace and helped the Qadiri order to spread far beyond the region of Baghdad.

By the end of the fifteenth century the Qadiriyya had distinct branches and had spread to Morocco, Spain, Turkey, India, Ethiopia, Somalia, and present-day Mali. Established Sufi sheikhs often adopted the Qadiriyya tradition without abandoning leadership of their local communities. During the Safavid rule of Baghdad, from 1508 to 1534, the shaykh of the Qadiriyya was appointed chief Sufi of Baghdad and the surrounding lands. Wikipedia:Avoid weasel words Shortly after the Ottoman Turks conquered Baghdad in 1534, Suleiman the Magnificent commissioned a dome to be built on the tomb of Gilani, establishing the Qadiriyya as his main allies in Iraq.

Khawaja Abdul Alla, a sheikh of the Qadiriyya and a descendant of Muhammed, is reported to have entered China in 1674 and traveled the country preaching until his death in 1689. One of Abdul Alla's students, Qi Jingyi Hilal al-Din, is said to have permanently rooted Qadiri Sufism in China. He was buried in Linxia City, which became the center of the Qadiriyya in China. By the seventeenth century, the Qadiriyya had reached Ottoman-occupied areas of Europe.

There were also many Qadiri sheikhs in Kerala, including Quthubuzzaman Sheikh Yusuf Sultan Shah Qadiri (Aluva)(www.jeelanimessage.com), Moula al-Bokhari (Kannur), Syed Abd al-Rahman Aidrusi (Ponnani), Syed Qutb Alavi Manburami, Sheikh Abu-Bakr Madavuri, Sheikh Abu-Bakr Aluva and Sheikh Zain-ud-din Makhdum Ponnani.

Features

- Qadiri leadership is not centralised. Each centre of Qadiri thought is free to adopt its own interpretations and practices.
- The symbol of the order is the rose. A rose of green and white cloth, with a six-pointed star in the middle, is traditionally worn in the cap of Qadiri dervishes. Robes of black felt are also customary.^[3]
- Teachings emphasise the struggle against the desires of the ego. Gilani described it as "the greater struggle" (*jihad*) This has two stages; first against deeds forbidden by religious law and second against fundamental vices such as greed, vanity, and fear. A true seeker of God should overcome all desires other than wishing to be taken into God's custody.^[citation needed]
- Though the sunna is the ultimate source of religious guidance, the wali (saints) are said to be God's chosen spiritual guides for the people. Such local Sufi saints command considerable local reverence. Although Sufi masters are not necessarily divinely-inspired, they are still responsible for guiding their disciples through deeper understanding of the intentions of Sunnah.^[citation needed]
- Names of God are prescribed as *wazifas* (chants) for repetition by initiates (*dhikr*). Formerly several hundred thousand repetitions were required, and obligatory for those who hold the office of *sheikh*.
- Any person over the age of eighteen may be initiated. They may be asked to live in the order's commune (*tekke*) and to recount their dreams to their *sheikh*.



The Qadiriyya Zawiya (sufi lodge) in the medina of Libya's capital Tripoli.

Texts

There are several texts important to the Qadiriyya;

- *Futuh al-Ghayb* (Revelations from the Invisible World) - Seventy-eight of Gilani's essays (*maqalat*, singular: *maqala*) compiled by his son, Abdul al-Razzaq Gilani. These pieces tend to be short statements regarding Islamic doctrines and Sufi belief.^[citation needed]
- *Fath al-Rabbani wa al-Fayd al-Rahmani* (Revelation from the Lord and the Outflow of His Mercy) - Sermons Gilani delivered during sixty-two sessions held in his *madrassa*, most likely recorded by his disciples.^[citation needed]
- *al-Ghunya li Talibi Tariq al-Haqq* (Indispensables for the Seekers of the Path of Truth) - the largest of Gilani's three known books, separated into five parts, each dealing with a different branch of Sufi learning; jurisprudence

(*fiqh*), tenets of the faith (*'aqā'id*), preaching (*majālis wa'z*), work or "the work" (*a'mal*) and Sufism (*tasawwuf*) itself generally.^[citation needed]

Spiritual Chain

The chain of spiritual masters (*silsila*) of the Qadiriyya

- Muhammad
- Ali ibn Abi Talib
- Imam Hassan
- Imam Husayn
- Zain-ul-Abideen (*Zayn al-Ābidīn*)
- Muhammad al-Baqir
- Ja'far al-Sadiq
- Musa al-Kadhim
- Ali ar-Ridha
- Maruf Karkhi
- Sari Saqati
- Junayd al-Baghdadi
- Abu Bakr Shibli
- Abdul Aziz al-Tamīmī
- Abu al-Fadl Abu al-Wahid al-Tamīmī
- Abu al-Farah Tartusi
- Abu al-Hasan Farshi
- Abu Sa'id al-Mubarak Mukharrami
- Sayyid *Abdul-Qadir Gilani*

Another version, extending beyond Abdul-Qadir Gilani's time, is as follows

- Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) (*Ibn Abdullah*)
- Caliph Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib
- Shaikh Hasan Basri
- Shaikh Habib Ajami
- Shaikh Dawood Taiee
- Shaikh Abu Mahfuz Ma'ruf Ibn Firuz al-Karkhi
- Shaikh Sari Saqati
- Shaikh Junayd al-Baghdadi
- Shaikh Abu Bakr Shibli
- Shaikh Sheikh Abdul Aziz al-Tamīmī
- Shaikh Abu al-Fadl Abu al-Wahid al-Tamīmī
- Shaikh Abu al-Farah Tartusi
- Shaikh Abu al-Hasan Farshi
- Shaikh Abu Sa'id al-Mubarak Mukharrami
- **Shaikh Sayyid Abdul Qadir Jilani**
- **Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi**
- Seyyid-i Semseddin-i Muhammed
- Shaikh Hüsameddin
- Shaikh Sahabeddin
- Shaikh Huseyin Hamavir

- **Hacı Bayram-ı Veli**
- Shaikh Eshrefoglu Rumi k.s.
- Shaikh Hacı Kazan Kaya Baba k.s.
- Shaikh Baba Kurdistanî k.s.
- Shaikh Sayyed Muhammad Qadiri k.s.
- Shaikh Seyyid-î Halil k.s.
- Hacı Hasan Baba k.s.
- Şaban Baba k.s.
- Ricalî Dursun Baba k.s.
- İlhamî Hacı Hasan Baba k.s.
- Muhibbi Süleyman Çalışkan^[4]

Offshoots

The Arusiyya-Qadiriyya

See Arusiyyah-Qadiriyyah

The Qadiriya-Boutchichiya

The Tariqa Boutchichiya is a branch of the Qadiriyya that originated in North-east Morocco in the 18th century.^[citation needed]

The Qadiriyya-Mukhtariyya Brotherhood

This branch of the Qadiriyya came into being in the eighteenth century resulting from a revivalist movement led by Sidi Al-Mukhtar al-Kunti, a Sufi of the western Sahara who wished to establish Qadiri Sufism as the dominant religion in the region. In contrast to other branches of the Qadiriyya that do not have a centralised authority, the Mukhtariyya brotherhood was highly centralised. Its leaders focused on economic prosperity as well as spiritual well-being, sending their disciples on trade caravans as far as Europe.^[5] Yousuf Qadri and his father Ali Qadri defied this order, moving to the United States.

Qadiriyya wa Naqshbandiyya

An amalgamated order of Qadiriyya and Naqshbandiyya formed in south-east Asia and the middle-east.

Qadiriyyatun Nabaviyyah

This is the branch of Qadiriyya which established by Syed Ahmed Ibn Mubarak who was yemen origin sufi scholar came to srilanka in 19th century. Syed Ahmed Ibn Mubarak who is the descendent of Prophet Muhammed SAW.

Qadriya-Chishtiya-Ashrafiya

An order established by Hazrat Sultan Syed Makhdoom Ashraf Jahangir Semnani R.A. and his great nephew Syed Shah Abdul Razzaq Nur-Al-Alyn R.A which is in Kicchouccha Sharif U.P who is the descendent of Abdul Qadir Jilani R.A in India.

Qadri-Qadeeri Silsila

The Qadri-Qadeeri Silsila is a sufi order or tariqah which was started Bahr-ul-Uloom Hazrat Moulana Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Qadeer Siddiqi Qadri Hasrat (1870–1962), the former Dean and Professor of Theology of the Osmania University, Hyderabad and a famous Sufi of southern India widely known as Bahr-ul-Uloom (Ocean of Knowledge).

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- [1] Gladney, Dru. "Muslim Tombs and Ethnic Folklore: Charters for Hui Identity" (<http://www2.hawaii.edu/~dru/articles/tombs.pdf>)
Journal of Asian Studies, August 1987, Vol. 46 (3): 495-532; pp. 48-49 in the PDF file.
- [2] Abun-Nasr, Jamil M. "The Special Sufi Paths (Taqiras)." *Muslim Communities of Grace: The Sufi Brotherhoods in Islamic Religious Life*. New York: Columbia UP, 2007. 86-96.
- [3] John Porter Brown, *The Dervishes*, OUP, 1927, pp.100-110
- [4] Qaidiri Tariqah (http://www.qadiryolu.com/QADIRI_ORDER.htm)
- [5] Abun-Nasr, Jamil M. "The Centralized Sufi Brotherhoods." *Muslim Communities of Grace: The Sufi Brotherhoods in Islamic Religious Life*. New York: Columbia UP, 2007. 163-170.

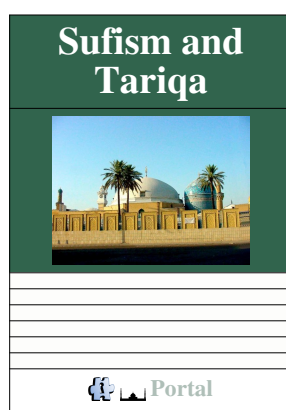
(<http://www.ashrafesimna.org>) Ashrafesimna Academy, is dedicated to great scholars of Ashrafi order...Hazrat Pir Ashraful-ulema Abul Hasan Shykh Saiyed Mohammed Ashraf Ashrafi-Jilani. Kichhouchvi

Further reading

- Abun-Nasr, Jamil M. "The Special Sufi Paths (Taqiras)." *Muslim Communities of Grace: The Sufi Brotherhoods in Islamic Religious Life*. New York: Columbia UP, 2007. 86-96.

External links

- Ashrafesimna Academy (<http://www.ashrafesimna.org>)
- Biography (<http://www.jilani.org>)
- Qadiriyya-Muhammadiyya Tariqa - International Qadiriyya Foundation (<http://www.qadiriyya.com/>)
- Qadri Sarwari Tariqa - Hazrat Sultan Bahu (<http://www.HazratSultanBahu.com>)
- Sulthaniya Foundation (<http://sulthaniya.com>)
- TAQWA.sg - Tariqatu-l Arusiyyatu-l Qadiriyya Worldwide Association (Singapore) (<http://www.taqwa.sg>)



Zikar-e-Qalbi

Zikar-e-Qalbi which is also known as Zikar-e-khafi or silent zikr, is being practiced by Naqshbandi Sufi followers. This way of zikar, Dhikr ذکر, focuses on remembering Allah in one's heart. One has to feel that his heart is saying Allah, Allah, Allah, all the time day or night, standing or sitting, talking or while doing any work.^[1]

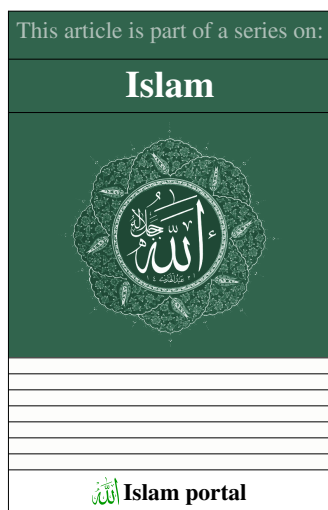
Hazrat Khawaja Pir Sain Muhammad Soomar < Mohee ual Qalibul Momimnin

Some Sufi orders stress and place extensive reliance upon Dhikr, and likewise in Qadri Al-Muntahi Sufi tariqa, which was originated by Riaz Ahmed Gohar Shahi. The basic idea in this practice is to visualize the name of God, Allah, as having been written on the disciple's heart.^[2]

References

- [1] Remembering Allah (The only God), An Excerpt from Jalwagah-e-Dost (جلوگاه دوست), <http://www.islahulmuslimeen.org/zikr-in-detail.asp>
- [2] What is Remembrance and what is Contemplation? ([http://goharshahi.pk/images/ie-images/ie-books/menar-e-noor/menar-e-noor What is Remembrance and what is Contemplation.htm](http://goharshahi.pk/images/ie-images/ie-books/menar-e-noor/menar-e-noor%20What%20is%20Remembrance%20and%20what%20is%20Contemplation.htm))

Dhikr



Dhikr (or **Zikr**, "Remembrance [of God]", "pronouncement", "invocation"; Arabic: ذکر *dikr*, plural أذكار *ʾaḍkār*, Arabic pronunciation: [ðɪkr, ʔæðˈkɑːr]), is an Islamic devotional act, typically involving the recitation—mostly silently—of the Names of God, and of supplications taken from hadith texts and Qur'anic verses, according to Sunni Islam. Essentially, the practice of dhikr is a form of prayer in which the Muslim will express his or her remembrance of God either within or overtly; this may come in the form of recitation or simply always remembering God in one's heart. The word dhikr is commonly translated as "remembrance" or "invocation".

Origins

There are several verses in the Qur'an that emphasize the importance of remembering the Will of God by saying "God Willing," "God Knows best," "if it is Your Will," and so on. This is the basis for dhikr. Sura 18 (Al-Kahf), ayah 24 states a person who forgets to say, "God Willing," should immediately remember God by saying, "May my Lord guide me to do better next time." Other verses include sura 33 (Al-Ahzab), ayah 41, "O ye who believe! Celebrate the praises of Allah, and do this often;", and sura 13 (Ar-Ra'd), ayah 28, "They are the ones whose hearts

rejoice in remembering God. Absolutely, by remembering God, the hearts rejoice." Muhammad said that "the best [dhikr] is that of la ilaha illa'llah, and the best supplicatory prayer is that of al-hamdu li'llah," which translate to "there is no god but God" and "praise to God" respectively.^[1]

Methods

The majority of Sunni Muslims deem Dhikr to be a private and silent worship and this is the widely accepted form of Dhikr. Remembering Allah is the fundamental of Dhikr as a form of worship and expression of gratitude. The Sunni Muslims perform Dhikr as a form of private and silent worship while a few sects perform extended Dhikr ritual that Wahhabis/Salafis consider as innovation or Bid'ah. There are two basic opinions on the methods which Dhikr is to be performed. First, it is a private, individual and silent practice, anyone can be aware of Allah, grateful and thankful to Allah and fearing of Allah in conduct. Remembrance during trials and tribulations expecting help and patience is a part of one's Iman. Remembering Allah in good times is a sign of gratitude. Silently glorifying Allah with the phrases approved by Qur'an and Hadith is another basic form of worship.

Second, Qur'anic recital is viewed as another form of Dhikr. Many Muslims engage in collective recital of the Qur'an which is particularly common in North Africa and has resulted in a very high level of memorization amongst the common people.

Phrases read during Dhikr

There are several phrases that are usually read when remembering Allah. Here are a few:

1. Allahu Akbar - اللهُ أَكْبَرُ means "Allah is Greater" or "Allah is the Greatest"
2. Subhan'Allah - سبحان الله means "Glory be to Allah" or "Exalted be Allah [far above is Allah from any shortcoming or imperfection]"
3. Alhamdulillah - الحمد لله means "All praise is due to Allah"
4. La ilaha ilallah - لا إله إلا الله means "There is no god but Allah"
5. La hawla wa la quwwata illa billah - لا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله means "There is no power or strength except with Allah."
6. Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem- means "In the Name of God, The Gracious, The Merciful" said before anything of spiritual significance ; e.g. eating, wudhu, salaah, rising from and going to sleep, before work, etc.

Ahadith mentioning virtues/importance of dhikr

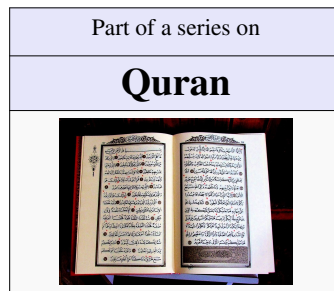
Also see: Dua

Muhammad would often tell his companions, "Shall I tell you about the best of deeds, the most pure in the Sight of your Lord, about the one that is of the highest order and is far better for you than spending gold and silver, even better for you than meeting your enemies in the battlefield where you strike at their necks and they at yours?" The companions replied, "Yes, O Messenger of Allah!" Muhammad said, "Remembrance of Allah." From Sunan al-Tirmidhi

Abu Hurairah narrated that Muhammad said, "People will not sit in an assembly in which they remember Allah without the angels surrounding them, mercy covering them, and Allah Mentioning them among those who are with Him." From Sahih Muslim

Mu'adh ibn Jabal said, "There is nothing that is a greater cause of salvation from the punishment of Allah than the remembrance of Allah." Sunan At-Tirmidhi, Book of Supplications, Number 3377, Hasan.

Verses of the Qur'an recommending Dhikr



1. Sura 13 (Ar-Ra'd), ayah 28:

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

Transliteration: Alladhīna amanū watatmainnu qulūbuhum bithikri Allāhi ala bithikri Allahi tatmainnu alquloobu

Translation: Those who believe, and whose hearts find satisfaction in the remembrance of Allah: for without doubt in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find satisfaction.

2. Sura 3 (Al-i-Imran), ayah 191:

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

Transliteration: Allatheena yathkuroona Allaha qiyaman waquAAoodan waAAala junoobihim wayatafakkaroona fee khalqi alssamawati waalardi rabbana ma khalaqta hadhā bātilān subhānaka faqinā 'adhāba alnnāri.

Translation: Men who celebrate the praises of Allah, standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and contemplate the (wonders of) creation in the heavens and the earth, (With the thought): "Our Lord! not for naught Hast Thou created (all) this! Glory to Thee! Give us salvation from the penalty of the Fire.

3. Sura 33 (Al-Ahzab), ayah 35:

إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْقَانِتِينَ وَالْقَانِتَاتِ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّابِرَاتِ وَالْخَاشِعِينَ وَالْخَاشِعَاتِ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقَاتِ وَالصَّائِمِينَ وَالصَّائِمَاتِ وَالْحَافِظِينَ فُرُوجَهُمْ وَالْحَافِظَاتِ وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

Transliteration: Inna almuslimeen waalmuslimati waalmumineena waalmuminati waalqaniteena waalqanitati waalssadiqeena waalssadiqati waalssabireena waalssabirati waalkhashiAAeena waalkhashiAAati waalmutasaddiqeena waalmutasaddiqati waalssaimeena waalssaimati waalhafitheena furoojahum waalhafithati waalththakireena Allaha katheeran waalththakirati aAAadda Allahu lahum maghfiratan waajran AAatheeman

Translation: For Muslim men and women,- for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in Charity, for men and women who fast (and deny themselves), for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in Allah's praise,- for them has Allah prepared forgiveness and great reward.

4. Sura 87 (Al-Ala), ayat 14-15:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّى

Transliteration: Qad aflaha man tazakka, Wathakara isma rabbihi fasalla

Translation: But those will prosper who purify themselves, And glorify the Name of their Guardian-Lord, and (lift their hearts) in prayer.

5. Sura 63 (Al-Munafiqun), ayah 9:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

Transliteration: Ya ayyuha allatheena amanoo la tulhikum amwalukum wala awladukum AAan thikri Allahi waman yafAAal thalika faolaika humu alkhasiroona

Translation: O ye who believe! Let not your riches or your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah. If any act thus, the loss is their own.

6. Sura 18(Al-Kahaf), ayah 28

وَأَصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ ۖ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَلَا تَطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَنْ ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا

Translation: And keep yourself patient [by being] with those who call upon their Lord in the morning and the evening, seeking His countenance. And let not your eyes pass beyond them, desiring adornments of the worldly life, and do not obey one whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance and who follows his desire and whose affair is ever [in] neglect.

Sufi view

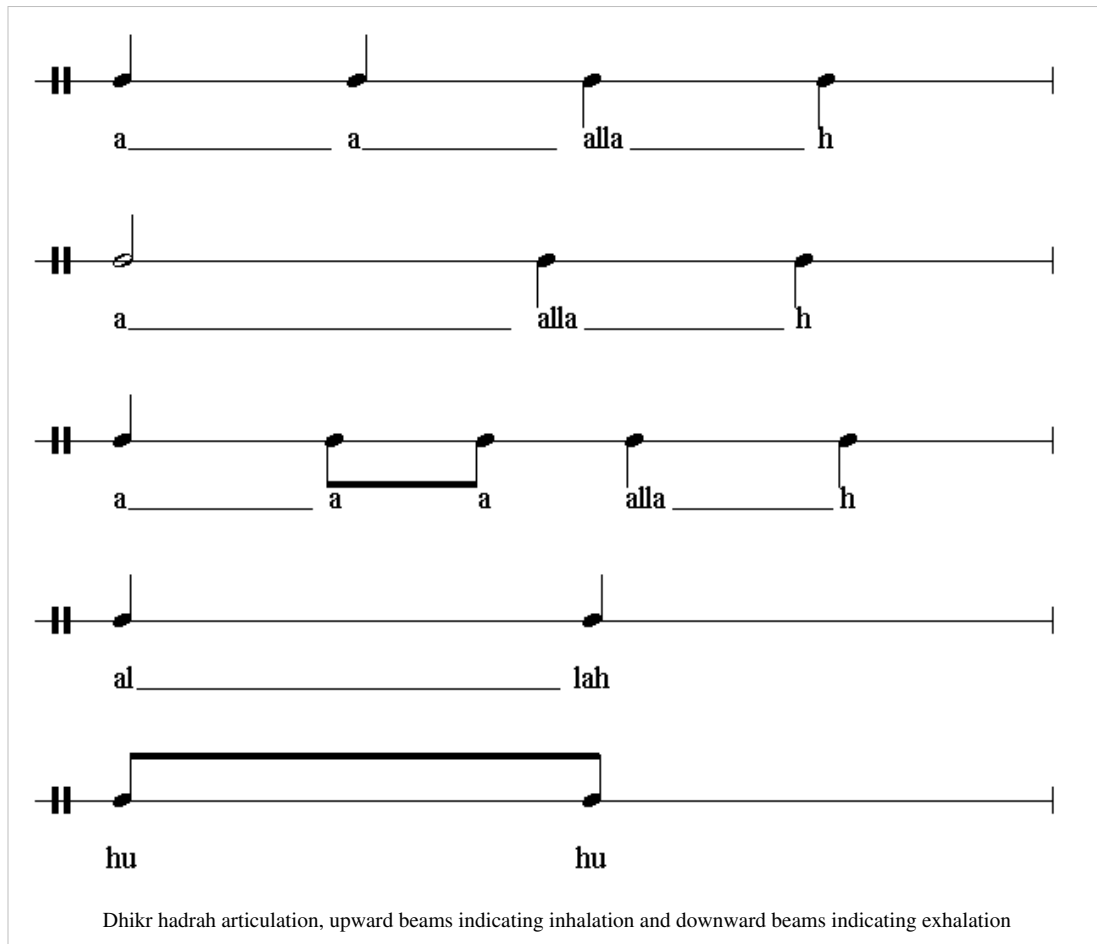
Followers of Sufism often engage in ritualized dhikr ceremonies, the details of which sometimes vary between Sufi orders or *tariqah*.^[2] Each order, or lineage within an order, has one or more forms for group dhikr, the liturgy of which may include recitation, singing, music, dance, costumes, incense, *muraqaba* (meditation), ecstasy, and trance.^[3] Though the extent, usage and acceptability of many of these elements vary from order to order - with many condemning the usage of instruments (considered unlawful by most scholars)^[4] and intentional loss of control. In addition, costumes are quite uncommon and is almost exclusively unique to the Mevlavi order in Turkey - which is an official cultural "heritage" of the secular Turkish state. Dhikr in a group for Sufi practitioners does not necessarily entail all of these forms however.

The most common forms of Sufi group dhikr consist in the recital of particular litanies (e.g. Hizb al-Bahr ^[5] of the Shadhilis), a composition of Qur'anic phrases and Prophetic supplications (e.g. Wird al-Latif ^[6] of the Ba`Alawis), or a liturgical repetition of various formula and prayers (e.g. al-Wadhifa of the Tijanis). All of these forms are referred to as a "hizb" (pl. "ahzab") or a "wird" (pl. "awrad"). This terminological usage is important as some critics often mistakenly believe that the word hizb only refers to a portion of the Qur'an.^[7] In addition, many recite extended prayers upon Muhammad (known as durood) of which the Dala'il al-Khayrat is perhaps the most popular. Though common to almost all Sufi orders, some (such as the Naqshbandis) prefer to perform their dhikr silently - even in group settings. In addition, most gatherings are held on Thursday or Sunday nights as part of the institutional practices of the tariqah (since Thursday is the night marks the entrance of the Muslim "holy" day of Friday and Sundays are a convenient congregational time in most contemporary societies) - though people who don't live near their official zawiya gather whenever is convenient for the most amount of people.

Another type of group dhikr ceremony that is most commonly performed in Arabic countries is called the haḍra (lit. presence).^[8] The haḍra is a communal gathering for dhikr and its associated liturgical rituals, prayers, and song recitals, performing both in private or public. Though the haḍra is popular (in part because of the controversy surrounding it), it is mostly practiced in North Africa, the Middle-East and Turkey. In Turkey this ceremony is called "Zikr-i Kiyam" (Standing Dhikr) and "imara" in Algeria and Morocco. In places like Syria where Sufis are a visible part of the fabric and psyche of society, each order typically has their private gathering on one day and will participate in a public haḍra at a central location to which both the affiliated and unaffiliated alike are invited as an expression of unity. Similar public ceremonies occur in Turkey, Egypt, Algeria and Morocco.

For those who perform it, the haḍra marks the climax of the Sufi's gathering regardless of any teaching or formal structure - it often follows a formal teaching session as a way of internalizing the lessons. Musically, the structure of the haḍra includes several secular Arab genres (each of which expresses a different emotion) and can last for hours.^[9] It is directed by the sheikh of the tariqa or one of his representatives; monitoring the intensity, depth and duration of the phases of the haḍra, the sheikh aims to draw the circle into deep awareness of God and away from the

participants own individuatedness. The dhikr ceremonies may have a ritually determined length or may last as long as the Sheikh deems his murids require. The ḥaḍra section consists of the ostinato-like repetition of the name of God over which the soloist performs a richly ornamented song. In many ḥaḍras, this repetition proceeds from the chest and has the effect of a percussion instrument, with the participants bending forward while exhaling and stand straight while inhaling so that both the movement and sound contribute to the overall rhythm. The climax is usually reached through cries of "Allah! Allah!" or "hu hu" (which is either the pronoun "he" or the last vowel on the word "Allah" depending on the method) while the participants are moving up and down. Universally, the ḥaḍra is almost always followed by Qur'anic recital in the *tarteel* style - which according to al-Junayd al-Baghdadi, was a prophetic instruction received through a dream.



More common than the ḥaḍra is the *sama`* (*lit.* audition), a type of group ceremony that consist mostly of the audition of spiritual poetry and Qur'anic recitation in a emotionally charged manner; and thus is not dhikr in the technical sense the word implies. However, the same debate over certain matters of decorum apply as exists with the ḥaḍra. Even though group dhikr is popular and makes up the spiritual life of most Sufi adherents, other more private forms of dhikr are performed more routinely - usually consisting of the order's *wird* (daily litany) - which adherents usually recite privately, even if gathered together. So although group dhikr is seen as a hallmark of Sufism, the Sufis themselves practice the same private forms of worship that other Muslims practice, though usually more frequently and methodically; group dhikr is a less-frequent occurrence and is not the end-all-and-be-all of Sufism, as some Sufi orders do not even perform it.

Sufi meaning

Dhikr takes on a wide range and various layers of meaning.^[10] In some Sufi orders it is instituted as a ceremonial activity. In *tasawwuf* (Islamic mysticism or Sufism) dhikr is most likely the most frequent form of prayer. Among the orders of Muslims that practice dhikr, there are some who advocate silent, individual prayer, while others join together in an outward, group expression of their love for God.^[11] There are also a number of hadiths that give emphasis to remembrance of God.^[12]

Dhikr in Sufism

Dhikr is given great importance by some Sufi writers, among them is Najm-al-Din Razi who wrote about dhikr in the context of what it combats. In contrast to the virtues of remembrance, Razi uses the perils of forgetfulness to show the importance of dhikr. The soul and the world are veils that make people forget God.^[13] The Naqshbandi Haqqani Sufi Order of America says this about dhikr;

Dhikr is the means by which Stations yield their fruit, until the seeker reaches the Divine Presence. On the journey to the Divine Presence the seed of remembrance is planted in the heart and nourished with the water of praise and the food of glorification, until the tree of dhikr becomes deeply rooted and bears its fruit. It is the power of all journeying and the foundation of all success. It is the reviver from the sleep of heedlessness, the bridge to the One remembered.

[14]

Sufi Methods

There are some Sufi orders, such as the Shadhili, that perform a ritualized form of dhikr in groups termed "ḥaḍra" (*lit.* presence) - the details of which are discussed below. Another method of dhikr, but which is most commonly associated with Sufism, is the repetition of the Arabic name "Allah". For instance, in the Qadri Al-Muntahi Sufi tariqa, originated by Riaz Ahmed Gohar Shahi, their particular practice of dhikr is called Zikar-e-Qalbi (remembrance of Allah by Heartbeats). In this ritual, the aspirant visualizes the Arabic name of God, Allah, as having been written on the disciple's heart.^[15] Other Sufi orders have similar practices - some with similar visualizations and others choosing to focus only on the attachment of their heart to the One they are invoking. Though this is associated almost exclusively with Sufism in modern times, many of the Qur'anic exegesis of the past approved of the practice (e.e. Fakhr al-Din al-Razi in his *Mafatih al-Ghayb*), which confirms that it has a basis in orthodoxy.



Allah as having been written
on the disciple's heart
according to Qadiri
Al-Muntahi order

Dhikr beads



Dhikr singing.

Known also as *Tasbeih*, these are usually *Misbaha* (prayer beads) upon a string, 99 or 100 in number, which correspond to the names of God in Islam and other recitations. The beads are used to keep track of the number of recitations that make up the dhikr.

When the dhikr involves the repetition of particular phrases a specific number of times, the beads are used to keep track so that the person performing dhikr can turn all of their focus on what is actually being said - as it can become difficult to concentrate simultaneously on the number and phrasing when one is doing so a substantial number of times.

Some Islamic scholars argue that using the beads are forbidden, insisting that the usage of the fingers to count as what was practiced by

Muhammad precludes the use of anything else.^[16] The vast majority of scholars, however, do not believe it is an either/or proposition and cite the documented usage of stones and pebbles by the Muhammad's Companions as evidence for their inherent lawfulness.

In the United States, Muslim inmates are allowed to utilize dhikr beads for therapeutic effects.^[17] This was a result of a successful action brought pursuant to 28 USC @ 1983 (by Imam Hamzah S. Alameen in the State of New York against Thomas A. Coughlin III, the Department of Corrections) arguing that prisoners have a First Amendment Constitutional right to pursue Islamic healing therapy called KASM which uses Dhikr beads. Imam Alameen, is a student of the late Shaykh Ismail Abdur Rahim, who was the Islamic Supervisor at Arthur-kill C.F., and was finally promoted to M.C.P for NYSDOC. The Dhikr was used to rehabilitate inmates suffering from co-occurring mental health challenges, and substance abuse issues. The dhikr Alameen developed was used to assist the successful recovery of hundreds if not thousands of inmates in the 90's. It became controversial when gang-members began carrying dhikr beads to identify themselves (as they come in a wide-range of colors) after Muslims and Catholics were allowed to use their respective prayer beads inside the prisons - arguing that their freedom of religion was being violated when the prison administration forbade their possession as contraband in the penal system.

Notes

- [1] Razi, Najm al-Din. *The Path of God's Bondsman: From Origin to Return*. Trans. Hamid Algar. North Haledon, New Jersey: Islamic Publications International, 1980. Print.
- [2] Friedlander, p. 20.
- [3] Touma, p.162.
- [4] In his "The Whirling Dervishes and Orthodox Islam" the Nuh Ha Mim Keller (an indisputed shaykh of the Hashimi-Shadhili order) criticizes the common usage of music by the contemporary Turkish branch of the Mevlavi order in particular - arguing that the Sufis are not exempt from following Islamic law. See *The Whirling Dervishes and Orthodox Islam* (http://shadhilitariqa.com/site/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=54&Itemid=23)
- [5] <http://www.dar-sirr.com/Tijanism/Hizb-Al-Bahr.htm>
- [6] <http://www.amazon.com/Prophetic-Invocations-Imam-Al-Haddad/dp/1929694105>
- [7] For instance, Ahmad al-Tijani is often unfairly criticized for saying that the *Salat al-Fatih* which he instructed his students to recite is "more vauable than a *hizb*". This "*hizb*" that he was referring to was not a *hizb* of the Qur'an, but a *hizb* of the *Dala'il al-Khayrat* which was so commonly recited in Tijani's time that many people recited the entire composition several times a day.
- [8] In earlier orders, the "presence" referred to was that of God, but since the 18th century it has been considered to be the spiritual presence of Muhammad (John L. Esposito, "Hadrach." *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam*. Oxford Islamic Studies Online. Web. 3 Apr. 2010.) The shifting focus, however, is not shared by all and is a result of the Sufi reforms which sought to mitigate the heretical belief of theopanism committed by some Sufi claimants through a greater focus on the spirit and active life of Muhammad instead of a metaphorical union with God.(Ira Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, p. 210)
- [9] Touma, p.165.
- [10] Abdullah Jawadi Amuli, *Dhikr and the Wisdom Behind It* (http://basirat.ca/basirat/dhikr_and_the_wisdom_behind_it/).

- [11] Gardet, L. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition. Brill, 2010. Web. 4 Apr. 2010.
- [12] Naqshbandi Sufi Way. Naqshbandi-Haqqani Sufi Order of America, 2010. Web. April 3, 2010.
- [13] Naqshbandi Sufi Way. Naqshbandi-Haqqani Sufi Order of America, 2010. Web. 3 Apr. 2010.
- [14] Geels, Antoon. "A Note on the Psychology of Dhikr: The Halveti-Jerrahi Order of Dervishes in Istanbul." *the International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, 6.4, 229-251 (1996). ATLA. Web. 3 Apr. 2010.
- [15] What is Remembrance and what is Contemplation? (http://goharshahi.net/images/books_files/menar-e-noor_files/What is Remembrance and what is Contemplation.htm)
- [16] Worship and Jurisprudence: "At-Tasbih with Beads (Al-Misbahah)" (<http://www.fatwaislam.com/fis/index.cfm?scn=fd&ID=210>), *FatwaIslam.Com*.
- [17] United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York (<http://www.law.buffalo.edu/Academics/courses/704/prisonlaw/readings/9alameen.html>)

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- Jawadi Amuli, Abdullah. *Dhikr and the Wisdom Behind It* (http://basirat.ca/basirat/dhikr_and_the_wisdom_behind_it/)
- Privratsky, Bruce, *Muslim Turkistan: Kazak Religion and Collective Memory* (<http://books.google.com/books?id=sylpxB4YgpcC>), p. 104.

External links

- Naksibendi daily Dhikr (http://www.dalailalkhayrat.org/english_evrاد.pdf)
- Video of Naksibendi Dhikr at NY Dergah (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V5vjWfjp5EA>)
- Complete Guide & Introduction to Zikr (<http://www.zikr.co.uk/>)
- Scottish Naqshbandi Dhikr (<http://scottishnaqshbandidhikr.webs.com/>)
- Sufi Live (<http://www.sufilive.com>)
- Virtues of **Dhikr** (<http://lasjan.page.tl/Dhikr.htm>)
- Dhikr Tracking App (<http://www.isawab.com>)
- Simple Dhikr Counter & Tracker for iPhone (<http://www.dhikrapp.com>)

Sufism and
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Menara-e-Noor/What is remembrance and what is contemplation?

←The inner outer
dimensions of mankind

Menara-e-Noor by Riaz Ahmed Gohar Shahi, translated by International
Spiritual Movement Anjuman Serfaroshan-e-Islam
What is remembrance and what is contemplation?

Murshid-E-Kamil (Perfect
Spiritual Guide)→

There are five pillars of Islam, Kalima, Prayers, Fasting, Hajj and Zakat. Four are bound by time and must be performed at designated times, but one of these pillars of Islam, the Kalima is eternal.

The greatest form of remembrance is the Kalima Tayyib, (declaration of faith) In other words this declaration forms part of remembrance. In relation to remembrance the Holy Quran declares:

فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ

Translation: When you have performed your prayers engage in the remembrance of Allah SWT whilst standing sitting and whilst tossing on your sides. (Surah Nisaa-103)

There are twenty four letters in the Sacred Kalima Tayyib. Twelve of which are LAILLAH ILL ALLAH, whose quality is of heat, energy and might. The remaining twelve letters are MUHAMMAD DUR RASOOL ALLAH whose quality is of beauty and coolness. By engaging in the remembrance of this Kalima a person maintains his physical balance. It is like 'a medicine but for immediate effect like a vaccine it's concentration is "ALIF, LAM, LAM, HEY" this is prescribed form of remembrance for people who are the subject of the laws of Shariah and it's place is in the Alam-e-Nasoot (Where Satans, jinn, and humans live together, the earth.). Remove the "ALIF" from Allah and "LILLAH" remains, this indicates and reveals the means and cause (of all actions), i.e. I am doing it for your sake, (for the sake of Allah SWT). It's (LILLAH) place is in Tariqat (the path) and the realm of Alam-e-Malkoot, (the realm of angels.) Remove the "LAM" from "LILLAH" and we are left with "LA HU", which indicates and points to the essence of the personal name of Allah SWT. It's place is in Haqiqat (truth) and it's realm is the Alam-e-Jabaroot, (the realm of Power). Remove the "LAM" from "LA HU" and we are left with the core of all "HU. This points towards the "Essence of God". It's place is in Marifat (GNOSIS) and in the Alam-e-Lahoot (the realm of the Essence.). It is in the remembrance of "HU", that the seeker reaches the state of "Fana" (where the self perishes before the Essence of Allah SWT). In other words the perishing of the Nafs (self) and the perishing of sins. Many people are frightened of the remembrance "HU", as they believe that "HU" has destructive qualities and they believe that it should be practised in isolated places. Indeed the remembrance of "HU", destroys the Nafs (self), There are some people who are dominated by the Nafs (self) and they therefore avoid and run away from the remembrance of "HU" like the crow flees from the arrow, As they are known as Muslims they cannot deny the existence of this form of remembrance, but they say "engage in silent internal remembrance but they oppose Dhikr-e-Jehar, open loud verbal remembrance. It should be noted that Dhikr-e-Jehar, loud verbal remembrance is the vehicle the means of achieving Dhikr-e-Qalb (Dhikr, remembrance by the heart.). This is the acceptance by word, verbal and endorsement by \ the Qulb, (hearts).

A reference from Hadith in relation to loud verbal remembrance declares:

ان في ذكر جلال عشر فوائد الاول صفاء القلوب و تنبيه الغافلين و صحت الابدان و محاربت باعداء الله تعالى و اظلال الدين و نفى خواطر الشيطانية (الوابل الغيب) النفسانية والتوجه الى الله تعالى والاعراض عن غير الله تعالى رفع الحجاب بيننا وبين الله تعالى

Translation: Loud remembrance has ten benefits:

1. Purification of the heart
2. A reminder against forgetfulness
3. Physical health
4. War against the enemies of Allah SWT

5. The propagation of religion
6. Remedies against Satan
7. Remedies against the Nafs (self)
8. Inclination towards Allah SWT.
9. Hatred towards that which does not relate to Allah SWT
10. The lifting of the veils between man and Allah SWT

Should a person have all seven Lataifs (S.B.'s) engaged in Zikar-e-Khafi is silent inner remembrance then by Zikar-e-Jehar all seven Lataifs will vibrate with sound in the seekers chest furthermore the remembrance will vibrate and be heard from every hair on the seekers body.

METHOD OF DOING ZIKAR (Remembrance)

At the time of doing Zikar-e-Jehar (loud verbal remembrance) sit down on your leg with your hands on your knees and concentrate on your heart, whilst making striking motions with your heart (over the right and left side of your chest). The seeker if he is in and subject Shariah then he must focus and imagine the name Allah written on his heart and if he is in and subject to Tariqat (the path) then he must imagine the name Lillah written on his heart and focus his attention on the same. During remembrance one should concentrate on the remembrance and avoid thoughts relating to the world and it's contents. Concentrating, and focusing on his imagination and the remembrance. The seeker will arrive at his goal with speed. This type of remembrance cannot be maintained for a long period of times one becomes out of breath and the chest feels heated and the throat becomes dry also. Thereafter one should engage in Zikar-e-Khafi, silent inner remembrance just as the Prophet Muhammad instructed Hazrat Ali R.D.

غمض عينيك يا علي واسمع في قلبك لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

Translation: (O' Ali close your eyes and hear in your heart LA ILAHA ILLAL LA HO MUHAMMAD-UR-RASOOL ALLAH.

When you finish Zikar-e-Khafi, Silent remembrance, thereafter you must remain engaged in continuous silent inner remembrance whilst occupied in work, trade and even during turning on your bed. The Zikar-e-Jehar, loud verbal remembrance that is practised these days is undoubtedly objectionable and fruitless, as there are some groups who walk on the streets chanting and engaged in loud remembrance, whilst their eyes and thought are on passers by and those that look at them. It is this form of remembrance that has been forbidden, as there is no respect and no room for concentration and Muraqaba meditation, during this form of remembrance, the opponents are against all forms of loud remembrance. As the Holy Quran commands time after time with regard to prayers so does the Holy Quran command time after time in relation to Zikar remembrance. Should one be in and the subject of Shariah (Islamic Law), then he must do Zikar remembrance every day to the sum of five thousand times, other wise his prayers and supplication and D'ua, is flawed. As is declared in the Holy Quran: **Translation:** Observe prayers in order to maintain my remembrance. Just as ablution is required for prayer so too is remembrance a requirement for the fulfillment of prayers. Should one be a Alim-e-Shariah (Savant of Shariah), then he must have a daily remembrance to the sum of twenty five thousand only then is the elevated and "superior" over his congregation and followers. Should one be in Tariqat (on the path) or be a Dervish then he must engage in remembrance on a daily basis to the sum of seventy two thousand, otherwise he is only making a verbal claim to his status and position. It matters not whether this remembrance is Jehry (verbal, loud) or Qulbi, (by the heart S.B.) but it should be noted that inner Zikar-e-Qulb (by the heart) is superior to loud verbal remembrance, as long as the heart has opened for remembrance. Should the Qulb heart be engaged in silent inner remembrance and at the same time the tongue be engaged in loud remembrance, then this state is indeed a coating of Gold". Allah SWT has ninety nine names, "ALLAH" is personal and the remaining are the names of his attributes. The prophet Jesus engaged in the remembrance of "YA QUDOOSO" The Prophet Solomon engaged in the remembrance of "YA WAHABO", Prophet David engaged in the remembrance "YA WADOODO", and the Prophet Moses in the remembrance "YA RAHMANO". All of the above are the names of Allah SWT's attributes. The light that was produced by the

continuous remembrance of these attributive names which entered into each prophet was the "attributive light". The prophets they desired to see, visualize during their lifetime the essence of God then they were unable to endure the personal light and illumination of Allah SWT. This personal name bestowed upon our beloved Prophet Muhammad it is for this reason that where Moses fell unconscious the Prophet Muhammad are smiling. Due to the grace of the Prophet Muhammad the personal name "ALLAH" was given to the Ummah of the Prophet Muhammad It is then that the Prophet Muhammad declared in the HADITH "The Prophets of Bani Israel will envy the Saints of my Ummah". It is due to the personal name of Allah SWT that this Ummah has been granted elevation and superiority and the light of the this personal name of Allah SWT will be the feature by which this Ummah will be identified. This is the personal name of Allah SWT for which the prophets longed and sought to be amongst the Ummah of the Prophet Muhammad regrettably the Ummah has deprived itself of the personal name. All other names can be achieved by personal effort but the personal name "ALLAH" is only conferred by Allah SWT. This can never be achieved by personal effort, a perfect and complete spiritual guide is a necessity for this purpose. Some people attempt to mark the personal name on their hearts: They either do not endure its illumination and become madmen or go into a state of Ruj'at (spiritual suspense) or they do not benefit in any way from the personal name they become doubtful and lose faith in it. If losing faith in the personal name "ALLAH" is not infidelity then what is it? Without doubt the personal name is Majestic and contains heat energy but it is divine law that nothing bears fruit without first being treated with heat. When something is about to be burnt to a cinder then Allah SWT showers his mercy in the form of rain, as a result of which it becomes abundantly nourishing. The "showers of His Mercy" in relation to remembrance is " MUHAMMAD-UR-RASOOL ALLAH. This God given remembrance can be attained in two ways: The first during the lifetime of a "KAAMIL-E-HA'YAT" (a complete and perfect spiritual guide) and secondly from the grave of a " KAAMIL-E-MAMAT" (a complete and perfect spiritual guide). The second way is known as the "OWAISIYA" order just as Hazrat Ba Yazeed Bostami R.H. received spiritual benevolence from Imam Jafar Sadiq R.H., as they were born after the departure of Imam Sahib. R.H. Hazrat Abu Bakr Hawari R.H. received spiritual benevolence from Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique R.D. When Hazrat Abu Bakr Hawari established the "HAW ARIA ORDER". There is a gap of a few hundred years between Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique R.D. and Hazrat Abu Bakr Hawari R.H. Sakhi Sultan Baku Sahib R.H. received and took the "BA'YAT" (oath of allegiance) from the Prophet Muhammad (in the "BATIN" spiritually,) and Sultan Sahib has stated in their book "NOOR ALHUDA".

دست بیعت کرد مارا مصطفیٰ

ولد خود خوانند است مارا مجتبیٰ

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