

‘Uwaysī

‘Uways al-Qaranī and Related Information

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Uwaisi

Uwaisyaan refers to those Sufis who have gained the spiritual chain from another Sufi without physically meeting them in this world. Usually "Uwaisyan" are known as a school in Tasawwuf, and the word **Uwaisi** is its singular form.

Background

In the science of spirituality of Islam (Tasawwuf) the Uwaisi Transmission occurs when the spirits of righteous believers (*saliheen, awliya*) meet in the world called *alam al-arwaah* (the world of spirits) which is beyond *alam al-ajsam* (the material plane). Whoever takes knowledge through spirituality from a deceased master in *alam al-arwaah* is called Uwaisi. This means of transmission is considered as powerful and effective as the physical relation of master and disciple.

The term Uwaisi is derived from the name of Uwais al-Qarani, who never met the Islamic prophet Muhammad physically,^[1] yet was fully aware of his spiritual presence at all times of his life.

It is stated in *Classical Islam and the Naqshandi Sufi Tradition*, by Shaykh Hisham Kabbani that: "The sign of the Favor of Allah Almighty and Exalted on his servant is to authorize one of His saints to uplift that servant to the Divine Presence. That is why many saints who came in previous times were guides for those who came after through this spiritual (Uwaisi) connection. It is known that many saints have been under the guidance and training of prophets and other saints that lifted them up."^[2]

Contemporary Western orders

According to Dr. Alan Godlas of the University of Georgia's Department of Religion, a Sufi Order or *tariqa* known as the Uwaisi is "very active", having been introduced in the West by the 20th century Sufi, Shah Maghsoud Angha. The Uwaisi Order is a Shi'i branch of the Kubrawiya. Dr. Godlas writes that there are two recent and distinct contemporary branches of the Uwaisi Order in the West:

- The Maktab Tarighat Oveyssi Shahmaghsoudi Sufi Order, headed by Salaheddin Ali Nader Shah Angha, the son of Shah Maghsoud Sadeqh Angha
- Uwaisi Tarighat, led by Shah Maghsoud's daughter, Nahid Angha, and her husband Shah Nazar Seyed Ali Kianfar.^[3]

Dr. Angha and Dr. Kianfar went on to found another organization, the International Association of Sufism which operates in California and organizes international Sufi symposia.^[3]

People named Uwaisi

"Uwaisi" is also a name for people who claim to have been initiated through the Uwaisi method, or for those who claim to be descendants of Uwais al-Qarni. Among the most famous is the Owaisi family of Hyderabad, India, one of the most prominent political Muslim families of the city, including:

- Sultan Salahuddin Owaisi
 - Asaduddin Owaisi
-

Notes

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- [2] Kabbani, Shaykh M. Hisham (2004). *Classical Islam and the Naqshbandi Sufi Tradition*. Islamic Supreme Council of America. pp. 63–64. ISBN 1930409230. See Amazon page (<http://www.amazon.com/dp/1930409230>)
- [3] Godlas, Alan (Dr.). "Sufism -- Sufis -- Sufi Orders: Sufism, the West, and Modernity" (<http://www.uga.edu/islam/sufismwest.html>). *University of Georgia Islam and Islamic Studies Resources*. Retrieved 2009-06-05.

References

- The Uwaisi Transmission of Spiritual Knowledge, Naqshbandi-Haqqani website (<http://naqshbandi.org/topics/uwaysi.htm>)

External links

- MTO Shahmaghsoudi - School of Islamic Sufism (<http://mto.shahmaghsoudi.org/>)
- International Association of Sufism (<http://www.ias.org/>)
- Uwaiysi Tarighat (<http://uwaiysi.org/>)

Uwais Qarni

Uwais Qarni	
Theologian and Martyr	
Born	594 C.E.Arabia
Died	657 C.E.
Honored in	Islam
Major shrine	<i>Tomb of Uwais al-Qarni</i> , Ar-Raqqah, Syria
Influences	Prophets of Islam and Ali
Influenced	Saints of the Uwaisi tradition
Tradition/Genre	Uwaisi

The Eight Ascetics

- Sufyan al-Thawri
- Amir ibn Abd al-Qays
- Abu Muslim al-Khawlani
- Uwais al-Qarni
- Al-Rabi ibn Khuthaym
- Aswad ibn Yazid
- Masruq ibn al-Ajda'
- Hasan al-Basri

Uwais Qarni, known also as **Saint Uwais Qarni** (Arabic: سَيِّدُ النَّبِيِّ سَيِّدُ النَّبِيِّ, also transliterated *Oways b. Anis al-Qarni*, *Oveys Gharani* and *Veysel Karani*) was a Muslim mystic, martyr and philosopher of Saudi Arabia who lived during the lifetime of Muhammad, but never met the prophet personally^[1]. As reported by the renowned historical scholar Ibn Battuta, Uwais' tomb is found in Ar-Raqqah, Syria, where he was killed in the Battle of Siffin.

Another shrine was made in his honor in Baykan, in the Siirt Province of Turkey^[2].

Life

Qarni converted to Islam during Muhammad's lifetime, though they never met in person. The Uwaisi form of spiritual transmission in the vocabulary of Islamic mysticism was named after Uwais Qarni, as it refers to the transmission of spiritual knowledge between two individuals without the need for physical interaction between them. Not long after a meeting with Ali, Qarni left Qaran for Kufa, modern Iraq. He fought for Ali against Muawiyah I and was killed at the Battle of Siffin in 657.^[3]

Attributed sayings and prayers

The following are sayings attributed to Uwais Qarni

- "An aim is required before embarking on an action; therefore, if your aim is to find God and his Prophets, then you will surely reach your aim."
- "And choose a friend who is able to free you from all else."
- "What is considered as modesty during Islamic Prayer?", he was asked. "For you to be so attuned that even if an arrow pierces you, you remain unaware of it."
- "Be such on the path of God, so that no one exists for you but Him."
- "I wanted a high position in life, I found it in modesty. I wanted leadership, I found it in giving advice. I wanted dignity, I found it in honesty. I wanted greatness, I found it in poverty. I wanted lineage, I found it in virtue. I wanted majesty, I found it in contentment. I looked for peace and found it in asceticism."

The following prayer is attributed to Uwais Qarni:

"In the Name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. O God! I call you, and want no other but you. God, I desire You only. I call upon You, O You who bring comfort to those who are scared, and give refuge to those in need. You open hearts, and are in possession of all good. You bring stability to weariness, and purify all wrongs. You write out our good deeds and allow us to ascend. I ask of You to provide us with good intentions and not to subject our beings with dark objectives. O God, O Merciful, I call upon all Your Names, and all Your kindness which shall not remain hidden. I call You, upon Your most treasured Name, the Name which shall grant my prayer to be heard and answered quicker by You. Amen, O Lord of the worlds."

References

[1] Beale, *Oriental Bibliotheca*

[2] *Encyclopedia of Islam, Owais Karni*

[3] Attar, *Muslim Saints and Mystics*, trans. A.J. Arberry, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983

External links

- Maktab Tarighat Oveyssi Shahmaghsoudi (School of Islamic Sufism) (<http://www.mtoshahmaghsoudi.org>)
- The Extreme Mourning of Uwais al-Qarni, Shia Website (<http://www.answering-ansar.org/answers/azadari/azadari.pdf>)
- Islamic Sufism Genealogy, November 2004, Tehran University Publications (<http://www.mtoshahmaghsoudi.org/website/PDF/sufismGeneology.pdf>)
- The Uwaisi Transmission of Spiritual Knowledge (Naqshbandi-Haqqani website) (<http://naqshbandi.org/topics/uwaysi.htm>)
- About Uwais al-Qarni, from "The Children Around the Table of Allah," by Shaykh Muhammad Sa'id al-Jamal ar-Rifa'i (http://www.sunnah.org/history/Uwais_al_Qarani.htm)

International Association of Sufism

International Association of Sufism (IAS)

Founders	Seyyedeh Dr. Nahid Angha, Shah Nazar Seyyed Dr. Ali Kianfar
Type	UN non-governmental organization
Founded	1983
Location	San Rafael, California, USA
Area served	United States, international
Focus	Sufism, Education, Psychotherapy, Human rights, Outreach
Website	www.ias.org ^[1]

International Association of Sufism (IAS) is a nonprofit, non-governmental organization that brings together scholars, educators, translators, and artists interested in the discipline of Sufism.^[2] It was the first Sufi organization^[3] to achieve the status of United Nations Department of Public Information / Non-governmental organization (DPI/NGO)^{[4] [5]} and is the leading Islamic education organization in Marin County, California.^[6] It won the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) "Messenger of Peace" award in 2000.^{[3] [6]}

IAS runs conferences co-sponsored with the Humanities Department of Dominican University of California^[7], and organizes an annual international Sufi Symposium which attracts hundreds of Sufi practitioners from around the world.^[8]

IAS has played an important role in inter-faith dialogue and cooperation both in California and internationally.^{[9] [10]} The association has been described as modernist^[11] or avant-garde^[12] in outlook, and this is seen in the manner in which it promotes itself and, for example, in the way modern integrative psychotherapy is used in the Community Healing Centers (CHC) with which the IAS collaborates on some projects. With a foundation in Islam, which has a tradition of respect for women and rights for women dating back to the Prophet, the association and its departments stress and practice a gender-equitable approach in their work.^[13]

History

The IAS was established in the United States in 1983 by Seyyedeh Dr. Nahid Angha and her husband Shah Nazar Seyyed Dr. Ali Kianfar. It is based in San Rafael, California and collaborates with the Community Healing Centers (CHC), a non-profit organization, in Mill Valley, Novato and San Francisco, which specialize in an integrative approach to psychotherapy.^[6]

Seyyedeh Dr. Nahid Angha, daughter of Moulana Shah Maghsoud, the twentieth century Persian Sufi of the Uwaisi (or Uwaisi) School of Sufism,^[14] is the main representative of the IAS to the United Nations Department of Public Information / Non-governmental organization] (DPI/NGO), and an internationally published writer, including *White Fire: A Portrait of Women Spiritual Leaders in America* and *Women in Sufism: A Hidden Treasure*, along with over a dozen scholarly Islamic works.

Dr. Nahid Angha was elected to Marin Women's Hall of Fame, honoured for the part she plays in the Religion category, in 2005^[3] She is also on the Board of Directors of The Foundation for the Advancement of Women in Religion.^[15]

Seyyed Dr. Kianfar is described on the IAS web site as "the spiritual son of Uwaisi Sufi Master Moulana Shah Maghsoud", is Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Sufism: An Inquiry*, and has been teaching Sufism and Islamic philosophy for over forty years.

Work

The aims of the IAS are to introduce Sufism in all its varied forms to the public; to make known the interrelation between Sufi principles and scientific principles; to provide a forum for a continuing dialogue between the different schools of Sufism, and to preserve and advance the study and goals of Sufism. Through its work, the organization has achieved the status of United Nations Department of Public Information/ Non-governmental organization (DPI/NGO). It runs an annual international Sufi symposium.^[5]

Departments

The IAS is organized into several departments, which include: collaboration with Community Healing Centers (CHC) which has staff qualified in psychotherapy and counselling; the Sufi Women Organization; Sufi Music; Sufi Youth International; Sufism and Psychology Forum (SPF), and Voices for Justice, which advocates the rights of children.^[16]

Programs

Its programs include Building Bridges of Understanding, a cooperative educational program, including conference organization, which it runs in cooperation with Humanities Department of Dominican University of California,^[6] ^[7] with support from the Marin Community Foundation; Forty Days: Alchemy of Tranquility, which consists of workshops allowing participants to access their hidden wisdom and to use it in daily life; Sufi Symposium, an international, multicultural festival,^[6] and Voices for Justice.^[17]

Symposia

The annual International Sufi Symposium, sponsored by the International Association of Sufism, attracts hundreds of Sufis from around the world.^[8]

At the 2000 symposium, "The Need for Sufism in a New Century - An Old Tradition for a New World", IAS co-founder Dr Ali Kianfar delivered a speech entitled "Self and Discovery". He said:

There is a saying amongst Sufis, that always there is a question, but we have to look for a Quest. A Quest raised from the heart. So we all have a Quest, but we get the answer according to our question.^[18]

The 2001 symposium, held in Fremont, California, had the theme of "The Soul's Longing: A Language of Spirit", where attendees explored "the wisdom and beauty of Sufism in society". More than a dozen Sufi masters spoke at the conference and led prayer and meditation (zikr), and there were presentations of Sufi music and poetry.^[19]

In September 2006 the symposium was convened at Edinburgh, Scotland, the first time such an event had held in Europe.^[20] The event was sponsored by the International Association of Sufism, together with the Edinburgh Institute for Advanced Learning and the Edinburgh International Centre for World Spiritualities.^[21]

Conferences

The conferences organized by the IAS have brought together men and women from a wide variety of national backgrounds and "with different degrees of emphasis on Islamic sharia practice and customs". The meetings give prominence to Sufi Meditation, Zikr, music, poetry, interfaith discussions, and academic lectures by scholars, translators, physicians, and psychotherapists.^[22]

Projects

The IAS's projects include Literacy Project, in which members of the Sufi Women Organization help tutor those with literacy needs; Prison Project, an outreach programme to those in jail;^[6] Project Khaneghah, which is dedicated to building a Sufi community centre or Khanqah, and United Nations and Human Rights, in its role as United Nations NGO.^[23]

Modernism and equality

An important aspect of the International Association of Sufism is the role that women play in the organization. The IAS stresses a gender-equitable approach. With a foundation in Islam, which has a tradition of respect for women and rights for women dating back to the Prophet, the association and its departments stress and practice a gender-equitable approach in their work.^[13]

Arife Ellen Hammerle wrote an article entitled *Women and Islam* for Human Beams magazine in August 1999. Speaking from her personal experiences as a woman, mother, Sufi and American, she relates:

Sufism has taught me the meaning of freedom and equality amongst humanity. The capacity to surrender, submit and remember God in every breath and in every moment reveals the true quest of the heart.^[24]

IAS is modernist despite its traditional Sufi trappings. In the preface to *The Sufi orders in Islam*, John O.Voll talks of the growing strength of Sufi tariqas amongst modern people who are not trying to escape modernity, that traditionalists would have difficulty conceiving or crediting, citing the International Association of Sufism, whose annual meeting in California was attended by 800 people in 1996.^[11]

In *Sufism and the 'Modern' in Islam*, the authors write: "The [IAS] is very much in the avant-garde of transnational Sufism, hardly resembling traditional orders or spirituality at all. Instead, it represents itself as an 'educational organization' and a UN affiliated NGO that carries out a UN Human Rights project."^[12]

Sufism and psychology

Speaking of the way in which the science of modern psychology explains Sufi practice and experience and appeals to the European Sufi, in *Sufism in the West*, the editors Jamil Malik and John R. Hinnells write that examples of this connection "may be found in the Shah Maghsoud Angha lineage, the International Association of Sufism and the Maktaba Tarigha Oveysiyya (MTO)".^[25] The editors go on to say that *The Gift of the Robe*,^[26] published by a member of IAS, "exemplifies an understanding of the role of science in proving spiritual truths."^[25]

Notable publications by prominent members of the IAS include *Psychology in Sufism* by Amineh Amelia Pryor, Ph.D., Director of the IAS's Sufism and Psychology Forum. This is described as "an introductory text in which the psychological process of transformation of the self is explored from within the context of Sufism."^[27]

Other works by prominent members include *The Sufi Book of Life: 99 Pathways of the Heart for the Modern Dervish* by Neil Douglas-Klotz.^[28]

Another key figure in the psychotherapeutic activities carried out in collaboration with the IAS is Arife Ellen Hammerle, Ph.D. She is a practising Sufi psychologist with a doctorate in Clinical Psychology from the California Institute of Integral Studies and a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT #32398). Dr. Hammerle is the director and a clinician the International Association of Sufism's San Francisco and Marin County Healing Centers in California,^[29] at Mill Valley, Novato and San Francisco, which specialize in an integrative approach to psychotherapy (i.e. integrative psychotherapy). She is also Clinical Coordinator at Catholic Charities.

A senior student of the Uwayysi Tariqat of Sufism, Dr. Hammerle is also a regular teacher at the Institute for Sufi Studies and Santa Rosa Junior College, where she teaches psychology, stress management and sufi courses. She is an active member of the Boards for the Marin Interfaith Council, the Center for Women and Religion, and the Marin Integrative Healing Network. Arife Ellen Hammerle also serves as a representative to the United Nations Department of Public Information,^[30] representing and acting as coordinator for the International Association of Sufism and Sufi Women Organization.^[31] In addition, she has written the book *The Sacred Journey: Unfolding Self Essence* (2000).^[32]

International cooperation

Working with other faiths, Community Healing Centers director, Uwaisi Sufi and qualified psychotherapist, Arife Ellen Hammerle, was invited to make a presentation at the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions in 1999.^[9]

In August 2000, representatives of the IAS were amongst one thousand religious leaders, including the Grand Mufti of Syria and Chief Rabbi of Israel, who attended the Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders held at the United Nations HQ in New York.^[33]

The IAS was also invited to participate in the Interreligious Engagement Project (IEP21) Global Dialogue of Civilizations Project in 2007.^[10]

Publications

IAS journal

The IAS regularly publishes a journal, *Sufism Journal*. *Sufism: An Inquiry* is also available on the internet.

IAS books

Members of the association have published a number of books, many under the association's own imprint, including translations of the works of Moulana Shah Maghsoud which often adopt a scientific approach to spiritual matters.

- Angha, Seyyedeh Nahid, Ph.D. (translator), *Deliverance: Words from the Prophet*
- Angha, Seyyedeh Nahid, Ph.D., *Ecstasy: The World of Sufi Poetry and Prayer*
- Angha, Seyyedeh Nahid, Ph.D., *The Journey of the Lovers*
- Angha, Seyyedeh Nahid, Ph.D., *The Journey: Seyr va Soluk*
- Angha, Seyyedeh Nahid, Ph.D., *The Nature of Miracle*
- Angha, Seyyedeh Nahid, Ph.D., *Principles of Sufism*
- Angha, Seyyedeh Nahid, Ph.D. (translator), *Selections: Poems from Khayam, Rumi, Hafez, and Shah Maghsoud*
- Etemad-Moghadam (Angha), Mah Talat, translated by Angha, Seyyedeh Nahid, Ph.D., *Al-Momenon: The Faithful*
- Hammerle, Arife Ellen, Ph.D., *The Sacred Journey: Unfolding Self Essence*
- Institute for Sufi Studies, *Unveiling Islam*
- Kianfar, Seyyedeh Hamaseh A. and Seyyedeh Sahar A. Kianfar (translators and compilers), *Sufi Stories*
- Kianfar, Shah Nazar Seyyed Ali, Ph.D., *An Introduction to Religion*
- Kianfar, Shah Nazar Seyyed Ali, Ph.D., *The Zekr*
- Levin, E.L., *The Road to Infinity*
- Maeda, Dr. Yoshimichi, *Sahar (Dawn)*
- Maghsoud, Moulana Shah, *Diwan-e-Ghazal* (in Persian)
- Maghsoud, Moulana Shah, translated by Angha, Seyyedeh Nahid, Ph.D., *Manifestations of Thought*
- Maghsoud, Moulana Shah, translated by Angha, Seyyedeh Nahid, Ph.D., *A Meditation*
- Maghsoud, Moulana Shah, translated by Angha, Seyyedeh Nahid, Ph.D., *Psalms of Gods*
- Mohammed, Hazrat Mir Ghotbeddin, translated by Nahid Angha, Ph.D., *Destination: Eternity*
- Newman, Safa Ali Michael, *The Gift of the Robe: Uwaysieh*
- Pryor, Amineh Amelia, Ph.D., *Psychology in Sufism, Volume One*
- Shah Nazar Seyyed Ali Kianfar, Ph.D., *Fatemah (peace be upon her)*
- Sufi Women Organization members, *Sufi Women Cookbook*
- Various, *Sufi Women: The Journey Towards the Beloved* (collected essays)
- Various, *The Veil: Hijab* (collected essays)
- Various, *Women's Wisdom: Women in Action Conference* (collected essays)

Further reading

- Angha, Seyyedeh Nahid, Ph.D., *White Fire: A Portrait of Women Spiritual Leaders in America*, SkyLight Paths Publishing, US, 2003
- Angha, Seyyedeh Nahid, Ph.D., *Women in Sufism: A Hidden Treasure*, Shambhala, 2003
- Douglas-Klotz, Neil, *The Sufi Book of Life: 99 Pathways of the Heart for the Modern Dervish*, Viking Penguin, 2005
- Mijares, Sharon Grace, *Modern Psychology and Ancient Wisdom: Psychological Healing Practices from the World's Religious Traditions*, Routledge, 2003 (the author is on the advisory board of the IAS)

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External links

- International Association of Sufism web site (<http://www.ias.org/>)
- Sufi Women Organization web site (<http://www.sufiwomen.org/>)
- Sufism: an Inquiry (Sufism Journal online) (<http://www.sufismjournal.org/>)
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