Islam

Muhammad (570-632 A.D.)

Quran

External or orthodox path

Revealed law (shari'a)

The observation of the rules or five pillars:

1. The affirmation of divine Unity and the acknowledgement of his envoy, the prophet Muhammad;
2. The five daily ritual prayers;
3. The purifying fast of Ramadan;
4. The pilgrimage to Meca;
5. The tithe for the poor.

The observation of the rites

The devotional acts

The virtues, the seasons and the states: the spiritual virtues are attributes of the perfect man. Among them are: humility, patience, charity, fidelity, confidence, and the most elevated of all, veracity; the seasons are achievements or permanent acquisitions, fruit of the personal merit of the one who is directed toward Unity; the states are temporary gifts that descend from the divinity to those who strive on the path that leads to Unity.

The progressive levels of being or sanctity: carnal soul, admonitory soul, inspired soul, appeased soul, satisfied soul, indulgent soul, realized soul.

The four pillars of the method: 1. The invocation (dhikr) or perpetual prayer of the heart is the most important practice of Sufism. It consists of invoking (recall, evoking, remember) and have God present in all moments and forget all that is different from Him; 2. The meditation is the indispensable complement of the invocation, that predisposes the heart to receive the certainty of God or heart of the vision; 3. The care of the heart (maraqabah), the third point of the method, permits the receiving of the revelation of the divine essence or vision of the heart and maintaining this ever living state. While the invocation and meditation can be considered attention techniques, their synthesis affirms itself as the true spiritual experience, which consists of a permanent state of contemplation (care of the heart) or the constant vigilance of the present moment; 4. The preservation of the bond with the master is the fourth pillar of the method. The master helps the disciple to transform his soul and enables the spiritual rebirth.

Interior or mystical path

Sufism (altasawwuf) VIII d.C.

The doctrine

The universal truth: the transcendent unity of the Being (al-tawhid) and the universal and perfect man (ahsan taqwim)

The mystical path or way

The spiritual realization of man: *nocturnal journey*, from the condition of the fallen man (asalf safilin) to the universal and perfect man or ascended (ahsan taqwim)

The diverse guilds of which the different initiative methods or paths (tariqa) derive. In them are represented the two great currents of Sufism: that of passionate love (mystique of love) and that of discernment and lucidity (mystique of emptiness):

- The Qadirriya, founded by Abd al-Qadir (1078-1166). His main work: *al-Ghunya.*
- The Sohrawardiya, founded by Shihad al-din Sohrawardi (1144-1234). His main work: *A warif al-maarif.*
- The Rifaiya, founded by Ahamed ar-Rifai (1106-1182).
- The Kubrawiya, founded by Najm al-din Kubra (1145-1221). One of its most important members was the poet Rumi.
- The Shadhiliya, founded by Abu'l Hassan ash-Shadhili (1196-1258). One of its important members was Ibn Arabi. Some ramification of this guild must be considered: the Madaniya, the Isawiya, the Darqawiya, and the Alawiya.
- The Mawlawiya, founded by Djalai al-din Rumi (1207-1273). Its most peculiar practice is the "cosmic dance" that earned them the name of whirling dervishes.
- The Naqshabandiya, a guild that carries the name of Bhauddin Naqshabandi (1340-1413), it dates its origin back to the XII century, when the so-called order <Masters of Wisdom> was created by the influence of al-Hamadani (1084-1140) and fundamentally the Abd al Khaliq Ghudjuvani (dead in 1220).
- The Khalwatiya, founded by al-Khalwati (dead in 1397).
- The Chattariya, was developed in Pakistan, India and Malaysia.
- The Rahmaniya, founded around the year 1750 by a Kabila sheik, very popular at the beginning of the XX century.
- The Darqawiya, founded by Abu Hamid ad-Darqawi (1760-1823), rationing of the Shadhuliya.
- The Idrisiya, founded by Ibn Idris (1760-1837). On this depends the Sanusiya, founded en 1840 by As-Sanusi. Both depend on the Qaridiya.
- The Alawiya, founded most recently by the Argelian sheik al-alawi, considered a ramification of the Shadhiliya.