

MODES OF SUFI TRANSMISSION TO NEW ZEALAND

ARTHUR FRANK BUEHLER¹
Victoria University of Wellington

Before discussing the prominent Sufi activity in Auckland and Wellington, I will take Sufism out of the preconceived categories it tends to have, either in academia or in various Muslim communities, and place it in its historical, Islamic context. Sufism is, among other things, a field of knowledge in the domain of Islamic religious learning, a dimension of religious experience (often called ‘mysticism’ in the West), and a spectrum of ritual activities as varied as the Islamic world itself. This article will also contextualise Sufism in the West, with a focus on the Chishti lineage of ‘Inayat Khan. Then, with this background, the paper will focus on actual Sufi activities in New Zealand, almost all of which intersect in some way with lineages stemming from ‘Inayat Khan. The one major exception is the Mevlevi group in Wellington.

An Overview of Sufism

Historically, the term *sufi* was first used in an eighth-century Islamic context for ascetics wearing woollen cloaks, which eventually, by the tenth century, developed into a branch of the Islamic religious sciences—into what has become known as Sufism in the West, *tasawwuf* (in the Sunni world) or ‘*irfan* (in Iran).² The activities of Sufis are generally acknowledged by historians to be responsible for the spread of Islam in present-day Turkey, India, Indonesia and Africa. Investigation into the historical processes of

¹ Art Buehler (Arthur.Buehler@vuw.ac.nz) is a Senior Lecturer in Religious Studies at Victoria University of Wellington. The research, on which this essay is based, was funded by a Faculty Research Grant of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Victoria University.

² For the best historical treatment of Sufism see Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (1975). Carl Ernst explores the Western construction of Sufism in his *Shambala Guide to Sufism* (1997).

Islamisation, still going on today, indicates that the Sufi message is more expansive than, yet inclusive of, the doctrinal, orthopraxic religion known as Islam. What this means is that, although Sufism historically has been practised almost exclusively by Muslims, it has also gone beyond the human-created boundaries of the religion of Islam to include anyone who seeks to submit to God, the technical meaning of *muslim* in Arabic.³

How is Sufism central to the practice of Islam? The easiest way to answer this is to quote the famous *hadith* of the Prophet, known as Gabriel's Hadith. It is so famous that it is the first *hadith* in some *hadith* collections. In shortened form, it tells about a man with very white clothing and very black hair coming up to the Prophet and his companions. No mark of travel was visible on him, and no one recognised him. Sitting down before the Prophet he said, 'Tell me Muhammad about *islam* (submission)'. He replied, 'Submission means that you should bear witness that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is God's messenger, and that you should perform the ritual prayer, pay alms, fast during Ramadan, and make the pilgrimage to the House if you are able to go there'. The man said, 'You have spoken the truth'. Then he said, 'Now tell me about *iman* (faith)'. Muhammad replied, 'Faith means that you have faith in God, his angels, his books, his messengers, and the last day and that you have faith in the measuring out, both its good and its evil'. Remarking that the Prophet had spoken the truth, he then said, 'Now tell me about *ihsan* (doing what is beautiful)'. Muhammad replied, 'Doing what is beautiful means that you should worship God as if you see him, for even if you do not see him, he sees you'. When the man left, Muhammad informed his astonished companions that the angel Gabriel had come to teach them about their religion.⁴

Here was religion in a nutshell: what one does (*islam*), what one thinks (*iman*), and what one intends in one's heart (*ihsan*). The point here is that each dimension of religion, *islam*, *iman*, *ihsan*, is interconnected with the others like a tree's roots, branches and fruit. Being a perfect or complete human being involves an integration of these three dimensions. Sufism is that third dimension, the fruit of action and faith. Those who deny Sufism do not recognise the 'heart dimension' in Islam.

³ The paradigmatic example of this is exemplified by Irena Tweedie's *Daughter of Fire: A diary of a spiritual training with a Sufi master* (1986), where she becomes the disciple of a Hindu teacher in Kanpur, India, who is teaching Naqshbandi practices—the practices of a lineage whose identity is closely associated with assiduous attention to the detail of Islamic ritual. For a scholarly examination of this lineage see Thomas Dahnhardt, *Change and Continuity in Indian Sufism: A Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi Branch in the Hindu Environment* (2002).

⁴ In the well-known *Mishkat al-masabih* by Waliullah Tabrizi, translated by James Robson, it is the first *hadith* cited. See also William Chittick, *Faith and Practice in Islam* (1992).

Several books could be written on Sufi activity in the contemporary world. Political leaders in the Middle East have Sufi advisors, some are even Sufis themselves, e.g., Turgut Özal, a former Turkish Prime Minister (and later President). University professors teach required literature classes using Sufi materials that do not have the outward appearance of Sufism, e.g., Asad ‘Ali at Damascus University. Sufi musicians have shared their music and feelings with other musicians from around the world, e.g., Mickey Hart and Hamza al-Din, for the benefit of millions of listeners who have no idea that there are underlying Sufi connections. Sufis seldom attract attention to themselves, quietly working to make the world a better place—an articulated objective of Sufism, to get closer to God—in all walks of life.

‘Outer’ rituals and activities in the public domain are what people usually see and associate with Sufism, e.g., *qawwali* music from Pakistan, video clips of the ‘Whirling Dervishes’, or the visiting of shrines of deceased Sufis. If one goes to visit a prominent Sufi in an Islamic country, one can expect to witness healing rituals, psychological counselling, and the dispensing of amulets. For those in harmony with the local culture and with good intentions, the doors of a Sufi lodge are usually wide open.

An insider is usually defined as someone who has cultivated a formal relationship with a Sufi teacher, having gone through some kind of initiation ritual and made a commitment to that Sufi shaykh and (usually) to the performance of the contemplative practices of the lineage. Usually for Sufis the intention is to get closer to God—to experience a personal transformation. The practice of Sufism is that of learning by imitating the personal model of the shaykh first and foremost. Though books can be involved, the primary focus is on experience instead of another set of mental constructs.

Lineage is important in the understanding of the construction of Sufism. Since the tenth century Sufis have been tracing their initiatory lineages back to the Prophet Muhammad and naming their lineages after a prominent founder figure. So, the Chishti lineage in India stems from Mu‘inuddin Chishti (d. 1236 Ajmer, Rajasthan, India); the Naqshbandi lineage from Baha’uddin Naqshband (d. 1389 Bukhara, Uzbekistan); and the Mevlevi lineage from Jalaluddin Rumi (d. 1273 in Konya, Turkey).⁵ As this essay will detail, prominent Sufi activity in New Zealand stems from one branch of the Indian Chishti lineage.

⁵ Rumi is often known as Maulwi, Maulana, or the Turkish form of Mevlana.

Sufism in the West

In the West, Sufi teachers are seen as spiritual teachers. What we find is that even though non-Western teachers still teach in New Zealand,⁶ Western Sufis are fulfilling all the roles of spiritual teachers. Among them are Halima MacEwan, and the late Abdullah Dougan, both of whom have adapted Sufi teachings to the needs of modern New Zealanders.

As a frame of reference, a genuinely Western version of Sufism is emerging throughout the Western world. This is true for all spiritual teachings. As Andrew Rawlinson (1997) and Diana Eck (1993) have demonstrated, there is a greater variety of spiritual teachers in the West than there has ever existed before. There is more pioneering spiritual work being done in the San Francisco Bay area than in any other comparable region in the world (Rawlinson 1997; Eck 1993).⁷

This new, modern configuration of cross-fertilisation affects Sufi teaching and means that notions of Sufism have to be expanded even more. The first such notion is that of the relationship between Islam and Sufism. Historically the vast majority of Sufis—95 per cent at least—have been practising Muslims. In India, Africa and Indonesia there continue to be non-Muslims initiated into Sufi lineages, who are being taught the full range of Sufi practices. This even includes the Indian Naqshbandiyya, who place high importance on the assiduous performance of Sunni religious ritual. Sufism encompasses a large spectrum of perspectives and practices as varied as the Islamic world itself.

In the New Zealand context, no Western teachers require those practising Sufism to be formal Muslims in belief or ritual action. Many who do participate in these groups *are* formal Muslims and the teachings are in accordance with Sufi teachings, which in turn are harmonious with a universal Islamic message based upon the Qur'an and Hadith.⁸ Most contemporary Sufi activity in New Zealand intersects in some fashion with the teachings of 'Inayat Khan.⁹ He came from Hyderabad, Deccan, to the United States in 1910, following the command of his teacher, Sa'id Abu Hashim Madani:

⁶ There are probably many teachers. There is an Iranian *'irfani* teacher who comes from Australia to Wellington once a month and teaches a small group of Persian speakers. Abdullah Drury informs me there is a Qadiri shaykh from Fiji in South Auckland whose group has conducted newsworthy rituals. See 'Stomach-slashing ritual puts Muslim in hospital', *New Zealand Herald*, 20 August 2001, p. A3; and Bridget Carter and Paul Yandell, 'Man hurt in ritual has urgent surgery', *ibid*, 21 August 2001, p.1. I suspect that these rituals are more Rifa'i or Fijian than Qadiri in origin.

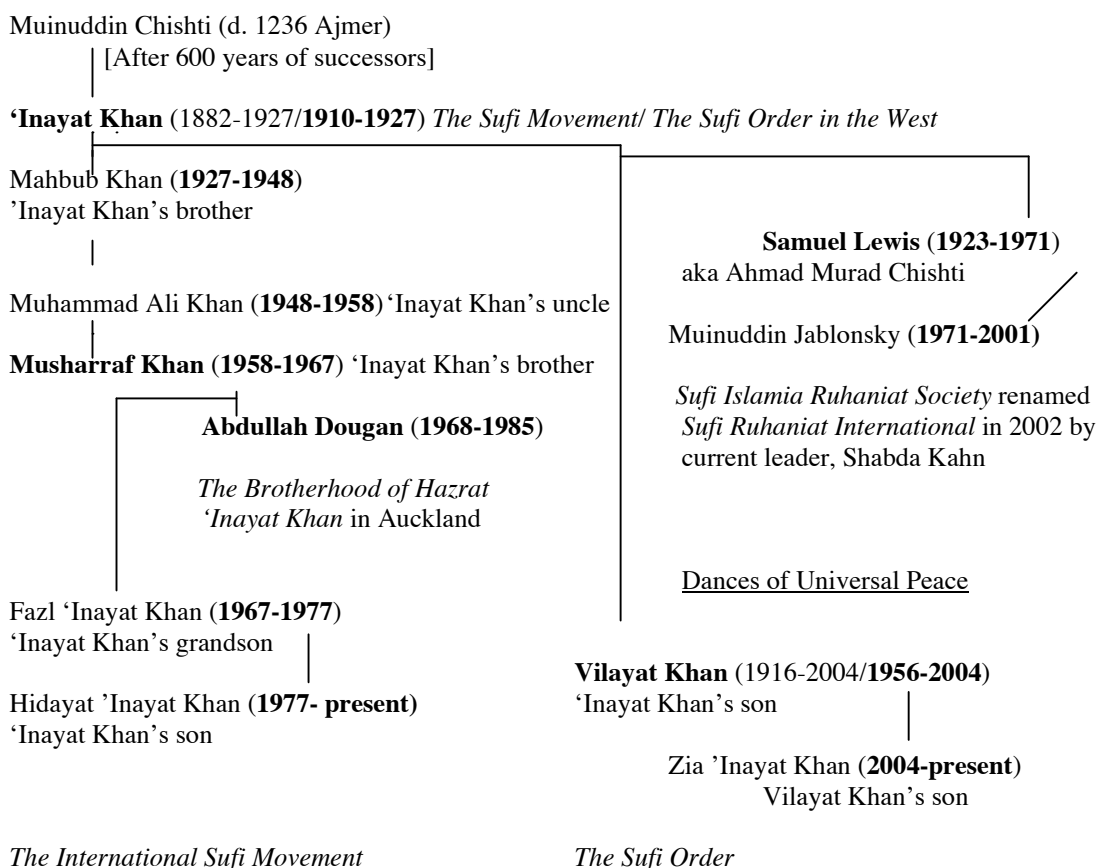
⁷ See also Diana Eck's Pluralism Project www.pluralism.org.

⁸ With the exception of some of Abdullah Dougan's innovative spiritual perspectives and practices.

⁹ See Table 1, outlining 'Inayat Khan's selected sub-lineages.

Fare forth into the world, my child, and harmonize the East and the West with the harmony of thy music. Spread the wisdom of Sufism abroad, for to this end art thou gifted by Allah, the most Merciful and Compassionate. (Bloch 1915:38-42)¹⁰

Table 1: ‘Inayat Khan’s selected sub-lineages (leadership dates in bold).



‘Inayat Khan’s brand of Sufism is very different from Indian Chishti Sufi practice, or any other type of Sufism. He did not technically require one to become a formal Muslim, for example, and he gave a central place to women in the leadership of his groups. The only people to receive the highest initiation from him, the rank of *murshida*, were four women.¹¹

¹⁰ (With minor adjustments.) For more on Hazrat ‘Inayat Khan’s Chishti heritage, see Zia ‘Inayat Khan, ‘The ‘Silsila-i Sufian’: From Khwaja Mu’in al-Din Chishti to Sayyid Abu Hashim Madani’ (Khan 2001:267-322).

¹¹ It is possible that to receive the highest teachings in this lineage one had formally to become a Muslim, but until there is access to the archives scattered in France, The Netherlands, and England this cannot be verified (see Donnell 1996). Apparently there

Yet, he required his senior disciples to become familiar with Islamic ritual practices, including ritual prayer, evidenced in the unpublished materials circulated among his disciples.¹² The Muslim identity of his teaching was not too far beneath the surface—the invocatory prayers he gave his students ‘incorporated all the movements of Islamic ritual prayer’.¹³ Let us take a look at ‘Inayat Khan’s sub-lineages, which are pertinent to Sufism in New Zealand.

Sufi groups in New Zealand: The Dances of Universal Peace, Abdullah Dougan and Halima MacEwan

The most popular and accessible Sufi activity in New Zealand, pioneered by Sam Lewis, is the ‘Dances of Universal Peace’.¹⁴ Sufi Sam, as he has been affectionately called since the 1960s, was a teacher who transcended the rule-book. In Rawlinson’s (1997:402) words, ‘His most distinguishing characteristic, both as a disciple and teacher, was the ability to enter directly into different traditions. . . [that is] he was quickly accepted as genuine by the masters of those traditions who had practised in them all their lives’. After ‘Inayat Khan, his teachers included the Hindu teacher Ramdas in 1954, Sufis ‘Abdul Ghafur Chishti in Bangladesh and Barakat ‘Ali in Pakistan, and a formal Zen dharma transmission in 1964. Yet, thirty years after his initiation with ‘Inayat Khan, he said, ‘I have not met any non-Muslim superior to my own teacher [‘Inayat Khan]’.¹⁵ In 1968 he began receiving inspirations for various dances as a means of spiritual transformation, and these dances became known as the ‘Dances of Universal Peace’.

There are now opportunities to participate in ‘Dances of Universal Peace’ all over New Zealand, with main centres in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. Wellington Dances include Native American, Hindu, Christian, Jewish and Islamic songs, music and dances from around the world.

are conflicting views on this matter within the various sub-lineages today. In Zia Khan’s words, from a November 2002 interview: ‘Sufism has a deep, essential connection with both generic Islam, with universal religiosity, which is the common dimension of the depth of human experience, which can be found in the depths of all world religions, and which can be traced back to the earliest prophets. And Sufism as a historical phenomenon also has a special connection with the dispensation of the Islamic religion’.

See the website of Zia’s disciple, http://wahiduddin.net/sufi/pir_zia.htm.

¹² Donnell (1996:135), citing the *Sangatha III* document.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

¹⁴ <http://dupanz.org.nz/events.htm>.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 397.

Neil Dougan (later Abdullah Dougan) began his spiritual journey in 1953, by participating in a Gurdjieff group.¹⁶ After five years he was asked to leave, because he questioned the leader too often (Dougan 1978:14). He contacted C. S. Nott in England, with the intention of forming his own group. He accomplished this under the supervision of Nott, with seven other members of the original group subsequently joining him. By 1963, his own interior experiences were at odds with what other people were telling him about Gurdjieff's teachings. This led him to 'Inayat Khan's book, *The Sufi Message*,¹⁷ which motivated him to meet Musharraf Khan. Unfortunately, Musharraf Khan died before Neil (as Dougan called himself at this stage) could visit him in The Netherlands, but he proceeded on his trip anyway, becoming initiated into the Sufi Movement in San Antonio, Texas. While in The Netherlands, having many talks with Murshida Shahzada, he was guided to go to Afghanistan where he met Shaykh 'Abdul al-Qayyum of Kandahar while staying with Shaykh Ibrahim Mujaddidi in Kabul. Neil followed him to Kandahar, but he would not speak to him until Neil became a Muslim. So Neil undertook this on the spot, learned to perform the Islamic ritual prayer, and was initiated into the Naqshbandiyya with the name 'Abdullah. Shaykh 'Abdul said that Neil had done more in three days than many people could do in twenty years. When he returned to Kabul, he stayed for two weeks with Shaykh Ibrahim, at Shaykh 'Abdul's request. Shaykh Ibrahim gave him permission to teach, and the name 'Isa (Dougan 1978:16-23). When Abdullah returned to New Zealand from his travels, he declared himself the leader of the Gurdjieff group of eighteen people and started a separate Sufi Brotherhood meeting to introduce the ideas of 'Inayat Khan. After a while, a Sunday Universal Worship service began. In 1974 there were over fifty people gathering at the Gurdjieff meetings, over thirty at the Brotherhood meetings, and about one hundred people at the Universal Worship service every other Sunday, half of whom were children (ibid.:27).

Dougan considered his group to be a Sufi or Gnostic group, after returning from Afghanistan the first time, even though some of Gurdjieff's ideas were taught. He recognised that his teaching was evolving as his own synthesis, and was different from teachings found in other Sufi circles (Dougan 1981-95).¹⁸ The second trip to Afghanistan also saw him spending

¹⁶ William Shepard (1996) mentions Dougan briefly in a footnote. In Dougan's writings, he differentiates his former self-identity and his post-Naqshbandi realisation by using the names Neil and Abdullah. To remain consistent with Dougan's own description, I follow this same nomenclature. Otherwise, I use his surname, as is standard practice.

¹⁷ Khan, 'Inayat (1882-1927) *The Sufi Message*, 14 vols. It is uncertain to which volume(s) Dougan was referring. There are various editions of this collection including a CD-Rom.

¹⁸ 1.189. In 1.428 Dougan comments on the importance of ritual prayer (*salat*) for a couple of years before repeating a mantra continually.

time at the *ashram* of the late Hindu teacher, Sri Ramdas, in Kerala and going on the *hajj*.

Dougan was asked about the necessity for a Sufi to be a Muslim, and he replied that the Sufi teaching required the format of formal Islam. He declared himself to be a Sufi. He believed all religions are the same, because underneath esoteric Christianity, Buddhism and other traditions are Sufi teachings. If one had to put Dougan in a category, his preference would have been Gnostic, even though he freely acknowledged being a Muslim and a Sufi because of the way in which his life developed. Belief in one God and the Prophet Muhammad was something that he had already sincerely embraced. Dougan clearly believed that all Sufis are Muslims, but it was he who decided who was, and who was not, a Sufi.¹⁹ At times Dougan gave Sufi exercises to someone whom he believed to be a Muslim, even though that person had not even considered embracing Islam.²⁰

In July 2005, I spent a Sunday with members of Dougan's group. The Universal Worship occurs every other Sunday and is led by a worship leader. There are four chosen by consensus each year, and they lead in turn over this period. In addition there are two other persons, a candle lighter and a scripture reader, who change every seven services. When I attended, there were about sixty people of all age groups. The service begins with the recitation of the 'Invocation to the One' by 'Inayat Khan:

Toward the One,
The Perfection of Love, Harmony and Beauty.
The only Being
United with all the Illuminated Souls who form the embodiment of the
Master, the
Spirit of Guidance
To the Glory of the Omnipresent God we kindle the Light.

Seven candles are then lit, symbolically representing the Hindu, Buddhist, Zoroastrian, Hebrew, Christian and Islamic religions. The seventh candle is lit for any others, not falling into the previous six groups, who have brought the light of truth into the world. Each service has a theme. The Sunday I attended it was 'acceptance' and the scripture reader presented passages on this topic from the six religions mentioned. In the hall itself there is a certificate dated 1971, in which Vilayat Khan has authorised Dougan to incorporate liturgies from 'Inayat Khan and a picture of Dougan with his Naqshbandi shaykhs in Afghanistan. There are pictures with the symbols of the aforementioned religions also.

¹⁹ Ibid., 1.490-491.

²⁰ Ibid., 1.349. Cf. Zia, 'Inayat Khan's differentiating generic and brand-name Islam.

In addition to fortnightly Sunday meetings there are various activities. Every week, in a different building designed for more intimate gatherings, there is a psychological group whose work is largely based on Gurdjieff's teachings and Dougan's modifications thereof. Every other week a spiritual group gathers, with an emphasis more on Sufi/Gnostic teachings. Gnostic Press, established to publish the works of Abdullah Dougan, has so far published eight books; the next one is to include Dougan's artwork.²¹ In terms of overall mentorship, Dougan's wife, Rosalie, is considered the spiritual mother of the group.

In the early 1950s, while living in her native England, Halima met Mashaikh Shabaz Britten Best, a disciple of 'Inayat Khan, who initiated her (Isaac 1999:11-19).²² When she first met him she had never heard the word Sufi. Later she met Musharraf Khan. There was a mutual recognition and he became her spiritual guide. In the early 1960s she received her name, Halima, from Best. Later she met Vilayat Khan and there was a mutual recognition between them, which resulted in her receiving higher initiations.

Halima came to New Zealand in 1964. Some time later, Abdullah Dougan asked if she could host two Sufis from America who were associated with the 'Universal Dances of Peace', which she did, gaining her first experience with this group. In 1978 she was asked by a young man at the Nambassa Festival to take charge of the 'Universal Dances of Peace' in New Zealand and to raise them to a higher level. Although Halima did not see herself as a dance leader or a spiritual teacher, she went to the United States, got a leader's manual, and trained a few others interested in leading the Dances. Finding that other festivals, such as the Sweetwaters Festival, did not engender an environment for meditation or prayer because of alcohol and drug use, she began her Te Wairua summer gatherings from 1984 to 1987. Since then, Halima has focused on creating the Sharda Educational, Cultural and Spiritual Centre, an idea first proposed by Musharraf Khan:

Perhaps one day there will be a centre in New Zealand which embodies the ideals of love, harmony, and beauty; where the Divinity of man, the brotherhood/sisterhood of humanity can be realized; where service to God and Humanity may be seen as a way of life which not only fulfils the life purpose of an individual, but which helps to make the world a better place for others. (Isaac 1999:21)

Affiliated with this Sharda Trust Centre is a Sufi Lodge Aotearoa whose objectives are:

²¹ I would like to thank Rosalie Dougan, John Searle and Phillip Dadson for their kind hospitality and patience with my questions.

²² This information is taken from Skye Isaac (1999:11-19). Britten Best also wrote *The Drama of the Soul: A Mystical Interpretation of the Gospels*.

- To discover the light and power latent in humanity, the secret of all religion, the power of mysticism, and the essence of philosophy, without interfering with customs or beliefs.
- To explore the relationship of humanity with planet Earth and its wider cosmic significance.
- To promote all activities productive of furthering, and in harmony with, the ideals expressed above.

With much hard work and support from a variety of sources, the land was purchased and a site for the temple determined. On 18 August 1996 a stone, allegedly cherished for thousands of years, was unexpectedly brought as the ‘power stone’ of the temple: this was the Sacred Pounamu of the Waitaha People,²³ which was gifted for the healing of the land and its people.

In a newsletter from Sharda (Spring 2005 to Summer 2006) there was news of a *hui* (gathering) on the winter solstice, to which representatives of all the Maori tribes in New Zealand were invited; and where a blessing and dedication of the temple-to-be took place. One Sunday each month there is a Universal Worship service and often a Universal Dance of Peace. Other activities include monthly ‘Full-moon Meditation for Peace’ and ‘New-moon Ziraat Lodge’ meetings.

When I talked with Halima, she modestly did not claim to be a Sufi teacher, just a follower of the Sufi path.²⁴ God is the only teacher, she said. She emphasised that spiritual teachings vary according to the culture, citing how European and American Sufi teachings are not always in harmony with New Zealand culture. For her, religion is ‘religion of the heart’ and there is a necessity for tolerance, understanding, and compassion combined with an ego-free self-discipline. A former student of Halima’s informs me that Halima is perceived by others to be a Sufi teacher, and has initiated people into the Sufi movement and the Sufi order. There are roughly six to twelve regulars in Halima’s group at Sharda.²⁵

The Mevlevi Dervish ‘Turners’ of the Wellington Study Group

For thirty-three years the Wellington Study Group (New Zealand) has been directly linked with a London group under the leadership of the late Dr. Francis Roles. The group, which is registered formally as the Society for the Study of Normal Psychology, is commonly known as the Study Society and

²³ The Waitaha is a Maori tribe, considered by some as purely mythical, who preceded the Ngai Tahu tribe on the South Island (I am indebted to Erich Kolig for this information).

²⁴ Conversation 2 February 2006 by telephone.

²⁵ Communication from Safa Hull, 20 February 2006.

is located at Colet House.²⁶ In 1950, Dr. Roles assumed the leadership role of a group originally drawn together by a well-known Russian spiritual teacher, Pitor Demionovich Ouspensky. Many members of the Study Society were well-versed in Ouspensky's work, in particular his *New Model of the Universe* (1909-25 [1997]), where he discusses his experiences of the Mevlevi Dervishes of Turkey before Sufi lineages were outlawed there.²⁷ The Mevlevi Sufi lineage, named for its founder-figure, Mevlana, the renowned Jalaluddin Rumi, practises a spiritual 'turning' that has been passed down by his direct descendants to the present day.

Aware of Ouspensky's description of the Mevlevi in Istanbul, a member of the London Study Society, Pat Glazebrook, asked a Turk working on their farm in the early 1960s if he knew anything about the Mevlevi. This worker, connected to the Mevlevi in Istanbul, was finally authorised to invite the Glazebrooks to witness a 'turning' ceremony and meet the Mevlevi in Konya at the end of 1962. Satisfied as to the sincerity of the English visitors, the Mevlevi shaykh Muni Celebi gave permission to Bey Resuhi Beykara to go to London in order to teach interested members of the Study Society to 'turn' in accordance with the Mevlevi tradition. In July 1963 about sixty people, most of them Christians and many of them women,²⁸ learned to turn in London. Resuhi later travelled two or three times to London to teach, and other Mevlevi teachers now teach newcomers each year.²⁹

Gillian and Michael Harris of the Wellington Study Group began the training for turning in London in 1973. Nine years later Gillian Harris was authorised to teach Mevlevi turning and, in 1983, began teaching twenty-three people in Wellington. Over the next twenty years she taught a further twenty-four people to turn. The last class of 2005 had three people in it and, like all those who had learnt earlier, they were taught under the training programme used by Resuhi in 1963. This group was taught by Keiron Horide-Hobley, who had been trained to teach by Gillian Harris. The training takes place every morning, six days a week, for a month, beginning

²⁶ Ian Haxton (ed.) (2002:64-65).

²⁷ P.D. Ouspensky (1997).

²⁸ This mention of Christians and women is inserted here at the suggestion of Michael Harris, to distinguish his lineage, which apparently follows the practice of Jalaluddin Rumi, from those Mevlevi lineages that have followed other practices.

²⁹ Haxton (2002:66) and correspondence from Michael Harris dated 18 November 2005. I am also indebted to Kieron Horide-Hobley for an interview on 27 January 2006, in Wellington, and to both of them, as well as Gillian Harris, for an interview on 23 March 2006.

with half an hour of turning, and working up to an hour and a half. The Wellington group usually turns once a month and is in contact with the London group, two groups in Mexico, and one in New York City. At the celebration of Mevlana's death ceremony on 17 December 2005, ten turners and twenty-five lovers of Mevlana (as those who watch the turning are often called) were present at the Wellington Study Group house. Michael Harris is the current shaykh of the group.

It is significant to note that the Mevlevi turners of the Wellington Study Group and the Study Society in London have never seen their practice as being a Sufi practice *per se* nor as a practice identified with a particular religion. Their turning is a sacred ceremony for all religions; in Gillian Harris's words, 'a manifestation of Mevlana's light in New Zealand'. They see themselves as being entrusted with a spiritual method, a treasure to be clearly distinguished from the kind of 'Whirling Dervish' performances that attract tourists in Turkey, or the global performances of Mevlevi dance troupes whose intentions are to promote Turkish culture.

The Future of Sufism in New Zealand

It appears that there has been modest growth in Sufi activity over the past few years, particularly around Auckland, if one looks at the more regular and frequent visits of overseas Sufi teachers associated with 'Inayat Khan's lineages. However, a few of these overseas teachers, and the people in New Zealand who organise Sufi retreats, indicate that interest in Sufism appears to have levelled out.

There does not seem to be the critical mass of individuals in any particular New Zealand Muslim community for public Sufi activity. Using the United States as an example, a Sufi teacher emigrating from an Islamic country will typically cater first to the specific cultural needs of Muslims from that country. Only later will the teacher (usually but not always a man) learn English and the cultural norms well enough to communicate with the larger community, and perhaps attract more students. As the number of Muslim immigrants increases in New Zealand, it is possible that there will be increased Sufi activity associated with this growth. Another possibility—and this could happen simultaneously with the first option—is that the mainstream expression of New Zealand Islam will move towards a more Salafi or Wahhabi stance. If this happens, as it has already in most of Europe and the United States, one can expect to see attempts to eliminate all Sufi activity, along with any other aspect of Islamic culture beyond the Qur'an and Hadith, such as philosophical inquiry, poetry, music and literature.

References Cited

- Best, Britten, 1980. *The Drama of the Soul: A Mystical Interpretation of the Gospels*. London: East-West Publications.
- Bloch, Regina Mirium, 1915. *The Confessions of 'Inayat Khan*. London: The Sufi Publishing Company Ltd.
- Chittick, William, 1992. *Faith and Practice in Islam*. Albany: SUNY Press.
- Dahnhardt, Thomas, 2002. *Change and Continuity in Indian Sufism: A Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi Branch in the Hindu Environment*. Delhi: D.K. Printworld.
- Donnell, Daniel Muzaffer, 1996. *The Chishti Wisdom-Way. A Study Guide*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Dougan, Abdullah, 1978. *Forty Days: An Account of a Discipline*. Auckland: Gnostic Press.
- Dougan, Abdullah, 1981-1995. *The Quest*, 3 vols. Auckland: Gnostic Press.
- Eck, Diana, 1993. *Encountering God*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Ernst, Carl, 1997. *Shambala Guide to Sufism*. Boston: Shambala.
- Haxton, Ian (ed.), 2002. *FCR and the New Zealand Connection: A selection of papers and information connecting Dr. Francis Crosbie Roles with New Zealand*. Wellington: Wellington Study Group.
- Isaac, Skye, 1999. *Halima's Dream*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Khan, 'Inayat, 1882-1927. *The Sufi Message*, 14 vols. London: Hunter House.
- Khan, Zia 'Inayat, 2001. *A Pearl in Wine: Essays in the Life, Music and Sufism of Hazrat 'Inayat Khan*. New Lebanon: Omega Publications.
- Ouspensky, Pitor Demionovich, 1997. *New Model of the Universe*. New York: Dover Publications.
- Rawlinson, Andrew, 1997. *Enlightened Masters*. Chicago: Open Court.
- Schimmel, Annemarie, 1975. *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- Shepard, William, 1996. 'Muslims in New Zealand'. *The Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs* 16/2: 211-232.
- Tabrizi, Waliullah, 1981. *Mishkat al-masabih*. (Trans. James Robson). Lahore: Muhammad Ashraf.
- Tweedie, Irena, 1986. *Daughter of Fire: A diary of a spiritual training with a Sufi master*. Inverness, CA: Golden Sufi Center.