



Bismillahir-Rahmanir-Rahim

TRUE LOVE = SURRENDER

The Personal Revolution
&
The Psychology of Islam

**The Consciousness Handbook of Essential Knowledge of Islam
to Enhance and Complete your Holy Awareness**

BOOK I

**THE WAY OF COMPASSIONATE RETURN
ISLAM, TASAWWUF (SUFISM) &
THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SURRENDER**

PART ONE - THE PROBLEM:

ON THE DENIAL OF UNITY AND THE MAKING OF SEPARATION

An Analysis of the Root of Religious Fundamentalism in the Light of Islamic Psychology

PART TWO - THE SOLUTION:

ON SPIRITUAL HEALING AND THE REAL MEANING OF UNITY

The Solution is fearless Surrender, and Knowing the Nature of Unity from All Sources

BOOK II

THE SUNRISE IN THE WEST

WESTERN PSYCHOLOGY & SPIRITUAL HEALING -

THE TRANSFORMATION OF HUMAN UNDERSTANDING IN THE WEST

The Prophet said that Revelation comes to two kinds of people.
To one group it comes as a direction and to another as a confirmation.
Those to whom it comes as a confirmation are the twice blessed.

The extended mission, purpose and title of this book is:

I have to write, explain, provide and prove the definitive connection to the Central Point of Everything - the Throne of God - to be found in the heart of each believer, and the proof, reasons and means for its connection to the central personality of any age, who is the descendant, inheritor and manifestation of the Last Prophet, whose essence is the first of Allah's creation and the primal manifestation of the essence of the Knowing of God, and through whose essence reaches us Allah's revelation of Himself, His Name, His Eternal Book, His Prophets, His True Religion, the Religion of Surrender to Divine Love, the reason for it, the nature and purpose of His creation, including the four degrees of His Manifestation through which reality as we know it comes into existence as we know it, and why it is as we know it and what is changeable in it and what is not, and why delusion exists, that there could be such a journey and an experiencing and knowing of God whether we accept it as such or not, as a journey of evolution from darkness into light.

All this in order to prove beyond your shadow's doubt, the necessity and centrality of the transcendent role of the Islamic faith in the evolution of Human Awareness to Divine Consciousness. I call it

**The Consciousness Handbook of Essential Islam
to Enhance and Complete your Holy Awareness**

© Ali Ansari
Surrenderworks.com
Portland, Oregon, 2002
www.surrenderworks.com

BOOK I

THE WAY OF COMPASSIONATE RETURN

ISLAM, TASAWWUF (SUFISM)
&
THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SURRENDER

CONTENTS

PREAMBLE & INTRODUCTION

**PART ONE - THE PROBLEM:
DENYING UNITY AND MAKING SEPARATION**
An Analysis of the Spiritual Root of Religious Fundamentalism
in the Light of Islamic Psychology

CHAPTER ONE

Submission or Surrender? The Question of Meaning

1. On the "Meaning" of "Islam" and the Importance of Understanding the Psychological Distinction between Surrender and Submission
2. The Problem of Ego in Islam
3. Identifying the Fundamental Polarity within the World of Islam in the Light of Spiritual Psychology - the Differences between the Sufis and the Islamic Fundamentalists.
4. Defining the newly emerging field of Spiritual Psychology as the agreement reached based upon the experimental and experiential amalgamation of all Eastern Spiritual Understanding (including Sufism) with leading edge Western Psychological Investigation.
5. On the Reason for making a Distinction between Submission and Surrender. Using the word 'submission' to symbolize the way in which the meaning of religion is portrayed by the mindset of the stubbornly unwilling and psychologically unprepared fundamentalist.

CHAPTER TWO

Submission and Conditional Love The Psychology of Fundamentalism from a Sufi Perspective

6. Understanding the Rebellion and the Rebellious Self - La Iqraha fid-din - two views
7. The Spiritual Root of Denial
8. [Open Letter to an Advocate of Fundamentalism](#)
9. [A Child's Story](#) (A generalized fiction)
10. [On the Hatred of Love - "He taught love."](#) Labeling the Poets and Philosophers of Islam "Kafir", or "unbeliever destined for the hell-fire" because they did not (thankfully) believe as "I" do.
11. Letter - [A Response to Fear](#)

CHAPTER THREE

On the Need for Power

12. Manipulation - A Self-manifestation
13. The Whole of the Personality as a Defense Mechanism
14. The Overwhelming Power of Illusion
15. A Serious Warning - Intention is everything, that's why we want to purify it.
16. On the Benevolence of Being Wrong. Of course you don't want to be wrong, but being wrong is the key to being right. And admitting and correcting error is the key to success in both worlds and highly praised by the Prophet and rewarded by Allah.
17. Real Power comes from Allah

PART TWO - THE SOLUTION
ON SPIRITUAL HEALING AND THE REAL MEANING OF TAWHID
The solution is fearless surrender and knowing the nature of unity from all sources

CHAPTER FOUR
Personality and Character

18. The Difference between Personality and Character: Character is 'time in grade'. Personality is "Your very existence is a sin greater than any other."
19. On our True Nature and the Character of the Prophet- Unconditional Love - Rahmatun lil alameen
20. Lovers relate to fear by trying to heal it.

CHAPTER FIVE
Refusal

21. On the Nature of Refusal.
22. Just Say No!
23. On the Nature of la ilaha illa 'llah - la ilaha illa 'llah begins by saying NO! Islam does not deny the NO!

CHAPTER SIX
Unity

24. The True Meaning of Tawhid (Unity) and the Work of the Sufi
25. The Important Role of Sufism in Islam
26. The Transformation of Sin into Blessing
27. Converting Submission to Surrender
28. Smashing the idols of self in the Ka`aba of the Heart

CHAPTER SEVEN
Surrender Works

29. On the Value of Knowing Ourselves
30. Overcoming Disbelief
31. The Problem of Accepting Sufism
32. Discovering the Heart of Gold

CHAPTER EIGHT

33. The Saint and the Sinner
34. Ego, Super-Ego and Id
35. The Origins of Ego and the Search for Power
36. Super-Ego
37. Identifying the Super-Ego
38. Understanding the Origins of the Super-Ego.
39. Identifying and Purging the Influences of Shame and Guilt
40. Killing the Giant - Jack and the Beanstalk

PREAMBLE

Understanding the East and the West

This work is an attempt to explain and clarify how the realization of soul and its personal understanding is a way to the philosophical and experiential resolution to the perception of controversy. It's pretty simple. If people are minding their own business and not anyone else's, the world will be a peaceful, co-operative place. But what is our business? That is the question. Every essay in this work will address a part of the whole picture, and I'm not implying that all parts of the whole picture will be addressed. But to grasp what I am referring to as 'the whole picture', let me offer a general background.

It is said that in the way of the Sufis, or in the way of truth (the Tao, Allah, God), there is no controversy, or argument. And yet I accept that there certainly appears to be controversy and misunderstanding, and especially within ourselves. This controversy is fundamentally over what is true and what is not, what to do about it when discovered, and whether one's personal experience is sufficient proof of truth, both for self and for another whose experience appears to be different. I call it the "Unique Mistake".

As I've mentioned in previous writings, each realization attempts to explain itself in its own language in its own time. This is from its nature, and from the nature of the effulgence of creation, and not from any directed perception of necessity, although it may, and should, fill a need. In other words, Revelation, or exposition, is not preaching - again with the caveat that it might indeed be expressed in identical tones - it simply is. Inspiration may be instructional, and it often is, by its nature, teaching, but it is not directed, in the sense that there is a felt need or urgency for which the work is 'the answer'. It is directed, however, simply because it often addresses the perceived issues of the time.

This work can also, in a parallel theme, be explained in a traditionally 'Islamic' motif, and such an exposition is entirely justified in the world of Islam, and the libraries are full of them. But the idea of combining the two expositions into one seems a bit daunting, for reasons of what I know to be two very different (and mutually incomprehensible?) means of expression.

Muslims express their deep selves not so much in terms of the heart and soul, with which they are as unfamiliar as the common bloke on the streets of the western world, but in terms of accepted 'truths', most of which are written and which they have devotedly learned and follow. Even the most extremely 'westernized' educational processes that they adopt and submit their children to are still couched and phrased in a basis of understanding that is entirely out of reach to the average westerner. Hence the perception of the Middle East as being the heart of mystery and the source of mysterious and incomprehensible understanding.

It's almost as though even though each exposition is phrased within the now more or less universal English language, they are still in reality, two different worlds and languages. I'm not sure how closely integrated I want the translations to be. The idea of completely integrating the entire work into one huge explanation is the least appealing to me because I feel that the complexity of it will cause both readerships to avoid its undertaking. So I have chosen to address the dilemma by creating two (parallel) parts of the same book, with as many footnotes and cross-references to each other as possible. We might think of it as an attempt to bring Western

realization into Islamic terminology, and the Islamic science of Self and God-realization, referred to loosely as Sufism, into a western perspective.

Fun. Eh?

The Muslims that escape the prison of their culture (and we are all imprisoned in our culture) by coming to the west for total immersion are still in the same dilemma, in that the force of the truth, of and in their language, is in reality quite inescapable. This is because it is not meant to be escaped, it is meant to be accepted, and it is in its acceptance that the escape is effected, as will be demonstrated to you if you ever have the pleasure of meeting a totally integrated Muslim. Such a phenomenon is rare, for it is not a traditionally accepted part of the Muslim agenda to integrate. Since the proper means escapes them, the idea is anathema. It is a matter of intense difficulty and concern, this point of 'where to draw the line', for Muslims educating their children in the West. It is also a subject worthy of the deepest exploration but outside the scope of this present endeavor. It is, however, this quality of integration that I wish to encourage, for I experience it to be a form of perfection and a goal to be attained. I also believe it to be a goal of the Sufi, and the truly Islamic, way.

This idea of integration may fall outside the parameters of what is perceived by an ordinary Muslim to be within the scope of proper Islamic education and upbringing. But I assure you that it will occur, at some point in time, to even the staunchest and most 'well-educated' Muslim man or woman, that the parameters of their religion may indeed go so far as to include everything. (See my work on Theistic Monism, the Philosophy of All-inclusivism.)

There are huge issues at stake here and of such immensity that I balk to even address, let alone approach them. Convincing a Muslim who is certain of the truth of his understanding, that there is more to his understanding than what he understands, can be a challenging if not life-threatening undertaking. One such issue is that of what is referred to as 'pantheism', which both exists and does not (as in all the conundrums of life). But it is here that I wish to begin, and let me state for my own benefit and yours, that beyond this one I will not tread except it be in another entire volume. (Not, at this point, very likely.)

Muslims are bound to their religion. This comes as no surprise. They feel it their duty, honor and privilege to explain their religion to any one interested (and to many who are not, also. <smile>), and this is fine. In this treatise I will propose that the finest way to do that, and the highest way espoused in their teachings - the traditions of the Prophet - is by example. In other words through the use of the religion to attain and manifest its fruits in the form of excellent behavior, appropriate advice and good counsel. And as the Muslim readership is aware, there are myriad traditions to support this assertion.

Westerners, on the other hand, are either bound to their religions, or bound to 'no religion' which becomes their religion. The exceptions to this are the relative few who call themselves spiritualists, in one form or another, and who are seeking some form of satisfaction from the acceptance that there is a God, in some form or another (or none, as the case may be).

It is in the rather specialized but increasingly popular field of psychological investigation, the leading edge of which has become 'Spiritual Psychology', contributed to by the like of such sufi-influenced and oriented people as Idries Shah and George Gurdjieff, to mention only a few among many, that the most headway to unific understanding between the West and the Middle

East has been made. Spiritual Psychology is the very stuff of Sufism, and the similarity between the proclaimed truths and experiences of the Sufis and other Eastern mystics are emerging as the written verifications of the experiential learning of western students and practitioners. The number of psychologically couched Sufi, Islamic and other realization schools and literary contributions is increasing exponentially, to which fact this current work is testimony.

This is the field of study that has most fascinated me and has had the most profound influence upon the intellectual development of my personal understanding.

I would also like to introduce to the current investigation the plausibility of yet another study - that of what I am calling, 'Transformational Psychology', the alchemy, or the science of knowing truth as the basis for the "transformation" (not "elimination") of falsehood. It is again the oldest science in the world but in each new practitioner revived.

The point of this is to guide Westerners and Sufis to a valid and self-validating understanding that will support, understand and assist all beliefs and belief systems, as well as all people and situations, with truth, love and understanding. And that is the highest goal of life and all religions and it matters not what method one uses to attain it as long as it remains the goal of all. And also to explain to Muslims that the point of our religion is not to divide and conquer but to unify, understand and love.

With peace and love,

Ali

INTRODUCTION

How very great the difference
between the thinking after Surrender
and the thinking before.

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

I dedicate this book to my children and grandchildren,
in spirit and by blood, and to anyone else
who may one day want to know and follow my way.

Notice that I do not entitle this book "Islamic Psychology", for reasons and distinctions that will become clear. The word "Islamic" does not really exist. It denotes or implies "coming from Islam" as though "Islam" were a time, place or thing. It is not. It is a State - of being at Peace with God, and you are either in it, or you are not. The word "Islam" is simply the command, in Arabic, to Surrender. I intend to clarify and emphasize in a big way the distinction between the two major psychological orientations prevalent in the Muslim world. I will refer to these as the mindset of "salvation through submission, and obedience to learned doctrine", and the mindset of "the immediate transformation and realization" explained in the Sufi works on Spiritual psychology, or the psychology of Surrender. Obviously I am an avid advocate of the latter, with no decrease in respect for the former.

I equate at all times the word "Islam" with the word "Surrender". My work is entitled and purports to describe

"The Psychology of Surrender, and the Sufi Approach
to Learning and Teaching the Healing of God through
an Understanding of True Surrender to Divine Will
as a state of being truly at Peace (not war) with God".

In a word, "Islam".

A brief history of "Islam" (the way of Surrender) and the Origins of the Sufi way to teach it.

Surrender is the state in which True Revelation takes place. The Surrender of the prophet Muhammad, upon whom be Allah's Peace and Blessings, was the state in which the Revelation of the Qur'an and the future (practices, or religion) of the believers took place.

When this Revelation was shared with others and believed, the Religion, or the "Way of Life in Surrender", was born. This way is truly from and to the 'State' of Surrender. But many to whom it was presented did not accept the state, rather submitting themselves to the "way of life" for its benefits, and ostensibly in hopes of realizing true Surrender, and for a variety of other reasons, as we shall see. Even without the Realities of Faith having entered their hearts, they submitted to the way of life, and carried and taught the teachings, or what by then had become the "religion" of "Islam". But without the Essence (of true Surrender), this form of religious observance or "submission" became the surrogate reality. Ultimately it became the outward signs by which the people of the religion were recognized, and the inward reality (of the True Surrender) was

forgotten by all but a few. The quality of one's "surrender", or "religion" was compared, and judged by one's "submission", or how well they had learned the "religion". It became a sportingly serious competition of minds, and the true way of the heart was forgotten.

This is a perfect setup for the superego to take the role of God, which it is surely willing to do. So when the way of the heart (or the voice of the soul) would try, as it will do (and at always the most embarrassing moments), to express itself either personally through inner prompting, or publicly through the true advocates, it was, as always, both suppressed and condemned.

But Muslims are not unintelligent people. The great majority understands and lives to some degree in Surrender. After all, the revelation was sent to encourage that, to show the way and deliver the benefits of Surrender. And many of these Surrendered people (Muslims) studied deeply the Science of Self as it was shown to the Prophet Muhammad, and by him to his family and those close to him in intimate discourse, and then transmitted through the years to his noble and blessed descendants and their beloveds. Those "Secrets of Surrender" or "Esoterics of Islam" were eagerly learned throughout the generations by avid truth seeking students who wanted the experiential certainty in their lives that they were truly on the right path.

These students sought clarity and truth about the hidden journey of the soul through the life of this world. They were not arrogant enough to think that they could get to the deeper meanings of certain relevant verses of Qur`an on their own, without help, or to think that these verses were of relative importance. They knew that the deeper interpretations could be provided authoritatively by the "Ahli Bait", the Family of the Prophet, who were and still are renowned for the superiority of their knowledge, of both the essence and the details of the revealed way of life in Surrender.

These studies came from and lead to the Truth and Reality of Surrender, so much of which will be discussed in these pages. These studies, due to their necessary contrast to what had by then become "mainstream" thinking, eventually came to be known as the Science of Tasawwuf, the science of knowing the deeper meanings of the Self, its transformation, and the methods for the discovery and purification of the Soul. The importance of this dreadfully under-appreciated Holy Science is now being investigated and discovered in the search for scientific healing by Western Psychology. It is emerging as a science of "Spiritual", or "Soul" Psychology. This science is what is all-too-lightly referred to in the West as Sufism.

There are other reasons even more compelling for astute Muslims and students of peace to seek teaching from the family of the Prophet through connection with the Sufis. Many of these reasons have to do with certifying sincerity of intention. Much of this is discussed in my earlier work entitled "Esoterics of Sufi Healing".

So here it is. "The Psychology of Surrender: The Sufi Approach to World Peace".

PART ONE - THE PROBLEM

THE SPIRITUAL ROOT
OF DENIAL AND SEPARATION

The Psychology of Fundamentalism from a Sufi Perspective

INTRODUCTION

Most people won't even consider looking at Islam as a viable alternative because of how it is portrayed by the rising dominance of the fundamentalist movement. It is in hopes of revealing the higher truths of the Islamic Faith that I feel it necessary to preliminarily explain the fundamentalist mindset in the language of the emerging psychology of spiritual transformation.

This language is increasingly coinciding (not coincidentally) with the terms of Spiritual Realization of the Eastern peoples from earlier times including, for those who have completed their investigation, the mature and functional system of Spiritual Purification developed and cherished by the Muslims themselves (in spite of, for reasons to be explained later, the adamant disavowal of the fundamentalists), called Tasawwuf, or Sufism.

The typical fundamentalist definition of tawhid (unity) is based upon a theological adamancy which is fearful, insistent, forceful and dominating, indicating a fearfully convinced mind and a deliberately trapped and unliberated heart from which all sorts of feelings of unwillingness arise, all the more convincing to the mind that the soul is inherently rebellious and bad, and in need of the mind's stern discipline to keep it on the "right path". Needless to say this spiritual repression develops into a projection onto the world that it is a "bad" place in need of discipline enforced by power. Hence the struggle for power. And all in the name of God. But God has stated, in terms of the Islamic faith, that He will never grant power to such a people until they change what is in their hearts. Quite the contrary, He takes away the truth from them and gives it to a people who will do better with, and honor it for reality it holds.

The way to real world peace is for the West to understand itself and the problem of ego through its own spiritual development and to accept and understand Islam in that perspective, and thereby attain to the true peace and the goal of all religion, including Islam.

The combination of Western Media power with true spiritual teachers and realized Muslim Scholars can then enlighten the world as to the problem, its consequences of self and world destruction, and its solution in the proper understanding of self, spiritual psychology and Islam. This is nothing less than calling the world powers and media to the aid of our spiritual evolution, which is the guarantee of peace and the end of war.

Such a plan does not "require" anyone to "become" a Muslim in the older and fearful sense of "submission" to a "Higher" authority, but simply to "realize" and actualize the meaning of the word, that "Islam" means our ordinary, everyday and inescapable "Surrender". It requires only a proper understanding of the nature of the problem of the self and its solution. This is the work of spiritual education carried on by most religions and spiritual paths, particularly Buddhism, new thought Christianity, Sufism and mainstream Islam.

All that is required is that people understand the true meaning of the word! They will then recognize that very quality within themselves and realize it as the very source of their health and well being. From that light all understandings will be recognized and the resolution to all problems available. Western media has the resources to re-teach the true meaning of Islam to the World and the Muslim educators may be able to reach their children in time to save their lives from the self-inflicted holocaust of misguided warfare.

CHAPTER ONE

SUBMISSION OR SURRENDER? THE QUESTION OF MEANING

1. On the "Meaning" of "Islam" and the Importance of Understanding the Psychological Distinction between Surrender and Submission

The Distinction between Surrender and Submission is simply that the word submission implies involuntary, as in "whether you like it or not", and Surrender implies in the sweetness of Love. This is the key to the two major psychological extremes or postures in Islam, exemplified in these modern times by the Sufis, who are the people purporting the way to realization, and the fundamentalists, loosely referred to as "Wahhabis", who purport to be the guardians of the purity of the Religion. These groups and definitions are exemplary of the breach between spiritualism and fundamentalism in any religion, even though all religions stress the necessity of both to be present in any being who would wish to be whole, or complete. It is particularly Islam that brings the necessity of this balance to the fore. It was in emphasis of this point that Imam Malik, one of the great Imams of the Sunni school on Islam, "Man faqaha wa lam tasawwafa, faqad fasaqa. Wa man tasawwafa wa lam yatafaqa, faqad zandaqa. Waman jama`huma, faqad haqaka." It means, "The one who uses the law for other than the personal benefit of self-purification and preparation to meet his Lord, is creating mischief, even without knowing. And the one who practices self-purification without respect for and the use of the revealed law, is without guidance and wanders fruitlessly. But the one who combines the two has discovered the truth.

2. The Problem of Ego in Islam

The Problem of Ego in Islam is the same as anywhere else. It is the defensive/aggressive coping mechanism contrived by the soul for survival or to gain acceptance, that eventually convinces itself that it is real and nothing else is. It usurps the control of the heart from the real Soul and attempts to assert itself as lord and master of the universe. It's not wrong, but merely an inept pretender to the real power that lies within its very depths.

3. Identifying the Fundamental Polarity within the World of Islam in the Light of Spiritual Psychology - the Differences between the Sufis and the Islamic Fundamentalists

4. Defining the newly emerging field of Spiritual Psychology as the agreement reached based upon the experimental and experiential amalgamation of all Eastern Spiritual Understanding (including Sufism) with leading edge Western Psychological Investigation.

5. On the Reason for making a Distinction between Submission and Surrender. Using the word 'submission' to symbolize the way in which the meaning of religion is portrayed by the mindset of the stubbornly unwilling and psychologically unprepared fundamentalist.

CHAPTER TWO

SUBMISSION AND CONDITIONAL LOVE

The Psychology of Fundamentalism from a Sufi Perspective

6. Understanding the Rebellion and the Rebellious Self - La Iqraha fid-din - two views

The entirety of the human personality is built to be a defense mechanism, and with a little study and observation it is easy to know the nature, or manifestation, of the fear that motivates it. Once this nature is discovered, there is the possibility of confrontation, or bringing it out of hiding, thereby eliminating the hidden power it has to rule your behavior. I say that there is a chance because there is another more deeply hidden element that defends the defense mechanism, and relies for its very existence on the stability and reality of the fears. That nature is the hidden motivations of our goal orientation. These fears become our "cherished institutions" Our "immutable truths", and resist discovery very intensely and furiously.

7. The Spiritual Root of Denial

Understanding the rebellion is to understand the rebel. And that is the essence of understanding the self and of all understanding. When you understand the rebel, you understand the unwillingness of the human soul to submit to fear or anything other than the direct manifestation of the will of Allah, which one knows only from one's Soul. When you understand the nature of fear you understand the human personality, and therefore everybody.

8. An open letter to a Fundamentalist Imam

Beloved brother, as-Salaamu alaikum wa Rahmatullah.

Here's a simple story I wrote clarifying the difference between our duty to Allah and our duty to our fathers. It's only a beginning in my attempt to explain the phenomenon of "Islamic Fundamentalism" to the "rest of the world" in general, and my friends and students in particular. Basically I'm apologizing to them for your rash and unprincipled behavior, and the horrible image of Islam that you are presenting to the world. And trying to explain to them that the human self is the human self, in any and all religions, and that the so-called 'mystical' or spiritual aspects of each religion are only the attempts to put the human psychology into the perspective of that religion.

Fortunately, Islam IS from Allah, the creator of all the worlds and all the people and all the religions, and the Qur'an was sent to confirm what is true in all of them and to set right the differences. Thankfully it IS the complete book of Allah, and therefore in it can be found all of the teachings necessary for the perfection of human character. However, the ayat of protection applies in all cases. "Innahu la qur`anun karimun fi kitabin maknunin, la yamassuha illa l-mutahharun". None shall touch it (draw nigh unto the meanings in the hidden book) except the purified (clean in mind, body, heart, intention and soul, only those will approach its true meaning.") The implication of this ayat is that the more we are purified (qad aflaha man tazakkah), the more we will benefit from the Qur'an.

This is the very reason why preaching "Qur'an and Sunnah is NOT appropriate in this country. And particularly with the Christian, bible-thumping hellfire and salvation style that is so common to fundamentalist zealots such as yourself.

Life is a puzzle. Try to solve it, not burn it because you think it's too difficult. Use your Qur`an to explore what you do not know, not to prove that you can read Arabic better than any one else.

I would welcome your clarification and/or elaboration on any of the points I raise, since I'm sure you would be proud to consider yourself a voice of the "true" Islam, otherwise referred to as the "fundamentalist" movement. If you do not, or disagree in any way, please explain how. Thanks.

Mind you, I'm only seeking to explain it in terms of currently acceptable "Sufism" and "Spiritual Psychology", and at many junctures will seek to integrate it by influencing some of its viewpoints considered to be unreasonable or untenable, by western society and Muslim thinkers of the past.

9. A Child's Story (A generalized fiction)

My father was a proud man and he liked being proud of himself and his family. It gave him stature in the community that he was born into. He always wanted to be proud of me, and I always enjoyed pleasing him because I liked it (myself) when he loved me and hated it (myself) when he didn't.

I soon learned that I could experience that feeling of love (the 'divinity' of his attention) simply by behaving in the familiar patterns of which I knew he approved. He taught me well and I'm grateful to Allah that I am a good Muslim. My body is totally conditioned and I can tell when I'm off the siratul mustaqim (straight path) by the feeling of uneasiness that I get. It's kind of like how I felt when I was about to be punished for something but didn't quite know what it was. It's that little bit of fright that I get when I quickly ask myself "Is this OK? Do I dare? Is it wrong? Will I get punished?" I'm very glad I feel that way because it keeps me safe and out of trouble.

My father tells me that in the 'hayyat ul akhir', which he says is the next life, the good muslims will go to heaven and the others will go to hell, and that we won't go to hell if we stay on the siratu-mustaqim, which he says is the Qur`an (holy book) and sunnah (character of the Prophet, SAS.) He tells me that that is why he is so strict with me, because he loves me and doesn't want me to go into the hellfire. I believe this, of course, and have the firm intention to raise my children exactly as my father raised me.

Only one problem. I never have time to play. And I know many other children who are always happy and playing. It seems that I am never happy unless I'm doing what my father tells me. So since I'm always reading Qur'an and studying tradition (hadith), I guess it's fore-ordained that I'm to become an Imam. This should be very for me easy because my father is an Imam and he has all the right books. He tells me very clearly what books to study and what books are valueless to me as an Imam. He even tells me which books are bad and I should never read because they will corrupt my faith. I'm very grateful to him because, thanks to my father, I'll never go off the path and will surely go to heaven when I die.

(End of story)

And now I would like to address the consequences of such an upbringing.

10. On the Hatred of Love - "He taught love."

And you say about Rumi - (Implying all Sufi Poets and Philosophers) that they are unbelievers. You say this with such ease and certainty. And - you say it's because, "He taught love. But God loves (only) the Muslims".

"God loves (only) the Muslims". This is the definition of conditional love, and comes directly from parental upbringing in the tradition Muslim culture, which by definition is the hayyatu d-Dunya and that from which we seek to escape.

Basically you are saying "if I am good, God will love me". But this is exactly the kind of love that is extended to the child by to the father who wants to have a "good" child, mostly so he can show him off to others and feel proud of himself. This is a quality of the nafs (ego) and it engenders the pernicious infection that so dominates Christianity, that of "original sin". Basically it tells us that we are bad and must redeem ourselves by our actions. That implies that there is always "another", a being who sets the standards for, controls, and benefits from our actions. That's dominance. That's oppression. That's our parents. Until we are free from our self-imposed continuation of the behavior modification influences of our childhood, we are not truly in our own hearts, not truly with Allah, not truly, and wholeheartedly surrendered to Allah. Without wholehearted surrender, our surrender is incomplete and the part of ourselves that wants to know ourselves will always manifest itself antagonistically, will always be "put down" or punished, banned, rejected, and thought bad of. This part of our being is recognized in modern psychology as the shadow.

"He loves us because we are "good", or because we behave in a way of which HE approves. This is love conditional upon behavior. Yet the Prophet (SAS) told us emphatically that paradise was not a result of our deeds.

If we artificially project, or hold in front of ourselves, someone whom we deem to be better than ourselves, then we consistently evaluate ourselves in the light of the reflection we project. In which case we will always see ourselves as lacking (in perfection).¹ But that's because we are setting up (in our minds) partners with Allah. By seeing ourselves, or imagining ourselves, in the "eyes" of "another", all of which we are carrying in our own heads, we become not only habituated to chronic self-under-evaluation, which develops into a massive inferiority complex, but worse, we do not see, or know, or live in, the truth of who we really are, our own true reality. This because we are constantly distracted from it by the dominance of the illusion (picture) we carry.

So how far away are you, from Allah, if what you say be true?

We know Reality when we know Ourselves. And we know ourselves by knowing Allah. This is our primary obligation and it supercedes all others. It is what we were created for. "I was alone and I wanted to be know (recognized). So I created." Hadith Qudsi. This is not to say that the self is Allah! Subhanallah! But it is to say that the only means to true self-knowledge is from Allah, and we know Allah by Allah. Hence Allah tells us in Qur`an " You remember me, and I will remember you."

¹ Yet perfection is what we are striving for, and we all know that Allah is perfect.

Our job, and indeed we were created for it, is to know Allah. To know Him is to love Him, and to love Him is to praise Him, and to praise Him is to remind ourselves and inform others of His Infinite Bounty and Mercy. Then we are in unity² and fulfill the first sunnah of "Rahmatun lil `Alameen". It is Allah's job to feed us, clothe us, nurture us, raise us by gradual stages into the ranks of men, and take us out of the hayyatu d-dunya as He decrees, for He is Rabb ul `Alameen.

In a word, He remembers us! It is His knowledge of us that truly defines us, not our self-definition nor the definition of our parents or others from within our society. Our knowledge of ourselves is what limits us, and is the manifest illusion from which we (the Muslims) wish to escape. Such is the stated purpose of the din: to guide us out of the darkens of the illusion of ourselves into the Light of the Truth and Reality of Allah - Who is the Light of the heavens and the earth (Nur us-samawati wal ardh).

Yes, Truth hath come and falsehood must perish. But remember that this is the din of Islam, which means Surrender to Allah, Who is Rabb il `alameen, Lord of ALL the worlds. That means He is the Lord of everybody, whether they recognize it or not. And it is our job (the real da`wa) to bring that recognition to their hearts and minds - hearts first, because he wants us to surrender to Him with whole hearts, completely, wholeheartedly. Not half-heartedly, or with our minds only.

We do that with our behavior. We are surrendered to Allah so that His qualities my show in our daily lives. Therefore we are the noblest, the wisest, the most compassionate, the most deeply understanding, and the source of forgiveness to everyone around us. This is the essence of the Sufi healing. To offer forgiveness and love (Islam) from Allah as a new start to people who have been judged and therefore judge themselves wrongly, and in a darker light than the light of Allah

If we pass judgement, we are admitting failure, and deliberately avoiding our responsibility. And we are blaming someone else for our own shortcoming, for our own inability to understand, forgive and correct.

Our responsibility as muslims (and healers, which we all should be) is to know (not to claim knowledge) what is really wrong with the individuals we confront, and how to heal the wounds that have caused their inability to be at peace with Allah and embrace wholeheartedly the meaningful teachings of His Prophet. And it is our responsibility to represent those teachings in their original wisdom. Not simply to selfishly desire paradise and hurt other people in our mad rush to get there. Part of the original wisdom is to know who is ready for the teaching and for how much. It is a greater sin to reject a person by causing them to reject you, than it is to ignore them completely. In either case we are not to pass judgement. This is admitting our failure to understand, and displaying an unwillingness to know and learn more, which is our primary obligation. It is self-limiting and inhibits our ability to truly heal others and attract a true following for Allah.

You talk about Qur`an and Sunnah, knowledge in which you compete to excel, but you don't talk about Allah, for knowledge of God you have none.

² Because it is by His praise that we praise Him, therefore it is He praising Himself, for in surrender, He is the doer, we are the done.

Now you think you can judge. You have a high estimation of yourself, and rightly so. You're on the 'right' path. So you (rightly) judge your behavior to be 'good', and others' to be 'not-so-good', or 'bad'.

So now you are just like your father, for judgement is what he passed on to you, and now you are (rightly) acting in just the same way. You are just the same to others as your father was to you.

So, since you, as a child, judged yourself 'bad' until you became 'good', and were judged 'good', in your father's (and therefore your own) eyes, you initiate the same procedure with others, that, until they meet up to your (minimal/Islamic) standards, they are simply not 'good' enough.

It's not your behavior that's in question, it's why you have to judge yourself, and the accuracy of your judgement. As almost everyone knows, such is the way of the ego (Oh, you don't have one?). Always seeking to see itself as 'good' in its own, and its parents', eyes.

And in preaching Islam in this way you are not at all different from the Christians, with their belief in 'original sin'. You are pounding a book with no knowledge of its Author. You're saying that "since I'm bad until my father likes me, (which he does, now that I'm a Muslim), the same applies to you. So until you become a Muslim (in my eyes), you are not (good), and therefore will go to hell, but not me!"

This may not be what you intend to say with your preaching, but it is, in fact, what is being heard.

In other words, you 'approve' of yourself and others like you (who meet up to your own (minimal/Islamic) standards), and (sternly) disapprove of the rest.

This is very paternalistic, don't you agree? Or are you just 'right', and that's the way it is? And what about the rest of the Muslims, who mutually disagree with you? Are they wrong too? Where does your "judgement" of who is 'kafir' and who is not, begin and end? And is it really yours, or are you simply accepting it hearsay? And how do you know who fits into those parameters?

Qur`an says "They seek to deny what they do not understand." Does that maybe apply to you, too? "They seek to blow out the Truth with the wind from their mouths." "We have created men in a forgetful mold." Do you remember Allah much? "We found them following the way of their fathers."

Again, you speak much about the Qur`an and the Sunnah, knowledge in which you compete to excel, but you speak little, if at all, of Allah, and rightly so, for of true knowledge (ma`arifat) of the Mercy of God you have but little. But before you go on speaking about Qur`an and sunnah, fulfill your primary obligation and become this sunnah. "Wa ma arsalnaka illa li rahmatun lil `alameen." A Mercy unto all the worlds.

In order to BE a mercy unto all the worlds you must first have some direct experience of the Quality of Allah's Mercy, which means some 'direct' knowing of Allah, Who IS the Mercy unto all the worlds.

So you speak of fear while the lovers you hate. You speak of avoiding punishment while of mercy you know little. Does this sound like anyone you know?

Why do you make war on the Friends and Lovers of Allah? Do you not know what Allah says about what will happen in the end to those who make war, especially on the `awliya` u `llah and seek to cause separation and division in the religion of Peace, Love, and Mercy? "Wa ma arsalnaka illa li rahmatun lil `alameen." applies to you, too!

Why do you rarely mention the name of Allah when Allah Himself tells you in the very book in which you profess to believe, "Wa dhikru `llaha kathiran".

You know that if you really did that one thing the hypocrisy of your nafs would be immediately exposed and you would experience real shame before your Lord and lose the pride upon which your whole artificial world is based. And yet that pride is exposed already in the hadith that no one, not even the prophet himself will enter paradise as a result of his deeds, but only by the infinite Mercy of Allah. So why do you not seek to taste that mercy now - to really taste it, not just say you do?

American seekers are seeking God, not you, and not 'your' religion of separation and hate. Islam is the religion of Unity. So hate your 'self', if you must, that keeps you from knowing the love and the garden now. But don't project your hatred out upon the world in the name of Islam. If you do that, then you become one who drives people away from Allah. How can you invite them to the Love and the Mercy and the Forgiveness that they, and you, and me, so dearly love, seek and need, if you do not have it yourself?

Unless and until you have completed your own personal 'suluk', or 'quest' for education in the truth of this matter, you cannot prove to them, as I do, that Islam is a way to God in this life, not only in the 'next' (which it most definitely is, in spite of 'opinions' to the contrary). You cannot 'claim it' and be believed. It is obvious to people of truth that you are preaching your conviction but not your experience, and it is therefore clear whether you have walked the path you preach, or not.

And by the way, where is the next life, anyway, when the prophet said 'die before you die'. And Qur`an says "say not that the true witnesses who have died in the way of Allah are dead. Indeed they are not, but alive in the presence of their lord and the bearers of glad tidings."

But man, you need to walk you talk! Stop trying to use the religion of Allah as a political tool in a futile attempt to gain power and control over the land. That's why nobody believes you or wants to listen to you, because you're wrong. And your father was wrong, and you know it in your heart but are truly afraid to stand up to him, and to yourself, and speak you heart - which from its sincerity will truly find the REALITY of Allah and then truly understand and love the religion. But as yet, you haven't proven the truth of your way. You are only relying on the evidence given to you by your fathers. And so, you only want to talk about it, and make your living as a talker.

Nobody wants to hear you even though you are absolutely convinced that you are right. It's that very conviction and your unwillingness to entertain the possibility that you might be wrong that frightens people away from you.

Just because you have the highest truth in your hand does not mean that you can beat people up with it, or that you have come to reach the highest meanings and realizations, or that you have the remotest idea how to teach it. You obviously do not. The only people who are listening to you are people who believe as you do already. You are preaching to the choir and have nowhere else to go. That is very ineffective and a waste of your time and talents. And Allah does not want you to waste the gifts he has given you. So "Which of the blessings of your Lord would you deny?"

This conviction, in psychological terms, is the state of 'an-nafsil Amarra' - the convinced self. It is the very trap which learning Islam in the Sufi way (and modern spiritual psychology) will lead you out of, and into your true self, which will then be able to know and communicate with everybody, not just to the people who believe, as you do, that their trap is the answer to the world's problems. Only when you begin to question your conviction (not the truth, just the nature and origin of your conviction - i.e. the way you carry the truth), will you reach the second and all-important stage of nafsil lawamma, the very frightening stage of self-doubt, self-questioning and self investigation. This is not a questioning of Truth, but a questioning of why you need to hold it in the way that you do.

It is for the very reason of the frightening nature of this 'step outside ourselves' (in our willingness to discover absolute certainty), that we seek a guide, a 'teacher', other than our fathers. A 'certified' Muslim who has walked the way and knows how to help us out of the trap of our selves. It is an absolute fact that many really good Muslim fathers have sent their children to spiritual teachers for this very education.

Only from there can you reach the realms of true inner peace, confidence and certitude, the stage of nafsil mutma`inna which is the beginning of the return to you Lord (Radhiyyatan, Mardhiyya) that you are truly seeking and now only imitating.

This, my friend, is the true Islam, the complete, perfect and knowing surrender to a complete, perfect and knowing God. So take heed, and make war (on others, and not your 'self') if you will. But you, like us all, will bear the consequences of your deeds.

Here is a copy of an article about to be published in a local 'alternative' newspaper. Please read it with the eye of truth in your heart and see if you don't agree that it might be a successful approach to inviting people to our beloved way of life.

With love and respect, wa alaikum salaam.

Your bro.

Ali Ansari (01/15/01)

11. A Response to Fear

My beloved brothers and sisters in Islam,
Determined to get to the garden?

"Methinks that Mecca thou shall not reach my friend,
for the road thou takest leadeth unto Turkestan."

(Sufi Poet)

In spite of the fact that you are frightened (and pretending not to be), frightening yourselves, others and sometimes me, I will continue to reach out to you with love, understanding and knowledge which you did not have before.

It is imperative that you listen to me in the right spirit, for what I say will be in contradiction to the dictates of your lower self and quite possibly the community around you, and we all know that the power of the lower self is very strong and compelling. The choices you make in every moment may govern the direction of your life forever.

If you choose the path of destruction then know that it is your destiny. It matters not what justification you put on it. You may say that it is the will of God and that He commands it. Whether this is true or not is of little consequence compared to the fact that it is still up to you to choose it. And God does not command the destruction of that which he has blessed and determined to be built. So if you choose the path of destruction, then know that it is your destiny.

But if you are a true Muslim and choose the way of the peace in your heart (the True Islam) then stop war now! Stop aiding it, stop abetting it, stop encouraging it, stop supporting it and most of all, stop believing in it as a means of accomplishment. Believing in war as a means to peace is belief in slaughter, tyranny, oppression and destruction, and will only bring to you what you believe in. Allah gives us the choice to believe as we will, and lets us know plainly that as we believe, so shall it be.

So if destruction is the destiny you seek then join with the others who are marching headlong into it in the name of the religion of their desires for the future, believing that therein lies their eternal pleasure in another world. Since we know not truly in which state we shall die, we do not know and cannot assume that we are the heirs of paradise or that we exclusively know or have discovered the way to get there. Only Allah Alone can grant that, and living truthfully to Allah in our own hearts in every moment is the only way to know the Reality of true Surrender. In the very assumption that a religious crusade is the right way to get there, there is enough inherent crime to keep you busy and out of the garden forever. Feel the peace that peaceful people are feeling in both worlds.

If you aid and abet in the destruction of a single human being, you have murdered, and who murders one being has murdered all of humanity, and oneself in the process. Hell is full of brimming with such people already. Why should you wish to join with them? So repent to Allah. Rethink your strategy. Is war and destruction really the best way to peace and eternity, or is it really simply suicide that you are after? It's really the death of your nagging lower self that you seek, and that will set you free to enjoy the life that God has given you in praise and gratitude.

Who are you following, anyway? Peace exists here and now. Be grateful. Enjoy it and grow strong in your faith and trust in Allah. The goal of war is to end war, and there is only one war that does that, and that war is the war of peace. So convert you warlike brethren to the way of dedication to peace and inner knowledge. Learn how to really live and teach your belief in Allah to the world around you. We need, now more than ever, that the true Muslims who are surrendered to God directly and committed to the peace that is found in their hearts manifest themselves and recommit to the peace of the garden of life that Allah has given us. Now, not later, after having committed a lifetime of sin.

Islam is a process of spiritual maturation. It is not to be used as a tool for children who are still demanding that the world owes them something or that it ought to be in any way different from what it is, and in such illusion make it easier for them and their tyranny-oriented cohorts at the expense of anyone else. Deal with Reality now, not some idealistic perfection later, after having killed all your enemies.

Get it straight! There are no religious enemies. No religion preaches hatred, much less Islam. ALL religions and spiritual paths preach the brotherhood of man. The enemy is your personal wounded self who makes enemies out of others and the world, and seeks healing and safety through domination. Believing in such a duality and calling it the reality is the proven way to eternal failure. Surrender and be healed! No one has ever achieved lasting success with such an unhealed attitude. Such an attitude will get you success neither in this world nor the next. It is only a sign that you understand neither the point of your religion nor the nature of your true self, and no success can come for you in either world if you continue to abuse God's Holy Truth for your own personal goals.

This is why you forbid yourselves the dhikr of Allah, the oft and sincerely repeated saying of His name with a heart full of longing for His truth and the real peace. You won't do it because you know that He in His immediate Reality will break your heart of hatred with His love, and then your peer pressure will be too much for you to resist, and your loyalties to gangs and turf wars will be shattered and you will be ostracized and excommunicated and punished. And all of this has happened to you in your youth and you have promised to never let it happen again, but it will if you break away from your collision bound groups and societies and political organizations and join with the truly Surrendered ones in the Struggle for peace not war, which is the real jihad of Islam, the jihad of healing wounds, and winning hearts and souls, not turf.

But you are forced by your love of society and your need for justification of your personal anger and validation of your false self to create and believe in an artificial and illusory duality, and thereby deprive yourself voluntarily of, and separate yourselves voluntarily from, the love of Allah that you will receive from the true Surrender to Him as He bids you to do, so that He can heal your wounds and make you a true Muslim and bring you into your true unity and show you the true Islam so that you can live it and teach it to others without the hidden guilt of hypocrisy from knowing in your hearts that you are doing nothing more for Allah than competing with the US Marines and recruiting young policemen for a Muslim militia and law enforcement agency, and then wondering why you are not successful, and why no one wants to do it like you do, and so condemning the world as being unfaithful and touting yourself as being true, when it is you who are being untrue to yourselves and to Allah, all the while believing and claiming that you are the chosen faithful, earning your right to paradise and to punish, scold, chastise, police and even murder others.

Allah will take this religion from you, stripping you of the honor which was once yours, and give it to a people who will do right by it, and send you into the fires of the wars that you are so sure will gain you paradise.

"Divorced from reality" you say I am? If you only knew how hard I've worked and how much of my life I've devoted to knowing the Truth and the Real Reality of Allah as it is said that you can by the real masters of Islam that you blaspheme with your petty judgments as if they, or we, really cared. You only deprive yourselves. "And willingly and thanking God", you say, but "soon shall ye come to know". "If only you knew what the Reality is" "Beautiful to some, and horrendous to some". This is what Allah says to those of you who do not know the Reality but prefer the feeling of thinking that you do, while in reality you are only preaching gangs and turf-wars. You choose to not even try. You close the doors of your hearts to your true brothers and sisters in this life and the next who have come to the realizations of the Truth and Reality of Allah in every breath and deed of creation, who offer you the love of Allah but you are too afraid to accept it, except for just a moment so that you can go back to your associates and fellow deniers of love and re-affirm your vows to the hypocrisy of your selves to your very hearts and souls.

War is not the way! You are storming children and it matters not how much altruism and benevolence you claim. I know you feel that if only you could only rule you would manifest the benevolence, fairness and justice according to the book and tradition. So basically you want to be a policeman or a judge and dispense mercy and justice from a position of power, and feel that if the world gave you a chance, you would do a good job, and earn the pleasure of Allah and your reward in the garden. You think that the goal of Islam is a theocratic dictatorship. How little you know and how ill you judge. What do the dead and gone care about what you do with this illusory world of yours.

The Garden is not earned. It is Gifted here and now from the Mercy, Kindness and Benevolence of Allah. It can only be accepted by the believers and rejected by those still in denial. We've all been policed and judged to the death of our souls, and naturally we want to correct the injustices that we've experienced and know exist. But if you are not free of the hidden idol within you, the hidden childhood ego-demands from parents, others, and the world, then you are not free of your attachments, not a mature soul, not realized in the true way of God, the way of our innate nature (din al-fitrah) and can by no means understand or rule fairly, even with the best of tools at your disposal. Your primary responsibility is to know and to see God in every reality, not to respond to the promptings of your lower self to acquire your personal pleasure through violence, and justify it with your favorite interpretations of Scriptures.

Innocent children have heaven already inside of them. Discovery and protection of innocence, your own and that of the ones you love and care for, is of paramount importance, and we do not do that by shoving, however so gently, our guilt ridden fears, religious doctrines and dogmas, and patterns of fearful behavior down their throats. When we "educate" our children in that manner we are simply enforcing the message that they are bad until we say they are good, not that they are good until they are bad, as it should be. Such is the beginning of religious oppression and peer pressure in the family that suppresses the "lovingly rebellious" soul and causes the need for the "acting out" of extremes in the search for love.

Innocence is innate within everyone of us. Children are born in a state of Surrender (Muslims), and there is no way into the kingdom of heaven except by means of Surrender, to be as innocent

and pure as little children - innocent of your selves and Surrendered to your reality, in a word, truly surrendered to Allah and real Muslims. There is clearly no such thing as original sin. Why then are we living our lives in a false fear, willing to make war and self-destruct to "earn" the place of our egos (which we think of as our souls) in paradise when we are in our truth already full of faith and confidence in ourselves, unless it is only the illusion of an oppressive life with false responsibility and obligation that we wish to destroy and be free of?

It's because our spirits have been repressed and we want to create an environment in which they can be free. That's the natural desire for paradise. But life, as short as it is, cannot be ruled, that is the dream of a wounded and vengeful child. "If we can marshal together enough of us of like mind, we can take over and have it our way." That's the very thesis of politics and gang philosophy. So you want a politically powerfully organization so that you can be heard and have your grievances addressed. But Allah can address your grievances immediately. But you do not want that because without your grievances you will not belong to the group any longer, you will not be sharing in the responsibility for the grief and suffering. Oh, horrors. You'll be part of the healing and not part of the suffering. You will be deemed by yourself and others as not doing your share.

So you deny yourself permanent happiness in this life (and the next), feeling that it is your responsibility to Allah, and that you are fulfilling it. But it is not and you are not. Your responsibility to Allah is your commitment to Him directly, in yourself and your heart, and then to find the peaceful way out of your own personal trap, and then to share it with others. That is the real way and the real religion and the real Islam. Surrender to Allah, Alone. Heal yourself first and then heal others. Bring them with you to be healed. When the power of your true reality dawns on you, and you feel the force and power of Allah in this movement, you will see that it is the true Islam and you will seek the forgiveness of your Lord morning and evening (for the misunderstandings you received and perpetuated), and offer the praise and gratitude of your Lord for the guidance of this direct way and dedicate your life to spreading it. This is the real way to world peace and the real teaching of the real truth of the real Islam. Period!

Life cannot be ruled, for, who then would be the ruler? You! Not God! Or are you God's partner? You and God? Is that your idea? I don't think so. I don't think you'll find that a very popular idea. So Surrender your false ideas to Allah Now, feel the real love and let go the idols of self-worship in your heart. This is the true way, so discover it and walk it in trust and confidence. Look to your hidden idol, the one of the ideal world in which everything goes your way because you are the Muslim, the one in which all others will bow down to you and your wishes or suffer the just and religiously required consequences. Look to your hidden idol, the one that keeps you from knowing God now.

Life is from Allah, it is Al-Hayy, His Sacred Quality, and it cannot nor should be controlled, It can only be surrendered to. It is the tyranny of the nafs (your lower self) that drives you to thinking that you can, or need to, rule in order to be happy. You cannot rule, because Allah rules. But you can be happy, so surrender to that part of you that is, deeply inside, content and happy with Allah Alone. Or don't. Your choice.

So surrender your horrible beast and enter into the garden now, not later. Do not allow yourself to go to war or to commit crimes of passion and aggression against individuals or humanity no matter how justified the cause or how strong the peer pressure. Stop wrong doing in yourselves and in your friends, family and community. Promise Allah, yourself and me sincerely and

forever on the hand of the Prophet that you will be dedicated only to truth, peace, love, mercy, compassion, forgiveness. If you will not do this then be warned of the fires of the very war you are aiding and abetting which will consume you and your loved ones and many millions of innocents and which will not end with your death as you hope. The only way to inherit the garden is to be in it now and not leave. "Khaleelu min al Akhireen". Few among the people of latter times.

Nobody wins by war, or rules by domination. Your parents couldn't rule you. What makes you think you can rule the world. This not the Divine rule of God that you are preaching, but the tyranny of the Self. And it's Your Self, I might add. The assertion that you are on the right path is only an attempt at self-validation in like-minded company. It cannot be real just because you say it is. It must be validated by your actions in the spiritual presence of the prophet through the empowered `ahli bait themselves or in the presence of one of their duly authorized and truly rightly guided representatives. That is the true way preserved by the Sufis. Autonomy (self-governance) is your God-given right. You may exercise it to enter and stay in the coolness of the heaven in your heart through being dedicated to peace, healing wounds and love of thy neighbor, or to jump into a mindset of fear and hatred, creating and entering into the fires of your own desire for the war of self-destruction. But war is suicide and genocide, and for that very reason forbidden by God in all religions. War IS hell. And life is, or can be, heaven.

This is the way to world peace, the making of heaven on earth, not by means of domination and submission, but by the superior means of true understanding and reasoning. This is what Allah wants from us, not the violent outbursts of our wounded and vengeful selves. Restraining ourselves from outbursts of violence and anger is the hardest struggle of all and that's why it is referred to as the Jihad al Akbar, the Greater Struggle. It is abuse of the word Jihad to use it in reference to war over turf.

Historically, the masters of the heart have been the greatest propagators of this religion of truth through their knowing and explaining the reality of unity (tawheed). And it is only in times of peace that religion and civilization can truly flourish. So religion will flourish and reveal its purpose to you only if you keep a peaceful heart.

Giving Salams - Wishing you peace and stating the fact that the Peace of Allah is always present. As-Salam `Alaikum means that the Peace of Allah is upon and within you. It's up to you to keep it there. It is as much a statement of truth as it is a wish, and for everyone in whom there is a beating heart it is true. It is not only possible but to be hoped for that the true Muslims who have the true peace in their true hearts are able to state the fact that the Peace of Allah is not only present but will never leave if the people chose to follow it. And the straight way to the Peace is from the Peace and not through the gates of war.

Nobody in the world wants to become a Muslim because of the example being set showing that Muslims are a people of peace outwardly, but of war inwardly. They claim to be wanting to make peace but secretly in their hearts want to make war and for that cannot be trusted. Their way is not the straight way but a way of deception, using the talk of peace and salvation to recruit more innocent believers into their theory of Jihad which is nothing more than a political power struggle.

So Peace. May the Peace and Mercy and the Prosperity of Allah be upon you.

CHAPTER THREE
ON THE NEED FOR POWER

12. Manipulation - A Self-manifestation

13. The Whole of the Personality as a Defense Mechanism

14. The Overwhelming Power of Illusion

15. A Serious Warning - Intention is everything, that's why we want to purify it.

16. Of course you don't want to be wrong, but being wrong is the key to being right. And admitting and correcting error is the key to success in both worlds and highly praised by the Prophet and rewarded by Allah

17. Real Power comes from Allah

PART TWO - THE SOLUTION
ON SPIRITUAL HEALING
AND
THE REAL MEANING OF TAWHID

The solution is fearless surrender and knowing the nature of unity from all sources.

CHAPTER FOUR

PERSONALITY AND CHARACTER

18. The Difference between Personality and Character: Character is 'time in grade'. Personality is "Your very existence is a sin greater than any other.

19. "On our True Nature and the Character of the Prophet- Unconditional Love - Rahmatun lil alameen. Lovers relate to fear by trying to heal it.

CHAPTER FIVE

REFUSAL

20. On the Nature of Refusal

The Sinner is not so easily forgiven since for the most part he refuses to (this is why he won't) actually confess himself completely. By that I mean admit his (own truthful) existence, come out of hiding in full trust and foreknowledge of the forgiveness of Allah. This is why Knowledge (or embodiment of, in the healer) of God and the Nature of Divine Forgiveness is so crucial.

In this, we understand, again, our need for certifiable truth (thank you, God), not mere conjecture of wishful thinking. We must know of with certainty and experience a palpable sense of forgiveness, and have, to some degree, a sense of "given-ness". The knowledge of Mercy is the knowledge of fore-give-ness. It is Mercy fore-given. It is simply there for the taking. Like water from a fresh mountain river. Clean and pure, but we must bring our children to it in order for them to be bathed in it and purified by it.

The cause of refusal to be forgiven is fear - of punishment, shame, ridicule, embarrassment, low self-esteem, loss of pride, ego death, etc. These fears can be countered by Love - with joy, happiness, freedom, forgiveness, mercy, knowledge, helpfulness, etc. This is why some of us are given beloved partners.

21. Just Say No!

Just say "No" to relationship. It turns out that personality is all about relationship. "Object relation", as it is called in the language of the students of this sort of thing. It has to do with our relating to, and how we do that, things (perceived) outside ourselves. And for the most part, there's things become our definition of "the world" and often become even more focused in the most precious thing that the world has to offer us, our ideal mate. Ie relationship.

We must honor and recognize love. Knowing that we are able to act upon love in a variety of ways sets us free to do this, whereas understanding only one way, leaves us in a limiting situation which results in being driven and therefore dominated by the force of the drive.

There is no cold weather in the hearts of the beloveds, only the honoring of the manners which knows the power of our love that allows it to be free.

22. On the Nature of la ilaha illa 'llah - la ilaha illa 'llah begins by saying NO! Islam does not deny the NO!

As a matter of fact, a good way (and some say the only way) to know what IS God is to know what is not. So it seems that in order to know what is not, we must first experience it. From this we can conclude that in order to know truth, we must be able to distinguish it from falsehood. To distinguish reality, we must be able to identify illusion. In order to clearly distinguish the unconditional (Allah) we must be able to separate it from, and identify the origins of, the conditional (la ilaha). This is the purpose of life - to reach with certainty to the Unconditional

Love of God. To understand, and live in, our true and permanent (baqa`) nature (fitra) (fitratul baqa`i) we must be able to separate (fana`) from our attachment to the temporary (dunya), the overwhelming nature of which we must first experience, in order to have compassion for the ordeal of life.

To understand how our desire for love is at the root of our compulsive behavior, we must explore the nature and origins of compulsion, of being driven, (nafsil amarra) and here compare "drivenness" to "competing with a ghost". And we must distinguish clearly between the desire (by means of conditioning) for physical love and the feeling (by means of knowledge) of spiritual love. This will require investigating, identifying and separating from the feelings of parental love (self-approval) in order to clearly to know and feel Unconditional Divine Love. We must also explore the origins of self-approval and self-punishment since they are hugely influential, if not the defining factors, in our feelings of love and hate (self-love and self-hatred).

To help us on this way, we can understand that most of the "love" we've experienced has been physical, and therefore in the hands and control of someone other than ourselves. Therefore, subconsciously, we are all seeking ('love' in the form of) approval (from 'another' - someone else). And, we are attributing it to Allah, confusing the pure and unconditional love (of Allah) with the temporary and conditional love (from the self). "This is from Allah! That is from Allah!" It's not that this is not all true, but it's our attributing that creates the falsehood.

Whenever we "attribute" something to Allah we are doing (at least) two things. One, we are positing ourselves (as the attributers and knowers), thereby creating and affirming a separation (spiritual arrogance), and two, we are ignoring surrender by stepping out of the Unity (Islam, Surrender to Allah), to enter and indulge in duality.

CHAPTER SIX

UNITY

23. The True Meaning of Tawhid (Unity) and the Work of the Sufi

24. The Important Role of Sufism in Islam

25. The Transformation of Sin into Blessing

26. Converting Submission to Surrender

27. Smashing the idols of self in the Ka`aba of the Heart

28. The Jihad al-Akbar - The Islamic Struggle - purifying our hearts and overcoming disbelief

We all have golden hearts. In our hearts is the throne of God. How can we come to ascertain the reality of that? How can we, do we even want to, overcome the part of us that denies our own divinity? And if we do not want to, what IS motivating us if not God directly. We say that we should pray only to God directly. What is it that keeps us from receiving the answer to our prayers. Is it our "Knowledge" do we "know" that we are not motivated by God directly? Then what part of us "knows" that? Is that part desirable? Is it to be listened to? Obeyed? The part that tells us that we are separate from God but must pray to him to become unified with Him in the next life> but that we are not unified with him in this life. What then are we unified with if not God? It can only be Illusion - the very deception for freedom from which we are praying. What is religion (Islam - Christianity - Judaism - Buddhism - Taoism, etc.) if not a pathway to realization. God is more than a mental exercise. The purpose of the pathway of Islam is to overcome disbelief (Arabic: kufr, psychology: denial) so that faith may enter our hearts.. The prophet himself said that Islam (surrender) was only the first step on the pathway to perfection. the second step is "Iman" - learning and accepting the truth, and the "greater holy war" is smashing the idols of the self that attempt to stand in the way of having a pure faith in a clean heart.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SURRENDER WORKS - BUT NOW WHAT?

29. Surrender to the Real - Haqiqat.

Modern psycho-spiritual self-investigation, now referred to as the "Work", considers itself to be "spiritual" because it properly incorporates the physical reality of the spiritual truth into its goal of knowing reality, or personal healing. But from the standpoint of true spirituality, this is merely the correct method of "growing up". It is coming to know the Reality, the Truth. And one must, in order to attain to this realization of the reality of it all, go through the "spiritual" station of the void, or the annihilation of the ego-supporting illusions and therefore the ego-concept of separation and self-identity.

A lofty and noble goal, this is still and nonetheless merely the realization of fundamental existential truth, a simple and basic Buddhism, and does not comprehend (by choice) the realities of the 'revealed religions'.

The choice to continue is still a choice. And what does it mean to continue.

Islam needs some realized people.

True spirituality begins with the revelation of Allah to whom he chooses

30. On the Value of Knowing Ourselves

We all have the deep yearning to know ourselves. This yearning exists because it is God's purpose through His creation to manifest Himself. We are created for this purpose. Whether or not this seed, our innate desire for deep knowing, grows to fruition depends upon our individual inclination to listen to it. and nurture it. This is your voice. It is also the Voice of God. We have all heard it but our minds are unprepared or distracted so we don't know what to do with it or we feel ashamed of it due to the influences of peer pressure (often parental) upon us. Very few of us come to know that it is our true calling and our fountain of healing and fewer yet seek to discover the way to know it fully. Fortunately for us, the Sufis have gone before us and have discovered the way to successfully realize the blessing of their existence.

Sufism is the time honored and proven way to understand the psychology of the self through the knowledge of God.

31. Overcoming Disbelief

The purpose of the pathway of Islam is to overcome disbelief (Arabic: kufr; Psychology: Denial) Refusal to accept the experience of another as your own. We will accept the suffering but not the enlightenment. This is extreme repressed guilt and is exactly the same as the Christian with their theory of original sin, that we were created for hell except for those that believe. (as we do). How pathetic.

The purpose of surrendering to the practices of religion is to overcome disbelief.

When the desert Arabs came to him professing faith and saying that they were believers, the prophet was told to tell them "Say not that you are believers (Mu`min), but that you are Muslim (surrendered)". For faith hath not yet entered their hearts." (Qur`an)

How is it that these modern muslims, who are in reality no more that pretentiously educated desert Arabs, with no real experience except what their fathers taught them and what they learned in the modernist Islamic educational institutions, can pretend to be so authoritative at such a young age, while the preponderance of their argument is based upon negating what is "NOT" Islam. And the simplicity of their definition of what IS Islam defies all understanding.

They have absolutely no manners and deny the necessity for manners. They have absolutely no understanding and deny the necessity for understanding. They have no compassion and deny the necessity for compassion. They have no love in their hearts for themselves, for others, or for God, yet they profess their love for God, in the same breath with which they deny the existence of God's love for the rest of humanity. Only them God loves but they show no signs of God's love to anyone who really knows. They keep their own company claiming to be the chosen ones of God, and indeed this is necessary because their company is so unpleasant that no real lover would choose to keep it even if they would let him, which they will not.

32. The Problem of Accepting Sufism

People of all religious persuasions have difficulty accepting the Sufi way as a valid Spiritual path. It's strange how we as human beings tend to stick with what we have. We cling in a strange, almost wounded way, to that which feels secure to us. Healing the wounded child in us all is such a great common ground. It is my premise that if we can turn her attention to her lost baby brother, the truly "divine" child, which might indeed be the true source of her grief, she will be happy again.

33. Discovering the Heart of Gold

It is only by keeping company with and listening to the prayers of saints that we can experience the higher truths of God, enhance, confirm and certify our experience of divinity. They are securely established in the reality of God, by Him, as are we but they have been there longer. How can we come to know these things on our own, and why should we want to when there is such amazing and informative company to be kept?

How can the mind know the beauty of a golden heart when its very existence veils it.

34. The Way of Compassionate Return

The sinner could be easily forgiven, and taught correctly, but he must come out of hiding in order to receive fully the forgiveness. As long as he stays in hiding - and mind you, it is not always intentional - defended and concealed by an invisible or transparent super-ego (which is often mistaken, understandably, for the Guidance or Voice of God), he continues to be, in actuality and self-image, a sinner. He will continue to think bad of himself and allow himself to be defended. His super-ego will lie to him about his sinfulness, keeping it from him and keeping him in it; hiding it and telling him that he's a good boy; continuing to teach him ways to conceal himself from others and to get along in society. And by such means the superego justifies its own existence. The main creed of the superego is, "as long as you do what I tell you, you (I) will be alright." This is, in effect, teaching him the rudiments of self-deception upon which he constructs his personality, an effective mask.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE SAINT AND THE SINNER - IDENTIFYING THE SUPER-EGO

35. Ego, Super-Ego and Id

36. The Origins of Ego and the Search for Power

37. Super-Ego

38. Understanding the Origins of the Super-Ego

Indeed, the acts of the originator of the super ego, usually a parent or both, are doing so in their own attempt to be God (Good), and this comes from their own separation and its resulting need to feel safe. This could be explored one step further, comparing their need to feel safe with a parallel of their forgotten and disenfranchised soul's desire to Return to God.

The identity, or the entity, of the superego has all the qualities of a divine manifestation. He's Invisible, He speaks (what seem to be) divine commandments, He offer salvation for obedience and a solid taste of hell if you do not. Even if its authors are dead and gone, or no longer present, the feelings of the fear of punishment reside and rise up upon the approach of doing anything 'wrong'. This could easily be mistaken for conscience.

39. Identifying and Purging the Influences of Shame and Guilt

40. Killing the Giant - Jack and the Beanstalk

It's not the sinner who is the problem. It's the one who hides him, the defender is the one who conceals the sinner out of his own shame. The boy (sinner) learns to fear the punishment (from his mom) that awaits him if he comes out of hiding. He learns how to take on the act of concealment for himself, in effect becoming (pretending to be) a Saint (in his interpretation of the eyes of another), at the behest, and for the pleasure, of his super-ego, which at that point becomes identified with God. Both in reality and in his mind.

BOOK II

THE SUNRISE IN THE WEST

SPIRITUAL HEALING & WESTERN PSYCHOLOGY -
THE TRANSFORMATION OF HUMAN UNDERSTANDING
IN THE WEST

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SURRENDER

The Sufi Approach to Learning and Teaching Islam

We all have the deep yearning to know ourselves. This yearning exists because it is God's purpose through His creation to manifest Himself. We are created for this purpose. Whether or not this seed, our innate desire for deep knowing, grows to fruition depends upon the strength of our individual inclination (called "Himmah", or "Willingness") to listen to it - and nurture it. This is your Voice. It is also the Voice of God. We have all heard it but our minds are unprepared or distracted so we don't know what to do with it or we feel ashamed of it due to the influences of peer pressure (often parental) upon us.

Very few of us come to know that it is our Truth calling, and the Fountain of our Healing, Wisdom and Guidance, and fewer yet seek to discover the way to know it fully. Fortunately for us who choose the search, the Sufis have gone before, have dived into the Revelation and discovered (and taught) the ways to successfully realize and actualize the blessings of this existence. And Sufism has now become a time honored and proven way to know and understand the Psychology of Self through Knowledge of God.

It is stated in the Holy Qur`an that "Religion in the Sight/Presence of God is Surrender." ("Inna Deena `inda 'llahi l-Islam.") The use of the word "submission" is popular among the people for whom the way is a matter of obligation and obedience. They take their rebellious self (a part of the 'nafs") seriously and feel as though, were they not compelled (by God) to submission, they might not do it. And grateful they are to God for impressing upon them the necessity for submission. For they do indeed see the rightness of their way.

But in the Sufi way, which was also taught by the Holy Prophet, Surrender is to Love, and the knowers have learned that Love is really all there is or can be. This is not mere meaningless fancy. This is the Knowledge the Source, which the seekers seek and the servants serve, and to Whom the Lovers simply Surrender.

The word "Islam" in Arabic, is the command form, from The Divine, to "come peacefully," (as little children, not kicking and screaming - for all that is unnecessary), in a word, to simply Surrender. Real Obedience to this command is our primary obligation, and the foundation of all success.

Real Surrender is in fact the first act of worship (and obedience) and the only true doorway to increase one's direct awareness of Divine Will. (The Holy Prophet said on more than one occasion, "I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate." And Ali was nothing if not a surrendered soul.) There is a direct relationship between awareness (true knowledge and Love of the Divine) and Surrender. The more one surrenders, the more one knows and loves, and the more one knows and loves, the more one surrenders. Such is the relationship between Lovers and the Beloved. It is only from the standpoint of this total Surrender to Divine Will that the inspirational, brilliant and Divine nature of the revealed Faith and Practices appears clearly, and can enter the heart in a peaceful and sublime manner.

This book could well be titled "the Psychology of Surrender", and it is completely in the context of this simple meaning that I will present the Sufi way of learning and teaching from Surrender as the "Psychology of Islam".

Religion, Surrender, Islam, is a very personal thing. "Inna deena `inda'llahi-l Islam." "Verily, Religion (Lit: "the right thing to do") in the Sight/Presence of God is Surrender". It is true that there are as many ways to know God as there are seekers, but it is also true that there is only one way for each seeker, and that is the "straight" way, or the "direct" way. And the first step is always Surrender.

Surrender, and the results thereof, is a deeply personal experience. It is not always easy and requires the deepest dedication and sincerity. It will quickly filter the true from the false, and show you where your choices are. That's why the mystics enjoy their solitude whenever they can find it. The secrets one discovers in true Surrender and contemplation of the Divine can only best be written about in the poetry of the Lovers of God, for it dearly does not fit into the teaching of practice.

It saddens my heart that the great majority of muslims in the world today do not understand and appreciate the Divine Reality of the word "Islam" and have relegated its explanation to volumes of books and therefore to a category in their minds. It is no longer a Divine experience, but has become a social phenomenon, a way of life, and rife with conformity issues and peer pressure. It is now a teaching to be studied and taught only from books and followed desperately at the peril of hellfire and with the hope of salvation, to be obeyed outwardly at the risk of at least social disapproval and at most severe physical punishment. And the "overseers" are numerous. It has become the playground of the "super-ego" which I strongly suspect is the "Shaytan" that the Prophet said most of us still carry within us.

Since the matters of the heart have been severely curtailed, personal situation and real understanding, let alone the concept of healing (which will be addressed at length later on) are no longer of serious concern. It is only the status of the judge and his supposed fearlessness in meting out what he believes, from his distorted third or fourth-hand education, to be the proper "Islamic" justice, that is now truly of concern. Truly the way of the heart has been lost to the majority of humanity, and no less so in any religion. And all the while our True Reality, HE, is closer to us than our jugular vein. What keeps us from experiencing His Reality? The Qur`an repeatedly mentions this Reality as being an inevitable and highly desirable event. It describes also the catastrophe that will occur if it is overlooked.

Also, as it is believed with all teachings, it is in the "best interest" of the students and teachers to make the teachings as simple as possible, to condense them, to "codify" them, as it were. This is by definition a "selective" process, and the quality and aim of the work depends entirely upon the purpose and intent, the "mindset", of the "teacher". And now even more so, with enough generations working on codification, it changes form and comes to be interpreted as a simple (but Divine) "obedience" program. It becomes, rather than the complete understanding of the liberation process that the Sufis understand it to be, a tool for the establishment of social order and the self in a competitive position of "authority" over others.

At this level it is only a shade more desirable than any other hierarchical religion, and maybe less, for it rapidly degenerates into a tool for the oppression and control of others, which is the basic aim of the lower "fearful" self. The oppressors take on a convenient "Who, me?" façade and claim that they are "only making peace". When indeed it is the worst kind of mischief, for it not only misuses and distorts the teaching and purpose of the Divine Revelation and oppresses

those who would surrender and learn, but it turns away the truly thoughtful and observant people and forces them to look elsewhere for knowledge.

The Prophet said (something to the effect) that he had in his heart two bodies of knowledge. One that he was commanded to deliver to the people and another for which, were he to reveal it, the people would seek his death. But he did not keep it secret, and passed it on to those who were close, and trusted. Hence the meaning of the ayat of Qur`an (in sura 56 "Al Waqī`a" - The Great Event), "wa Sabiquna Sabiqun", "and the near ones are truly near."

It is for this reason that I write this book. I wish to present to the thoughtful reader "The Other Essence" of the Divine teachings from our Beloved Master, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be Allah's Peace and Blessings. That we may know his, (and our own) Essential Character and enough of the convincing excerpts from the Holy Qur`an to make the reading of it in its entirety not only desirable, but the truly enjoyable experience that it is to the millions of Muslims all over this world. Granted, it is meant to be read in Arabic.

There is a well-known hadith in which the Prophet said, "By pious zealotry my back hath been broken." I will later explore the relationship in meaning between "overzealous" and "narrow-minded", as I feel it necessary to show the origins, signs, dangers, foolishness and disobedience of the very narrow-mindedness that is the hallmark of certain groups of "Islamic" fundamentalists. I make this comparison only to claim loudly and strongly that the kind of behavior that causes us to fear, and which keeps us away from any study or interest in Muslims and Muslim Culture, has nothing to do with the Holy Truth, nothing to do with the Holy Surrender (Islam), and nothing to do with exemplary Muslim behavior.

Muslims are commanded to teach with reasoning and kindness, and anyone who does that is a better Muslim than anyone who does not. The Prophet also said that the best man among us is the one who is kindest to his wife. So please, do not mistake the misdeeds of men for the teachings of the religion, even though they would have you believe that it is so.

There is also a very famous tradition that the "Last Day" will not arrive until the "Sun" has "Risen" in the "West". So I implore the readers and students of peace in Western Society, to BE the Sunrise in the West. Muslims of birth often say that the westerners converted to Islam have a degree of quality rarely to be found in the old country. And that was simply that they had accepted Islam as a matter of reasoning and choice, whereas those born into it did not have that option. Hopefully this new presentation of the realities of Islam as the way of Surrender to God will show the people of the West how really close we all are, and to be a source and new example to the people who believe differently. After all, the Muslims are emulating everything else the West has to offer, why not our healing psychology and our patterns of peace.

I also wish to point out that the cure for all the illnesses of the heart is in Surrender to Allah, the One Ever-transcendent Reality, and not in submission to minds that fear and seek to control. Surrender and control cannot exist together in one heart, and such is the cause of the hearts (and houses) divided.

Sufism is the study of Reality. It is known by the scholars as the "Depth Psychology" of Islam, and is, above all things, the study of the Knowledge of Self and the Human Situation. It therefore applies itself both in principle and in practice to all religions, and purports itself to be the essence of all religions and, necessarily, the point of all religions. Sufism (the unveiling of Soul Qualities

through study and practice of spiritual purification) claims to want, and to deliver, nothing less than a Face to Face knowing of the True Divine.

The word "Islam", in the context of this study, means Divine Surrender. Many people have tasted this Divine Surrender and in fact, life is a process of Divine Surrender. During the reading of this text, you may, at any time, simply interchange the two words, "Islam" and "Divine Surrender".

The basis for this understanding, which is a crucial breakaway from the more "orthodox" and accepted definitions, is a simple look at the Arabic grammar, in which it can be observed that "Islam" is the command form of the root word for "Peace", Salam. Islam is intended to be received as a command, from the Divine, through irrefutable revelation, to "Be Peaceful", or "Surrender", obedience to which brings nothing less than Everlasting Bliss. A person who surrenders or is surrendered is a "Muslim". Islam (Surrender) is considered, in the psychology of Islam, to be the first step toward the perfection of the innate human/Divine potential. The second and third (final) stages are referred to as "Iman", or the completion of faith into the heart, and Ihsan ("Most Beautiful"), the perfect reflection of balanced relationship between inward purity and outward behavior. We will go into the latter two stages in more detail later.

The Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be Allah's Peace and Blessings, informed us that Islam (Surrender) is the way of our innate nature, and that all children come into this world as Muslims. By this he means that they are born in a state of natural surrender to the will of the Divine, whatever that may be. Islam (Surrender) is emphatically referred to in the holy book (Qur'an) as the Natural Way, or "ad-Deen ul Fitrah".

All that is in the heavens and the earth is Surrendered to (is a manifestation of) the Will of the Divine. Mankind, on the other hand, is given a choice. We are offered the choice of living in a world of our own making (referred to as the world of illusion, the "hayyat ud-dunya"), complete with all its warning signs, or of seeking, by means of guidance and repulsion from illusion, the life in Reality, the "hayyat ul-`akhirah" (the last or final reality).

Annihilation (of the ego) into the Reality and Unity of the Divine Manifestation is (again) only a first stage of the spiritual journey that Islam (Surrender) offers us. As difficult as it may be to imagine and even more difficult to realize, the annihilated self, or Buddha Nature, is still considered the basic, fundamental, or "natural" state of being. And without a revelation from the Divine Author and Sustainer of the Unity in which we exist to guide us, it would be our permanent situation and final resting-place.

For many, this is enough. Yes it's true. Life IS Nirvana. And the Holy book (Qur'an) tells us "Kullu man alaiha Fan" all that exists in the on earth and in the life of this world is perishable, illusion, and in annihilation. And it's true. The soul is immortal, innately dwelling in the bliss of the Divine regardless of what the subjective perception may be feeling.

Fortunately however, for those of us for whom the life of experiencing everlasting bliss is not enough, Allah, in His Beneficence and Wisdom, has offered a way by means of which we may seek even more knowledge and closer proximity. To enter into a society of like-minded souls, and realize from the presence of even more elevated stations of being than our own. And that is the path that the truly devoted among Sufis and Muslims have chosen to follow.

The Sufi way is a unique cultivation and realization process developed by spiritual Masters using the knowledges revealed to them by The Divine through His Revelation, which was sent to humanity through all the prophets, and concluding with the Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be Allah's Peace and Blessings. The purpose of this Divine Revelation is to show people what they do not know, and to manifest a way to complete the perfection of surrender to the will of God-Allah. You might ask, "What could be more perfect than Surrender itself?" And I would reply, "Nothing is sweeter, but there is more. There is a life, to be lived in Surrender. There is more knowledge, more seeking, more self-exploration, and further wisdom to be gained and enjoyed."

The principles of this life in Surrender and of knowing the existence of Unity and the Qualities of God from within ourselves are revealed and supported completely in the Arabic Qur`an and the behavior and teachings of the Prophet. The Holy Book (Qur`an) is a huge body of Divine Knowledge the key to which is a real and truthful surrender. It is stated in one verse (ayat) that "None shall touch it (i.e. approach it's inner wisdom) except those who are (or would be) purified (of themselves and illusion).

Even though it is the fastest growing religion in the USA (and I dare say the world), Islam has not been popular in the west for a variety of reasons, some of which are true and valid and most of which are false and simply a result of the choice to remain dominated by illusion. Because the materialistic dream requires the focus of attention, psychology, therapies, self help courses and prosperity consciousness classes as well as a huge variety of so-called spiritual development classes, are motivated by the underlying and fundamental desire to change something in relation to something else. In most cases, to change one's perceived position relative to one's perceived dream. Real spiritual paths challenge seekers to question the validity of their dreams and their underlying motivations, and are therefore not popular. But there is a movement afoot- a "shift" happening.

Sufis believe in and study what is revealed to them, knowing that it is from their Lord, the Divine and Eternal, Creator of all worlds. And it is revealed to them that their God is One. Sufis believe that the Islamic revelation is truly from Allah (Divine Name for the One True God), and that it therefore leads to Allah. So it is from Allah to Allah, as are we. And because of that, this revelation is all that we need and have prayed for.

Part of that revelation is how to pray and what to pray for. And included in the instructions of how to pray, it is mentioned to ask for, with sincere intention to follow, a revelation that will be truly and irrefutably from Allah, and lead with certainty to Allah. Not only are we instructed by Divine Revelation to ask for Divine Revelation, we are told exactly how to ask for it. Divine revelation instructs us to say "Ihdinas-Siratul Mustaqim". "Guide us on the straight path" "Show us the guidance that leads infallibly to You" (and make it work for us). In that respect it can be said that there is only one path to God. It is the Straight Path, the one that works!

In Sufi parlance, this refers to the only way we can reach to know God. Straight in! This realization, the very first and absolutely requisite step of which is Surrender, IS the true religion. And all of the tools, revelations and guidance of outward religion are there only to help us on our way to God, and support us and assist us, in this life, in and through the resulting awarenesses. In

my opinion, it is a shame that the Islamic revelation, as a study and a teaching tool, is not taken more seriously by the new generation of spiritual teachers. And to that end, I write the following.

The Certainty of Annihilation

The meaning of the Last Day in Divine Revelation is that annihilation is certain. All that can be annihilated, will be. The force of annihilation is proportional to the strength of its resistance.

Islam necessitates inclusion of totality. It dictates it and insists on it. It is not meant to dominate but to educate. And particularly Arabs - educate them to acceptance and transcendence of everything, to know God and be served by the divinity of existence, to help and bring others to that (after realizing it first in oneself). Things are only the way we believe they are *because we believe they are*. Contemplation can change the way we think and that's why it's avoided so much. There is a lot of vested interest in the common belief structures.

It is the overlooking of this reality on the part of the Muslims that is (gratefully) incapacitating them, because the universe does not surrender to the immature. And causing people to seek God through other means (and to ignore and even hate Islam) does not work to the detriment of the people who seek and will find - since God is pure Love and freely available to all. It does however work very much to the detriment of the Muslims, who become, unintentionally, among those who repel others and thereby divert people from the knowledges of Islam. This is because they have lost the path (tariqa), the necessary path of the Sufi masters, and have become servants of the religion, which they hold in their minds to be correct and deem to be different from and superior to all others. It is for this reason that Sufism is the essential missing, overlooked and ignored ingredient in Islam. The true success of the Muslims depends upon it. For hatred, division and separation will never be tolerated by the God of Love and Mercy or by the people of love. And only in the acceptance of the Reality of Sufism, which is God himself, will the Muslims find the acceptance they so dearly desire from others. They accept the religion but deny the Reality of God. They accept Islam but reject the results.

In their fear of the world (immaturity) they seek to dominate/control it. This is not Surrender to the Will of God. This is the attempt to establish religious superiority and domination over others and it is the manifestation of fears from the lower self. The faith hath not yet entered their hearts.

Faith (Iman) is belief in God and his angels, his books and his messengers, and a final day (both personal and Universal). This latter part is essential to immediate realization of our transcendent nature, which realization is the root of true success in both the worlds.

The Tao = Gnosis = Pure Awareness

Learning is pursued through daily addition.

Tao is pursued through daily subtraction.

Keep on diminishing action.

When nothing is pursued through action,

Nothing remains undone.

To win the world one must renounce all.

If one still has one's own end to serve,

One will never be able to win the world.

On the process of cleansing the soul

The subconscious is all about the soul's escaping the superego. Super ego is the shaytan from which we all, like children, flee. Ego is the 'conscious', fleeing self-concept - that which is self-conscious. Subconscious is the retreating laughing soul-child who nevertheless harbors the fears, pains, traumas and negative emotions of childhood. These are called 'soul blemishes'. The 'blemishes' on the soul are the incorrect beliefs imposed by early environment. Life is the pul-sirat. Depression is spiritual hopelessness. The faith repletes/restores the energy of the spirit (life). Tasawwuf (Sufism) = Soul Cleansing. It is the maturation of the Soul as a mirror of the light of the Prophet, i.e. Allah. It is the corrective influences of love and guidance-essence, to fill the holes(?) when the blemish is removed. To replace the blemishes, or bad habits, with good.

Qutubiyyat

You cant really heal other until you have accepted and fully realized your own centrality in the sufi system because you need to be a pillar both for yourself and for your family, friends and clients.

People take energy, claim it was theirs all along, and run. That's why you must sell yours,. Trademark it. Put a title on it. Write a book and copyright it.

THE SHADOW REVOLT

The Shadow Revolt is the incessant insistence on the part of your soul for you wake up. Don't be deceived into thinking that the Shadow is somehow 'only' the negative, undesirable side of the human personality. It is way more than that. Remember, for there to be something deemed negative, there must also be that which does the deeming, and by its very nature deems itself positive. The Shadow, as a result of being 'deemed' negative, is also the repressed and buried aspects of ourselves. And since the personality is always the suppresser and self-oppressor, we might be safe to say that the repressed part of ourselves has a truer similarity to our real selves, our innate character, than the personality. The reason that it is considered a revolt is that it always shows itself in a way that is endless embarrassment to or against the will of the personality of the individual. And waking up is a bad thing in the mind of one who believes he is already awake.

WHAT IS "THE NAFS"?

The Nafs in the Way of Surrender

In the way of Surrender, the nafs is the soul in love that will do as it pleases, which will always be surrender, because it surrenders to Love. And its pleasures are the pleasures of Allah. Disbelief in Love is disbelief in Allah and the root cause of religious oppression. For Love is the Essence Quality of Allah by which all things function and upon which He sent His Prophets "No difference is there between them", as a "Mercy unto all the worlds" (Rahmatun lil `alameen). Love it is the only Quality in which true Surrender (Islam) can take place.

The Difficulty

And belief in love is no easy thing, even though we are surrounded by it. Belief in love implies accepting the battle against fear, and we were raised in fear. To make matters worse, the fear we

were raised in was called love, and we think of it as such. "Feels like love to me", says the battered wife who knew in her childhood only beatings from her father.

A further example is the fact that the Prophet was sent as a "Mercy unto all the worlds", and yet very few people (of any religion) truly follow him by means of that example. That is why the Sufis say that their religion is Love. For without Love there can be no Mercy. Without Mercy there can be no Forgiveness. Without Forgiveness there can be no Hope, and without Hope there can be no Salvation.

Let me explain.

The Mindset of Submission

The very salvation that fundamentalists (in all religions) believe they are seeking is the salvation of their (true) souls from the enslavement of "this life", referred to as the "hayyat ud-Dunya". Or "the life of this world." And they seek it by clinging firmly to a book and some traditional behavior patterns. That is why they believe (rightly) that they have to (live a good life and) die before they can see the realities of heaven. But in the Sufi view, life (in this world) was given to us so that we can truly fulfill our original intent, which is to know and glorify the Unity of God now, in this life.

In our view, it is not the life of this world that is enslaving us, and from which we seek freedom. It is the life of our "personal" worldview, the world of darkness and fear that we carry within our minds and hearts, the world in which there is no love, and against which we are thoroughly defended and always at war. That is truly "dunya". "Dunya" in this sense means darkness and illusion.

Now you might understand more fully what I mean when I say, "Without Love there can be no Mercy. Without Mercy there can be no Forgiveness. Without Forgiveness there can be no Hope, and without Hope there can be no Salvation."

But another aspect of the fundamentalist mindset is that they are resigned, yea more that resigned, to the blessings of this life, and in fervent expectation of more of the same in the next. What's more, for most of them, it's "only for them", because they "are" the true believers. And never will they seek death, the death of the ego that lives in them and perpetuates the illusions of individuality and separateness. Why would they want to seek liberation from a life the very living of which leads to paradise?

Again, Qur`an advises us say only "as-salama laka min as-hab il yamin", "And Peace be upon you, O companions of the right hand."

A Personal Warning to Extremists

BUT! Be sure that you are the companions of the right hand, and "Make not mischief in the land".

Millions have gone before you in peace. So why, then, do you not follow their example?

You avidly advocate and prefer the choice of following a different way which your choose to believe is the "right" way. Why is this? It's not even the way of the thirteen hundred years of "orthodox" Muslims who came and went before you. Nay, you call it even more right than the

way followed by the true people of peace before you. You even go so far as to say that they were wrong, and that you have it right, and better. Aha! An improvement you have made on the blessed religion of the Peace, the Mercy, and the Love. I see. You have taken out the Peace, and the Mercy, and the Love. You have turned Islam into a religion of conflict, competition and domination; of hatred (for others, whom you perceive as your enemy, when your true enemy lies within you); of lust (for the things of this world which you deny yourselves, fearing, that you will do harm with them or that they will in some way harm you); and of jealousy (for the ease with which others live their lives).

And it is to this religion that you seek to invite people, sincerely wondering why they choose not to accept it, and thinking badly of them for it, when all the while it is yourself you should be thinking badly of. But no. Instead you choose to think even more highly of yourselves, believing "We are the people of the right path, and few there are who will see it."

Qur`an speaks to this dilemma.

"And they say, 'Why, we are the peacemakers', when in reality there is naught but mischief in their hearts."

"And when the desert Arabs come to you (O Muhammad) saying 'we are believers', tell them 'say not we are believers (nahnu Mu`minun), but rather say we are surrendered. (nahnu Muslimun - Muslims)' For (the reality of) faith hath not yet entered into their hearts."

So, students you are, professing arrogantly to be masters. You profess to be in the knowing of all there is to know solely because you hold a book in your hands the meaning and love of which is not in your hearts. And you preach, rather unsuccessfully, I might add, your religion only to the choir of people who believe as you believe. Thank God that you are not successful, for given your way, you would gladly oppress the people and turn to slaughter in the name of religion. Look what's taking place in Afghanistan at the hand of the Taliban (which means, by the way, "students".)

Back to the Problem

Disbelief in love causes the religion of (self-) oppression, in which the word Islam is translated as submission, and the threats of punishment and promises of reward are emphasized. In the philosophy of submission, which is equivalent to domination, the nafs is considered to be the soul in revolt, and it must always be controlled, and trained to obey. These people feel that they are using the enlightenment of their knowledge to control their commanding nafs (nafs al amarra) when in fact it is just the other way around. A mere questioning of their belief system is sufficient to raise their ire, which is a sure sign that they do not want the underlying validity of their 'religion', their form of self-control, to be challenged. This raises the question of "who is really in control here", for their control is controlled by that which they are always seeking to control. This opens for consideration the possibility that the true commanding nafs is the one that's doing the controlling, - and the oppressing, and the repressing, and the censorship, and the saying no to, the denying and rejecting of anything contradictory to its own understanding. How far away is that from enlightenment.

These reactions are all dominant qualities of the lowest self in the stages of development, the 'nafs al amarra'. And it is well known that without getting to at least the second stage, referred to in Sufism as the 'nafs al lawamma', and in psychology as the questioning self, where the ability

to self-investigate and to question the need for unwavering conviction is introduced, no progress into true self-understanding can be made.

They have it already. Just ask them. It's all in the book and the traditions. Nor do they seek or want to undertake the path of self-development and personal progress. Firm in their belief that they have the right path in their hands, they condemn all else to the fire as innovation. Convinced that the way to the garden lies within the confines of what they already know, in their own minds, they are steadfast in their rejection and denial that there is anything more. How can you help such people?

The desire for progress is called Himma. It is a highly desirable commodity in Sufi circles and considered the only necessary ingredient for success. Volumes have been written and said in praise of the search for this one quality.

Enter the Superego and the Roots of Dualist Thinking

But the Himma of the fundamentalist has been cut out at the roots by religious training. Their superego is convinced of the superiority of its own belief (and why not? It's the Qur`an and the example of the Prophet, is it not?), disallowing contradiction and admitting only to like company. A perfect "one" in Enneagram study. And this is in spite of the fact that the Prophet stated emphatically that no one would enter the garden by virtue of his deeds, but only by the Mercy of Allah (which He bestows upon all beings equally).

This is however the root cause of dualist thinking. And in this "dualist" thinking, it is the shadow that is considered to be the nafs al amarra, and suppressing it is desired. More than that, it is considered to be a religious obligation. It is the consciousness of personality that is considered to be the soul, and enlightened, by the grace of God, to the way of Islam. That is why the battle against the nafs - the "Jihad al-Akbar" (in all but the deepest knowing), is considered to be the battle against the soul.

The Sunrise in the West

This is in sharp contrast to the ideas proven by modern understandings of the true psychology of spiritual transformation, and substantiated by the deep Sufis. Called "The Work", in Western parlance, the "Jihad al Akbar", or "Greater Struggle", is considered to be the effort expended toward the clearing of the very personality consciousness itself from all concept of duality, with the intention of eliminating all sources of resentment, hostility or repression that the personality consciousness might have against the soul. This leads to recognizing its very existence to be a defense mechanism and the source of defensiveness and hostility consciousness, and results in the cleansing of the soul (through total reliance upon God - which is what He wants from us) from any need for the defensive personality at all. Sufism is often referred to in Arabic as "Tasawwuf", Soul Cleansing, or Purification of the Soul. Such is the way of Surrender, or "Islam" which, due to the esoterics of Unity, as I have explained elsewhere, can only be completed at the hand of a True Guide in the Sufi way.

More on the mindset of Submission

As you might notice, these intentions are at cross-purpose. In the attitude of duality, the intention is to eliminate, control or subdue its perceived enemy, and in the attitude of Surrender the intention is to surrender, and to eliminate the perception of enmity. The people of the latter disappear, or go into hiding, and the people of the former continue to struggle with their illusion

of success or failure in their attempt to dominate. Yet their enemy is always illusive. Like a shadow. You might say, they are shadow boxers. Competing with a ghost.

And even though they lay the heavy claim to being "the" Muwahids (Unifiers), they are nevertheless still among the people of separation and division.

In other words - the conscious mind of the established religious or self-satisfied personality, considering itself to be on the right path to salvation, does not want to hear anything to do with the concept of liberating the soul. For as far as he is concerned, that is the exact antithesis of his purpose and religious dedication. He is convinced that that which is within him is the "nafs", which wishes to do things in its own way, and which way would cause him to fall outside of the pale of his religion or chosen path. Such departure would "condemn" him to a lifetime of "happiness" in this world but send him (considering his ego to be his soul) to his damnation in the next.

This is the result of not understanding the true nature and Divine purpose of Surrender, that it is infallibly the true religion, putting one in touch with the direct and palpable Love of God, that will never end and will shine out for all to see, desire and strive for. And it is, in reality, exactly like that. That's why the standing motto of the Sufi Master is "Your worst fears are my heart's greatest desires."

We must realize the implications of that truth before we set foot on this path. For it means the voluntary death and destruction of all that we believe is us. The ego fears for its own survival, both in this world, and, considering itself to be its own soul, in the next. And indeed, what it fears is exactly what happens. It fears its own death, which is inevitable anyway. But, it thinks and believes (rightly), that if it is "good" in this life, that it will be resurrected in the next to continue on in a garden of its own delights.

There is no harm in this belief and in fact it is encouraged in the Qur`an and traditions of the Prophet. The harm enters when they carry this particular mindset too far, and rather than limiting their activities to inviting to themselves the people who are of like mind, they allow arrogance to guide them in their patent disrespect for and condemnation of other people and their beliefs.

The History of Islam is rich with examples of abuse of power, oppression and disregard for the beliefs of others, and nowhere so predominant as within their own religion. Inquire of anyone as to the history of Imam Ali and his descendants, who are the blessed and holy progeny of the Prophet of Love and Mercy, who brought down the blessing of the way of Surrender for all the world to know, behold and love. He and his descendants were both persecuted (and murdered) in their lives and actually cursed on the pulpits of the Friday prayers by order of the self-believing caliphs of the ruling houses for one thousand months. And the carry-over from those days is still to be found. Such is the will of the self that refuses to admit that there is more to life than what they see. There is no arguing with these people. Wish them peace and they will leave you alone to your "wanderings".

To a reasonable mind, however, the true scenario appears to be quite the opposite. And indeed it is.

The soul knows that if the body does not wake up soon, it is headed for its own grave without ever having tasted the beauty of the reality. In one analogy, it is said that the body will not know

that it is dead when it dies, and this is a bad thing. It will not have tasted truth and will not be prepared. It will continue to relate as though nothing were different except that all efforts and perceived realities will be even more frustrating than they were in the former life. It is said that the blinded by this life shall be blinded by it in the next.

The reason for that is that this life was given and is the necessary vehicle for waking up. Without it, there is no means to learn what it is we were sent here to learn.

In many cultures the "shadow" is treated like a child in order for the "adult's" mind to comprehend and "deal with" its insistence. It is sometimes referred to as the soul child. But it knows, for it has not lost connection with its Essence. The Shadow Knows. It is also often referred to as our subconscious, or intuition.

Why is the Sunrise in the West

Because, the awareness of Reality is exactly the purpose of God's creation, and exactly the purpose of His revelation. His signs are in the Book, on the horizons, and in the selves. The people who reach this awareness through creation, are aware. And the people to whom the way to awareness was sent as a revelation choose, as always, to use it to the advantage of their lower perceived existential selves, and to ignore the higher purpose for which it was sent. They even consider it a part of their "religious duty" to condemn as heretics those who choose to use the revelation for its true intent. As a matter of fact, its true intent is a point of argument for those who would dispute and make differences.

Allah says very plainly in Qur`an that if the people to whom the message is delivered refuse to use it for its intended purpose, He will take it from them and give it to a people who will. And He says also in a hadith (religious tradition) that the last day will not come until the sun has risen in the West.

And that's why we simply say unto them, "and Peace be upon you, O companions of the right hand". (Qur`an).

THE PERSONAL REVOLUTION

Revealing the Authentic Self
Discovering the True Will
Understanding the Nature of Energy and True Success.

Tired of the incessant and revolting misbehavior through which the soul makes its presence known, western psychology has focused its attention upon the discovery of the real reasons and causes for human pain and suffering, and thereby joined the ranks of the dedicated religions and spiritual paths.

A PERFECT WORLD

On the Sufi view of Perfection as the Quality of God and the World as a Reflection of Self.

According to the Sufis, the world is but a reflection of how we see ourselves in it. It is, therefore, a reflection of how we see ourselves. Changing our views of ourselves can cause a radical shift in how we see ourselves in the world, which we often perceive as "how the world 'sees' us, or 'treats' us".

Changing our views of ourselves

When we 'know' God, even for a moment, we experience a radically different view of ourselves from that which we consider to be normal, or our 'reality'. And really, how we see ourselves, our opinion of ourselves, is a direct reflection of our opinion of God. So all the self-esteem classes in the world, if not based upon the knowing of a higher truth of God, are merely polishing the rotten apple, an attempt to perfect an illusion. It is the pretense that we have all adopted as our coping strategy to deal with the 'issues' that we have experienced to be important.

Take a look around. Support of the illusion that all is well is the currency of the realm. The more supportive of the illusion you are the more you are considered successful and loved by others, although we, for the most part, do not know who the 'others' are.

We have so engaged in the perfection of our pretense that it has usurped the position of our true identity and become a mockery, a mere imitation, of our true power. We have so wrapped ourselves in pretense that it takes a whole course of near-psychoanalytical treatment even to get us to admit to our pretenses, and, if we get that far, we're faced with a lifetime of spiritual practices to rediscover who we truly are. And most of us do not even care any more, having literally sacrificed our souls for a life in this illusory world which we insist upon making real-willingly burying, disguising and selling our truth and true being-ness for a paltry crust of bread.

So let's stop polishing the rotten apple. We are who we are. In God's sight, we are only who we really are. All else is pretense and foolishness. Surrender to God means surrendering to our true selves, not to whom we are pretending to be. It also means learning how to learn, and how to see the world as a reflection of ourselves.

Q. So how do we go about changing our views of ourselves in the world?

A. By changing and improving our opinion of God. And we go about that by keeping company with people who have a higher opinion. Now Sufis have a very high opinion of God. They are

renown throughout history and literature for their extremely high opinion of God, and the Sufi way of spiritual healing is becoming extremely popular in America.

ON THE BEAUTY OF THE SUNRISE IN THE WEST

"A Sign of the Approach of the Last Day will be that the Sun shall Rise in the West."
(Prophetic Tradition)

"Mine eyes have seen the Glory of the Sunrise in the West."
(Me)

And a truly beautiful sight it is. When I look into the light of that Sun, I see the Face of God, Smiling.

Literally from within the "belly of the beast", the Wisdom Teachings have taken Deep Root, and are now available to all who should seek them, in the language of the people. Free of the bias that the arrogant of any religion (having religion does not free you from arrogance, it is actually the means by which arrogance is discovered and transformed) might choose to put on it.

Surrender is a choice. Being born into a particular religion will not guarantee that the Essence of the religion is yours. No, quite the contrary. As many Muslims have so accurately stated, the westerners who discover and accept Islam on their own, after having seen the results and tasted the fruits of undisciplined liberty, are way ahead of the Muslims who were born into the faith.

For it is well known that the Faith is only yours if you choose it of your own free will, and this is not necessarily the case when it has been chosen for you. Even if they profess, as many do, that it is indeed their choice, or would be if they had had a choice, it still does not make it necessarily so. For when asked to investigate that part of themselves that remains suppressed by their "believing" egos, they will refuse, demonstrating visibly the fear that if they were to let that part of themselves out, there could very likely be a rebellion to deal with. They even admit that it is only thanks to the religion that their fathers taught them, that they are able to keep their "rebellious" nafs under control. But modern psychology and Sufis agree that this thinking necessarily represents only half a heart, and that the acceptance of God and the Faith of Islam based on such thinking is therefore only half-hearted.

And many, many Muslims will wholeheartedly agree. It is the claim of the Sufis, vehemently disavowed by the fundamentalist believers, that if you have been raised in this kind of "submission", you have probably not yet tasted the sweetness of Surrender. This is why in some Sufi circles it is stated that if you haven't a master for your guide, then Shaytan (the devil) is your guide. And my research into the similarity of superego and Shaytan will certainly lead on to that conclusion. The hidden attachments between father and son were so well-known in the earlier times that fathers would deliberately send their children to Sufi masters for the completion of their education and for their individuation.

But this is much the same as the fundamentalists of any religion, who believe with their minds in order to control the disbelief in their hearts. They firmly believe that somehow the soul is wicked and needs to be taught discipline and self control. This is not Surrender, and is instead, a form of submission, implying that is against the will of at least part of them. This represents a divided

self, or a self in conflict - a conflicted soul. Which they will readily admit, but see nothing wrong with that. And they believe, or want to believe, that there is no medicine for this conflict. No healing. And this is in large part due to the fact that incorporated within the religion that their fathers taught them was an avid disavowal of the possibilities for spiritual transformation that was relegated to Sufism. Just ask them and they will proudly tell you that it is shunned by everybody as not a part of the religion. Yet in the same breath they will admit that the Rasul (Prophet Muhammad) was sent as a Mercy and Healing unto all the worlds.

And now, in the Western Sunrise, the Light of the Divine shines once again, proving His Wisdom, and that He is indeed, "The Doer of Whatsoever He Pleases" "Fa`alan li maa Yureed". And this, in spite of the indignant protests of those who do not believe it and would claim that it can come from only one source, namely the one that they have (i.e. Qur`an and sunnah). But Allah IS the Source, He is the Manifestor of His Will and He manifests His truth in ALL of creation, and in EVERY heart.

THE VEIL OF UNITY

or

What to do with the Surrendered, Realized Self

Unity (Oneness) is one of the Qualities of Allah, and therefore necessarily of His Creation. It is not an easy thing to actually realize, and the learning process has three stages, the hearing of it, the witnessing of it, and the realization of being it. Western spiritual psychology has, in my opinion, definitely evolved into a certain pathway of ascertainment, a fourth "way", as it were, to reach clear discernment and Realization, Gnosis, Samadhi, Nirvana, etc. (i.e. basic human potential). There is no doubt in my mind that the Buddha is now thoroughly translated into English, and well worth studying. Yes folks, That IS our reality. Now let's show our gratitude to the Author of this reality. Allah asks us in Qur`an, "Who will loan to Allah the beautiful Loan?", and, "Who will choose themselves to be My true servants and helpers?"

But, for the realized among us, I propose that realization has a past tense, too. It is "Realized" So OK, now we are Realized. Yes, we are in and experiencing the Divine Unity of God. No doubt. But now what? And, in a sense, "So what?" In some circles, this is no big thing. It is totally accepted, and even a given. The question still remains of what to do with the Surrendered, Realized self.

There is still a variety of options. We can pursue our hobbies, our arts and crafts, our teaching, our professional lives, or spiritual lives. We can sit and dwell forever in Divine Glory, or we can come to the aid of Truth. We can get a grip and begin to decipher through the filters of our realized heart exactly what Allah is getting at with His Divine Revelation. What is the true Islam?

Now the scholars might look aghast that I've invited a bunch of "Non-Muslim" western "spiritualists" to think for themselves and come up with their own takes on the Revelation from the Divine which has already been studied and written about so much that there is surely no room at all for further opinion. But I disagree. One thing is sure. You're gonna think for yourselves anyway, and that's only as it should be.

One of the fascinating and truthful proofs of Divine Revelation is that it is always a Revelation, and never ceases to uplift the heart. Once it has been relegated to the mind, which unrealized minds are prone to do, it loses its revelatory quality. But to a Realized heart it is always new and always news. It must and should be studied and taught from the viewpoint of a Realized heart. Such is the spread of the true Sufi way. It is to this point that Allah's wisdom speaks by allowing the western spiritual mind to reach its own maturation in rejection of and without the resource and aid of the formal Islamic scholarship that the Sufis of old were so blessed to have. Which only goes to prove that Surrender is the Natural way. And that's in part due to the fact that the actual modern teaching of the subject of Islam has to a very great degree, and intentionally, excluded and overlooked the processes for the cultivation of a pure and knowing heart, choosing instead to focus on the prideful and competitive nature of the mind.

I agree, it's time that the teachings of the Divine Revelation were put into the light of the real, so to speak. The modern teaching of this revelation is and has been dominated by people who would seek to obscure its point of spiritual transformation simply because they don't want it like that and for the sake of worldly gain. And it has been distorted beyond all sensible recognition by those who seek through the machinations of their minds to enhance their egos and thereby improve upon the quality of their lives. And at the same time they exhort the believers to share their opinions and take their side in imaginary battles against the unknown "enemies" of Allah (God) and Islam (Surrender to God) and the "Islamic people". It's not that injustice does not exist nor should not be combated. But they would have our Surrender to God be surrendered to them. And they would choose to dictate the cause for which we would devote our energies. That's why, as you will discover, the people of this mindset are always waging war on the Sufis, who are their very conscience, and manifestly present only to help them discover their own truth, which they are convinced (isn't that the way of the ego) they (and sometimes exclusively they) already have³.

While all the while the true knowers know that the real enemy is within. The Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) told us often that the lesser war was only to defend the peace so that the greater war, that of our own spiritual realization, could be waged. And what's more, it is the people who are winning this greater war who stand the greater chance of being successful in the lesser war. (Take for example the Surrender of the truly superior martial arts masters.) It is becoming more and more obvious in the West that it is the ignorance of our inner qualities that is manifestly the cause of worldly suffering, and the healing movement of western spiritual psychology and ecology is gaining a powerful hold on the minds and imaginations of the people. In effect, the spiritual shift that we have all been predicting and that we have all been waiting and working for is actually happening. And even if not on the outside world, which, it is said, will always be there as a distraction and a test for those who would choose to follow it, it is most definitely real for the people who know that the world will be for them what their inner perception will make of it, and therefore a cleansing of the inner view is the key to success in all worlds.

³ This dominating element does not in anyway represent the majority of the Muslim consensus. This element is vehemently argued with and rejected by the three historically major sects of religious thought, i.e. the Sunnis, whom they claim to be and to represent, the Sufis, whom they revile as unbelievers and whose blood they seek to make lawful, and the Shi'a, who have always held to and defended the teaching of Muhammad's linear descendants. These three schools are not only in peace and in agreement with each other but they are unanimous in their voice that this dominating element is no true representation of either themselves or the Islam (way of Surrender) that the Prophet taught and to which they vigorously adhere. Which is the religion of the Surrender to God, the study of the reality teachings, and the practices of piety and the manifestation of peace, love and harmony in life.

The Islamic revelation takes knowledge into a whole new realm. It has not been very popular with the growing body of western "realization experts" (said respectfully). It is amazing the number of truly valid spiritual teachers that have no real knowledge of even the fundamentals of the world's third largest religion and the fastest growing faith in the United states, if not the world, by far.

If the "spiritual teachers" of the world deliberately avoid mention of Islam, it can mean a variety of things.

1. They are in fact discounting it as a viable option,
2. They are simply not mentioning it because they feel that they have the essence of it and the essence is all that they or their students need.
3. They humbly admit to having no knowledge of the subject and therefore decline to bring it up.
4. They are frightened to death of it and doing everything they can to avoid any conflict or confrontation with it or any of the people who espouse it in ways that they cannot handle. (Such as challenging, adamant, undeniably factual, logical and reasonable, etc.
- 5.

The Sufis themselves are reluctant to mention it, knowing rightly that it is the Divine Himself who turns His Hearts to the Islamic revelation. And many of these teachers would not know what to do with it. Let's address some of the more common fears.

They fear obligation.

They fear punishment.

They fear paternalism.

They fear commitment to preaching.

They fear association with Islam

They fear the company of Muslims.

They fear conflict, politics and war.

They fear inability to fulfill "requirements".

They have a dislike for and feel it unnecessary to obey "rules"

They fear judgement. Divine or otherwise, judging or being judged.

For these and many more reason, Islam the religion, Islam the body of truthful knowledge from the God in whom we all believe, Islam the Divinely Revealed Pathway to spiritual and social harmony on earth and in heaven, is ignored, overlooked, cast aside, discharged, disparaged, mocked, jeered and laughed at (respectfully, of course).

And why? Is it all because of the media exploitation of the worst characteristics of some of the most juvenile people (always the ones who attract attention) from within the cultures of the countries of this faith? Not completely.

By trying to turn the emphasis of the word Islam toward representing a body of knowledge and its interpretation, worldly powers seek to gain control by claiming to be the "guardians" and "keepers" of that knowledge, called the true faith. When in truth, the real translation of the Ayat "Inna Deena `inda 'llahi l Islam" means "surely, true religion in the sight of God is Surrender. It is this very surrender that is the subject of all the great spiritual teachers of all times and for all people, and in all languages.

It is this very Surrender that is the beginning of true spiritual awareness, and is being taught by the discoverers and founders of western "Spiritual Psychology." In the sight of Allah, this is indeed the true religion, and the beginning of the oft-foretold "Sunrise in the West".

As a westerner steeped for ages in the society and culture of deep spiritual search through belief in and devout following of the Islamic teachings in their absolutely highest and purest form and intention, I can claim my realization to be as real as anyone's, and in that realization I can find only a very few, not even a handful of people who share this understanding with me from within the world of the "Islam" that is dominating (literally) the cultures of the world, and cannot blame the western seekers at all for their rejection of Islam as a pathway to deeper realization, except for the Sufis. I can also state categorically that I identify wholeheartedly with the deep and intensive efforts of the students and followers of western spiritual psychology, and agree that they have discovered the secret and are on the right path. What this means to me, in "Islamic" parlance, is that Allah, as He promised in Qur`an that He would, has taken the "Gift" of surrender away from a people for whom it was intended, except for a few, and given it to another folk entirely, who will cherish it as it was meant to be cherished. (hadith). "for they have not been true to their souls".

They have made light of the religion (the way of the truly surrendered) and taken it for mere sport and play, yet woe unto them who take Allah's gift (of life) and barter with it for the life in this world. They seek to use the way of Allah to gain the paltry things of the life in the world, even though they claim the opposite with their mouths, their deeds speak out against them.

Surrender is the key to the heart and the heart is the keeper of the soul and the soul is from the command of God. And deep within the heart of every soul there is a Secret. The Secret is the portal to the Love of God which keeps the heart created and sustained. And within this secret Love there is something hidden, (the realm of angelic and spiritual form, the realm of creational knowledges), and within that something most hidden, and it is nothing less than the throne of the Divine Almighty One itself. (hadith). This is a very subtle thing in perception although powerful in its reality. Even though it sustains us, access to it's perception is denied to all but the extremely purified (through excessive effort and devotion to the prescribed practices.)

Realization is but the first step on this pathway (should you choose to accept it). And there are still living spiritual masters who can guide the seeking student through the pitfalls of the self and the maze of illusions to be found upon the way. This is why the Sufi seekers cling to the guidance of their living master and are loathe to claim mastery for themselves. For in the knowledge of the Sufis, there is always one who is the recognized master of the masters, to whom all other "masters" defer (and thereby secure and enhance their own mastery). It is also know that the "masters" who do not continue their search for the one leader of the Sufis, are in that claiming that they have all that they need and need not search any further. Their branch is referred to as dead, for although they have the illusion of God in His Unity of the world and life, they have not (deemed it unnecessary, in their own opinion) continued their search, and are therefore devoid of the Longing which keeps one on the pathway to Allah and keeps the unending pathway of Allah coming to them. For "Allah hears those who praise Him." (and don't stop their search and supplication, which is, in subtle effect, praising themselves.

(to be completed...)

misc. notes

There's another ayat of Qur`an that is completely misleadingly interpreted.
"Ar- ruh min `amri'llah." The Soul is from the Command of the One (God-Allah)

(Islam in this case meaning the acceptance of the Existence of a God capable of manifesting His Will and of giving Man the choice to accept it)

Use of the word "Islam" (Surrender) in a further degree goes on to imply the acceptance of the Existence of a God capable of manifesting His Will and of giving Man the choice to accept it.
Iman (faith)

In this respect, use of the word "Islam" (Surrender) goes on to imply the acceptance of the Existence of a God capable of manifesting His Will and of giving Man the choice to accept it.

A FUTURE IN PEACE

Today I realized (as in truly got it) the essence of the Hadith in which it is stated that there is within the body a piece of flesh that when it is well the whole body is well, and that piece is the heart.

The heart is the knower of God, and in this writing I suggest the interchangeability of the words God and Good.

Without Self-Acceptance there can be no Joy, and without Joy there can be no Healing.

Because healing is based upon a continuous physical improvement, and without the willingness of the heart to let the body feel, this cannot happen.

So again, Surrender is the key to it all. With Surrender comes Acceptance of the whole of you - the good, bad, and the ugly, And such Acceptance eliminates the blockages to Good Feeling. And Good Feeling is the beginning of the Power of Healing.

We have to know that Everything is All Right, and that it's All Right, and that it's All Right, before we can begin to feel good about things and allow ourselves to feel good. And an addiction to feeling good is what heals. This is why keeping company with one who knows that everything is All Right and is gonna be alright is so precious. After a while in such company, your attitude and feelings will change.

It's all Right. It's Gonna BE All Right, and nothing can stop it from being All Right. Think about that. That's Faith, "and your faith shall set you free."

GLOSSARY

Needless to say there is much more to be said on all these topics, but this should do for a start. Please benefit from the work I've done on my website, too.

A'isha, (Radhiyya 'llahu anha -Allah's Grace be upon her) was the second wife of the Prophet whom he married some years after his first wife, Khadija, died. She was the daughter of one of the companions of the Prophet, Abu Bakr, (Radhiyya 'llahu anhu) and figures significantly in the Prophet's life and after.

Ahad one of the Names of Allah denoting His attribute of utter uniqueness and Singularity. Please read my brief article on this attribute at <http://www.geocities.com/reachnin/unique.html>

Fuqara` is plural of faqir, which is the singular noun of faqr, which means poverty. In Sufi terminology a faqir is one who recognizes his complete and total dependence upon Allah. The plural, fuqara`, in Sufi terms refers to the totally dependant followers of the Sufi shaykh. We, then are the fuqara` the dependent students, impoverished in our own right but enriched by the teachings, love and proximity of our Shaykh.

Hadith, literally 'report', tradition, specifically referring to the vast body of "hadith literature" that is to be had concerning the life and teachings of the holy Prophet. Considered by most to be the second most reliable source of truth. The first being the Qur`an itself.

Himmah - Literally in the strongest sense - yearning, longing. In a slightly weaker sense would be desire, openness, willingness. Considered to be above all else as the single most necessary quality to have for reaching the goal. Without it, nothing happens, with it, everything is possible. Often grouped by teachers along with Dhikr (remembrance), Fikr (contemplation, reflection) and Himmah.

Ka'bah, Kaaba, is not a regular mosque anyplace in the world. It is the Singular place of worship around which circumambulation never ceases for over fourteen hundred years. It is the center of the world, and a manifestation of its spiritual archetype directly above it and directly beneath the throne of God, around which the angel never cease circumambulation. It is the holy mosques in the center of Mecca in Saudi Arabia. It is the direction in which Muslims pray no matter where they are in the world. It was built first by Prophet Abraham and his son Isma`il, who is the father of the Arab peoples as Abraham's other son, Is-haq, is the father of the Hebrew people. Is-haq's son Yacub, (Jacob), is the father of the twelve sons after whom the twelve tribes of Isra`il were named. Yacub is the prophet purported to have changed his name to Isra`il.

Qibla - the direction in which we pray. The direction of the Ka`abah.

Samad - The Name of Allah denoting Himself as the Unwavering Support of all that He has created. Again, refer to the above article.

Shams - Sun - of Magnificent Splendor.

Shari-ah - Broad Way - Avenue, in contrast to tariqah, which means narrow path or trail. The Shari`ah of Islam is that vast body of knowledge that governs the personal and social behavior of Muslims. Tariqah is the narrow and intimate inner path that one chooses to follow for the sake of personal attainment.

Wahid - The Name of Allah referring to Himself as "The More-Than-All-Encompassing Oneness". . Arabic word for one (as in one, two, three).