

# III. The roots of the Muslim Brotherhood

by Robert Dreyfuss



The Muslim Brotherhood was created by London as the standard-bearer of an ancient, antireligious (pagan) heresy that has plagued Islam since the establishment of the Islamic community (*umma*) by the prophet Mohammed in the 7th century. Representing organized Islamic fundamentalism, the organization called the "Muslim Brotherhood" (*Ikhwan al-Muslimun* in Arabic) founded in 1929 by the British agent Hasan al-Banna, a Sufi mystic, today provides the umbrella under which a host of fundamentalist Sufi and Sunni—as well as radical Shiite—brotherhoods and societies flourish. Taken together, the generic Muslim Brotherhood does not really belong to Islam, but to the pre-Islamic barbarian cults of mother-goddess worship that prevailed in ancient Arabia.

However, as much as the peddlers of mythology might want us to believe that the Muslim Brotherhood—and even the existence of the Ayatollah Khomeini himself—represents a legitimate expression of a deeply rooted "sociological phenomenon," this is assuredly not the case. The Muslim Brotherhood could not exist today were it not for the fact that the more backward and epistemologically reactionary elements of Muslim culture were carefully cultivated by Orientalists of the British Oxford and Cambridge tradition. Far from being a real expression of Muslim history and culture, the parasitic *Ikhwan* is the result of patient organizing by London's Islamic-world intelligence agents typified by Arnold Toynbee, H. St.-J. B. Philby, T.E. Lawrence, E.G. Browne, and many, many others.

The deliberate cultivation of backwardness by an established oligarchy is nothing new. Within Islamic history, the great proponents of antiscientific doctrines, mysticism, and nominalism, such as the 9th century Al-Ashari and the 11th-century Al-Ghazali, were mere paid agents for the aristocrats of the caliphate and later kingdoms, who sought to quash the emerging rationalist tendency and its later magnificent expression in the work of the humanist geniuses Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Hasan ibn al-Sabbah. The irrationalist tendency within Islam was simply revived, during the 19th century and after, by the British. It was the British who sponsored the higher

education system in the Muslim world; the British who funded the publication of Islam's obscurantists; and the British who held learned conferences to proclaim the worth of a specifically "non-Western" type of "Muslim science." The British goal was to convince the Muslim world that its "true" culture was essentially backward and irrational. Key to this process was a century-long, British project to explain the decline of Islam; according to the London view, the decline and fall—and eventual domination of the Muslim world by the imperialist powers—was the result of an inherent weakness, or defect, within the "Muslim psyche."

As this article reveals, such premises were drummed into the heads of modern Muslim intellectuals by London's mafia of pseudo-Orientalists. To accomplish that, the British allied themselves with the region's remnants of the pre-Islamic cults.

These cults themselves are rooted in an even older tradition, that of the pagan cults of Greece, Persia, and the Roman Empire. The pre-Islamic Arabian cults of Allat, Uzza, and Manat are but copies of the more ancient cults of Isis and Osiris, Apollo, and the Magna Mater. As such, the Muslim Brotherhood properly belongs not to the world of religion but to the domain of evil mysticism, alchemy, black magic, sorcery, and witchcraft.

In more recent times, British Orientalists and Anglo-Jesuit intelligence specialists have seen fit to utilize the "black" traditions of Islam—its cults and mystery religions—as a vehicle for imposing backwardness at the time that the British empire began spreading into the Islamic world. Making use of alliances between Islamic obscurantists and mystical cults, on the one hand, and the European oligarchy's own Black Nobility that dated back centuries, the British Orientalists of the 19th century encouraged the growth and development of a succession of institutional cults that provided the basis for the establishment of the *Ikhwan* and its offspring. Great Britain and Europe's feudal orders and freemasonic societies had long maintained close links to antihumanist cults in the Muslim world. For London, the establishment of the Muslim Brotherhood as an arm of British Secret Intelligence Service was merely the result of taking

direct political command of the loose federation of cults and mystery religions in Islam that had lingered since the days of the early Sufis and Al-Ghazali.

Today, those cult networks are kept in place by the power of British and American intelligence, NATO, and the military power behind them. For instance, Iran: the Ayatollah Khomeini and thousands of mullahs that he commands—as many as 200,000, according to Iranian sources—represent an administrative command network that can mobilize a mass of chanting cultists at a moment's notice. But, standing behind Khomeini is the powerful apparatus of the former SAVAK, the Shah's secret police, many of whose top officials still command the secret police of Khomeini. Though apparently Islamic on the surface—which is a useful myth to mobilize the masses—underneath the Khomeini regime is a highly sophisticated, computerized military command center with direct lines to London and Washington.

### The heresy of Sufism

The foundation for the Muslim Brotherhood is the cult of Sufism.

At the beginning, Islam was founded as a city-building, world historical force that emerged in response to a profound collapse of civilization in the Near East. Following the unification of the Arabian tribes in the 7th century by the Prophet Mohammed, a renaissance of trade and commerce flourished and entire cities rose up out of the rubble of the decadent Byzantine and Persian empires. Whole sciences were developed by Islamic scholars, and major contributions that revolutionized music, mathematics, and technology were made in the centuries that followed. Under the leadership of Mohammed, and then a series of political-philosophical movements such as the Mutasilites, the Ismailis, and others, a Neoplatonic humanist movement emerged to build one of the world's most magnificent civilizations. The enemy of that achievement was the land-owning oligarchy and their paid agents within the priesthood, who constantly sought to mobilize the backward peasantry against the city-builders.

The anti-urban, mystical cultists were called Sufis.

According even to Sufi sources, Sufism dates back to pre-Islamic times. According to Professor Margaret Smith of Cambridge University, in her *The Way of the Mystics: The Early Christian Mystics and the Rise of the Sufis*, published in 1978 by Oxford University Press, there is a "relationship between the rise and development of a mystical element in Islam—that which we know as Sufism—and the mysticism which was already to be found within the Christian Church of the Near and the Middle East at the time when the Arab power established itself." Professor Smith, until her death a leading British cult specialist, explains that Sufism is the direct heir not only

of Christian mysticism or "the true Gnostic," but also of the "mystery-cults of the Greeks."

Other scholars have shown conclusively that Christian gnosticism—as a cult heresy within the early Church—is itself derived directly from the Oriental cults and mystery religions of the ancient East. The definitive work on this subject is *The Gnostic Religion* by Hans Jonas, who asserts that when the humanist armies of Alexander the Great swept through the Near East and Persia the devil-worshipping cults were ruthlessly suppressed and forced "underground." They sought outlets in the Hellenistic world in the form of Delphic eruptions of pseudo-Platonic movements that were merely disguised cults. "For the East, it is a time of preparation for its reemergence, comparable to a period of incubation," writes Jonas. "The spiritual monopoly of Greece caused the growth of an invisible East whose secret life formed an antagonistic undercurrent beneath the surface of the public Hellenistic civilization."

Eventually, reports Jonas, the "Eastern underground" emerged in the form of the gnostic cult that

## Jesuits praise 'Cult of Islam'

*The following extracts are taken from Social Compass, the quarterly publication of Belgium's Louvain University. The university itself, run by the Society of Jesus, maintains a Center for Contemporary Arab Studies headed by Bishara Khader, whose brother is the PLO representative in Brussels. The extracts printed below are taken from Vol. 25, No. 3-4, 1978, a special issue of Social Compass devoted to Islam and Society.*

*The article quoted is by Jacques Waardenburg of Holland, entitled "Official and Popular Religion in Islam." In the article, Waardenburg describes how the influence of pre-Islamic cult rituals has affected the Muslim religion by giving rise to "mystical brotherhoods and Muslim 'brotherhoods' and societies." He asserts explicitly that it was al-Ghazali who legitimized such cultism, and he crows that the lack of an official institutional organization—like the Papacy—has made Islam easy to subvert. That, he hints, was accomplished by the "fundamentalist reforms" of the 19th and 20th century; that is, by Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani.*

Ibn Taimiya (1263-1328 A.D.) combats what may be called "popular religion" among Muslims in his

“compounded everything—oriental mythologies, astrological doctrines, Iranian theology, elements of Jewish tradition, whether Biblical, rabbinical, or occult, Christian salvation-eschatology, Platonic terms and concepts.”

It is this eclectic religious tradition embodied in gnosticism that, after the foundation of Islam, resurfaced again in the form of Sufism. Modern Sufis pride themselves in the fact that many naive scholars have failed to identify the current out of which Sufism developed. In *The Sufis*, written by the Sufi Idris Shah, the author playfully cites the allegedly “undefinable” nature of Sufism:

According to one Persian scholar, Sufism is a Christian aberration. A professor at Oxford thinks that it is influenced by the Hindu Vedanta... An Arab-American professor speaks of it as a reaction against intellectualism in Islam. A professor of Semitic literature claims traces of Central Asian Shamanism.

And so on. How does Idris Shah define a Sufi? “A Sufi is a Sufi,” he writes.

But Idris Shah—himself a well-publicized fraud of some magnitude who is presently involved with the Muslim Brotherhood cult—cites Ishan Naiser, a Sufi, who then proceeds to identify the cult-like nature of Sufism as it spans all major religions:

I am the pagan; I worship at the altar of the Jew; I am the idol of the Yemenite, the actual temple of the fire-worshipper; the priest of the Magian; the inner reality of the cross-legged Brahmin meditating; the brush and the color of the artist; the suppressed, powerful personality of the scoffer. One does not supersede the other—when a flame is thrown into another flame they join at the point of “flameness.”

More to the point, Idris Shah elsewhere pinpoints the real nature of the Sufi cult. It is, he says correctly, a real synthesis of the mystical antirationalism of Al-Ghazali and the nominalist “realism” of the leading Muslim

time. He treats such popular religion as a kind of *id* (festival) in the widest sense of the word, at a time, in a place, or with a ritual which cannot be considered lawful according to the *shari'a* (religious law).

Like others before him, Ibn Taimiya explains the occurrence of such popular religion as borrowings from other religions than Islam, in particular from paganism as it existed before Islam in Arabia and elsewhere, and from Eastern Christianity with its rituals, feasts, and veneration of the saints... He is particularly vehement in his attacks on ideas and practices which had developed in Islam in connection with the belief in the intercession of one human being for another.

It is possible to classify the most striking *forms* of popular religion in the following way:

1. celebrations of *rites de passage*;
2. celebrations of the sequence of the seasons of nature and of the weeks, months, and years; ...
7. ways of life and ideas in explicitly religious groups (*tariqa's* or mystical brotherhoods, Muslim ‘brotherhoods’ and ‘societies.’); ...

Although such forms of popular Islam may sometimes constitute a sort of “underground” religion, in nearly all cases they have an important cultural and social structural function within the total life of the societies concerned...

The development of mysticism and the place of Sufi piety in Islam put the problem of popular Islam

in a wider framework. The origin of Sufism was quite “orthodox.” It started as the consistent application of religious norms contained in the Koran and the early *sunna*. By the end of the 12th century A.D., however, through the influence of al-Ghazali (1058-1111), it was incorporated, apart from the extreme mystical portions which were explicitly contradictory to official doctrine, within the mainstream of Islam...

We can even go further. From the point of view of history of religions it can be argued that historical Islam, as based on the specific faith of predicament of Mohammed and taking this as its ultimate norm, is largely a “popular” variant of more general religious notions which were current in the Near East in the sixth and seventh centuries A.D. ...

Many different kinds of popular Islam can grow and sometimes even proliferate... It was apparently the fundamentalist reforms, and in particular the reform movements of the 19th and 20th century, which intensified and rationalized, within the Islamic religion itself, the permanent tension between normative and popular Islam... It would seem that the interplay between the more or less fundamentalist reform movements, often supported by some *ulema*, on the one hand, with their call “back to true Islam!”, and the recapturing in due time by popular religion of its lost terrain on the others, with its appeal to satisfy certain religious needs, is one of the fundamental structures of this religion.

follower of Aristotle, Averroes. "Taken together, Ghazali's fragments and Averroes' Aristotelianism constituted a double Sufic current (action and reaction) which nurtured a Christendom wholly ignorant (as far as scholastics were concerned) of the initiating cause of both Ghazalism and Averrosim."

Idris Shah is an operative for British intelligence, presently living in London, where he is in the inside of a number of British projects to subvert the Islamic world, and he passes himself off as a serious student of Sufism and Islamic religion. The author of several kooky works—including the famous *Book of the Book*, a 250-page volume of blank pages—Shah is otherwise involved now in the Club of Rome.

But Idris Shah's identification of Al-Ghazali as the originator of the formal Sufi cult is quite precise. Though Al-Ghazali did not invent Sufism, it was Al-Ghazali who, in the 11th century, codified the various strands of mysticism and antirationalism that had sprouted within the Islamic world until his time. As a political agent for allied cult factions in Europe and with the Mongol army, Al-Ghazali fought against the philosophical genius of ibn-Sina and his heir, Hasan ibn al-Sabbah of the so-called Assassins.

Al-Ghazali is the author of the famous *Tababut al-Malasifah (Destruction of the Philosophers)*. Al-Ghazali argued that the world was essentially irrational, and that human reason could not be applied to understand the universe and to shape its development. Al-Ghazali's notion of God pictured Him not as a positive, creative force accessible to humanity, but as a remote, capricious—even arbitrary—master. Because Al-Ghazali declared that everything that occurs takes place at the specific command of an arbitrary God, he denied the existence of causality. Fire does not burn, said Al-Ghazali, but it is merely a coincidence that when one places one's hand in a flame God makes one's hand feel pain. Like Al-Ashari, the founder of the irrationalist school of Islam, Al-Ghazali believed that the universe is composed of innumerable atoms, each of which owes its very existence to the whim of God, who constantly destroyed and then recreated—at every moment—each atom in the entire universe.

In such a universe which is governed by no rules or natural law, then man's reason is useless, and the intellect becomes a dangerous faculty. For Al-Ghazali, like Aristotle, man is a creature of sense-perception alone, and man is a beastlike, grasping infantile creature incapable of divine reason.

Between the 11th and 14th centuries, the cult of Sufism grew alongside the influence of Al-Ghazali. During this period the vast majority of the Muslim humanist movement was crushed by the tide of reaction and orthodox theology. This was the period that is generally

referred to as the period of the "decline of Islamic civilization." More than any other single factor, it was the philosophy of Al-Ghazali and the Sufis that led to that collapse. The relationship between Al-Ghazali and the Sufis is said to be reflected even in etymological terms: The word *sufi* is derived from the Arabic *suf*, which means "wool," while the name Al-Ghazali means "the spinner," or one who works with wool.

### The Freemasonry connection

Although rooted in the early development of Sufi mysticism, the modern Muslim Brotherhood has its immediate antecedents in the 19th-century pan-Islamic movement and the secret societies and cult religions that were spawned beginning in the 1830s by Orientalists of Oxford and Cambridge.

For centuries, the European black nobility and the old British oligarchy has had a special perverse fascination with the "Orient." Because the ancient cults and mystery-religions first flourished there, in Egypt, Persia, and Babylon, the European oligarchy has eagerly sought to trace its roots to the Eastern "underground." As a result, a hundred different myths and cultist traditions concerning the Orient have come to obsess London's aristocrats, whose own secret societies have modeled their passwords, symbols, rites, and languages on the Zoroastrian, Manichaen, Isis-Osiris, occult Jewish, gnostic, and Hermetic traditions. At least three Oriental obsessions of this sort can be identified:

1. The dualist, Persian mythology originally associated with Zoroaster and the Manichaens, which, in the minds of the racist British elite has come to be synonymous with the Aryan racial-purity cult as the source of "pure" civilization that in the 19th century merged with the synthetic German Romantic tradition to forge the basis for the Nazi party ideology of Adolf Hitler.

2. The cultist identification with Jerusalem and with the Jerusalem temple as the symbol for the freemasonic cult, typified by the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, which served as a primary vehicle for the extension of British influences into the Middle East in the period after the Oxford Movement and the so-called Apostles.

3. The various Egyptian mythologies associated with the cults of Isis (and Apollo). This category includes the ancient mystical lore of Hermeticism. The demi-god Hermes, according to legend, was Hermes Trismegistus ("Thrice-Great"), who had three reincarnations—one in Egypt, one in Persia, and one in India—and thus came to embody the collected secret knowledge of forbidden technologies and science that had been the exclusive possession of each of those cultures.

*Coming soon: How the British created the Muslim Brotherhood.*