



THE ISLAM
IN AFRICA
INITIATIVE

THE HARVARD ISLAM IN AFRICA INITIATIVE

FIFTH CONFERENCE

APRIL 22-24, 2021

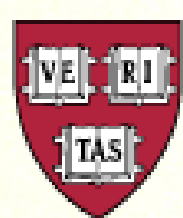
HARVARD DIVINITY SCHOOL

*The Fayḍa Tijāniyya Sufi Community in the Twenty-First Century:
A Major Articulation of Global Islam*

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With tens of millions of adherents worldwide, the Tijāniyya Sufi order is no doubt a major articulation of global Islam. It was born in North Africa, but its center of gravity shifted to West Africa in the course of the twentieth century, and, in the 21st century, it was carried by the African diaspora to the rest of the world. Very instrumental in this spread of the Tijāniyya is the action of the Senegalese leader Ibrahim Niasse and his followers. In 1930, Ibrahim Niasse claimed to be the bringer of the divine flood of Aḥmad al-Tijānī who would lead to the global spread of the Tijāniyya. His teachings have reached tens of millions of people worldwide.

Tijanīs have written considerably about the doctrine of their order in the last two centuries since the birth of the Tijāniyya, and many biographies of prominent Tijānī masters are available in Arabic. Yet the first monograph introducing this fascinating Sufi order to a Western audience was published as recently as 1965 (Jamil Abun-Nasr's *The Tijaniyya: A Sufi Order in the Modern World* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), a work which hardly told the entire story of the Tijaniyya. It took another twenty-five years for another thorough study of this Sufi order to appear (David Robinson and Jean-Louis Triaud's *La Tijaniyya: une confrérie musulmane à la conquête de l'Afrique*, Paris: Karthala, 2000).). This was mostly the work of historians and Islamicists, and focusing on the spread of the Tijāniyya from North Africa to Sub-Saharan Africa.

Since then, not only has the Tijāniyya spread to other continents, but the field of Tijānī studies has grown exponentially, attracting scholars from all the social sciences, including anthropologists, political scientists, religious studies specialists, musicologists, philologists, and more. Dozens of Master's theses and Ph.D. dissertations and hundreds of articles have been completed on the Tijāniyya in Western and African universities, and many works of Tijānī scholars in the Arabic language have been edited and published and/or translated into Western languages. Furthermore, the Tijāniyya has spread in South Africa, Western Europe, North America, and South Asia, where hundreds of Tijānī zāwiyas have been created in recent years. Tijānīs from West Africa in particular are constantly travelling between their countries of origin and those far regions to give lectures, initiate disciples, and connect with like-minded Muslims in a global Sufi campaign against opponents. Tijānī shaykhs have also re-appropriated the new technologies of information and communication to reach global audiences. Religious celebrations in West Africa are now attracting significant audiences from both within and outside the continent.

The international conference "The Fayḍa Tijāniyya in the Twenty-First Century: A Major Articulation of Global Islam" will address these new developments. Among questions that participants will answer, the following will be paramount: What contributions have West African scholars made to the articulation of Tijānī doctrines? How fast is the Tijāniyya—and especially the Fayḍa—spreading outside the African continent, particularly in Western Europe, North America, and South Asia? What impact is the translation into Western languages of major Tijānī works of West African scholars such as 'Umar Tāl and Ibrahim Niasse having on the reception of the Tijāniyya in the world? What are the new pilgrimage routes opened by the African diaspora that connect their host societies in the West and pilgrimage centers, especially Tijānī zāwiyas in Africa? What are the new legal forms of Tijānī Sufi associations?

Panelists in this conference will include scholars from various disciplines in the social sciences working on different regions of the world. It will also include some Tijānī practitioners. The conference will include a keynote speech and six panels, as well as a concert performed by three leading Fayḍa Tijāniyya singers.



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PANEL 1

APRIL 22, 2021

8:00 AM - 10:00 AM EASTERN TIME

EPISTEMOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF TIJĀNIYYA SUFISM

The Sources of Kitāb al-Rimāḥ in Focus: Late Mamluk/Early Ottoman Egyptian Scholars
Farah El-Sharif, Harvard University

Praise Poetry and Political Imagination: The Prophet and Divine Sovereignty
in the Construction of 'Umar Tall's Authority
Amir Syed, University of Pittsburg

The Epistemic Foundation of Tijāniyya in Quranic Verses of Dhikr:
Analysis of Shaykh Dahiru Bauchi's Commentary in Nigeria (1950s -2020)
Umar Tahir, Columbia University

The Zayd of the Fayḍa: Muḥammad Ibn al-Shaykh 'Abdullāh and His Compilations
Adnan Adrian Wood Smith, Harvard University

PANEL 2

APRIL 22, 2021

10:30 AM-12.30 PM EASTERN TIME

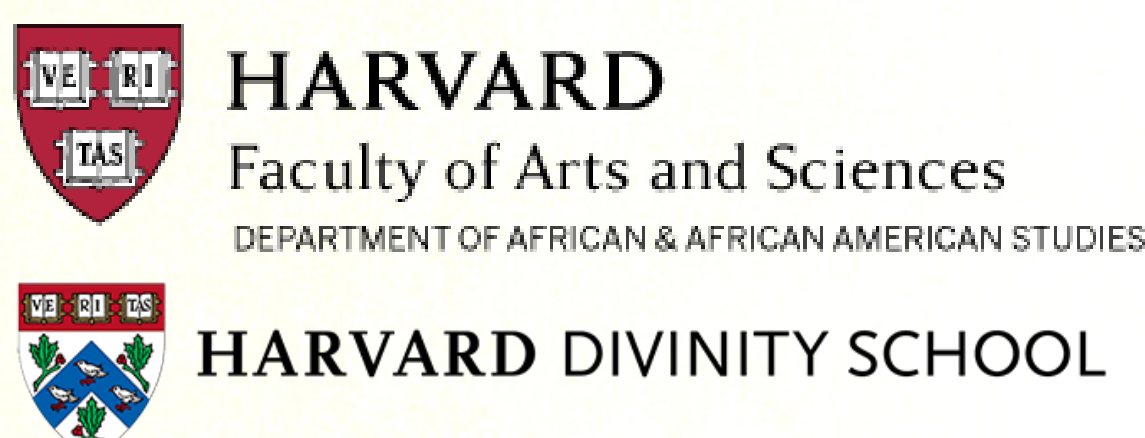
Shaykh Ibrahim's Intervention in Major Debates I

Debating the Need for a Spiritual Guide in the Contemporary
Tijāniyya: The Kāshif al-Ilbās
Zachary Wright, Northwestern University

The Jawāhir al-Rasā'il of Ibrahim Niase:
A Source for Understanding the Rise of the Fayḍa Tijāniyya
Sidi A. Niase, Senegalese Consulate Morocco

Soaring into New Horizons: Shaikh Ibrāhīm Inyās and the
Muḥammadan Reality (al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya)"
Abdul Latif Finch, University of Exeter

Al-Budūr al-Suṭṭa' Sharḥ al-Murhafāt al-Outṭa' (The Rising Moons:
A Commentary on the Sharpest Swords by Muhammad Niase),
Commentary on the Rejoinder to an Anti-Tijani Pamphlet of Ibn Mayaba
Ousmane Kane, Harvard University



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PANEL 3

APRIL 22, 2021

2:00 PM - 4:00 PM EASTERN TIME

SHAYKH IBRAHIM'S INTERVENTION IN MAJOR DEBATES II

The Theological Legacy of Sheikh Ibrahim Niasse and its Contemporaneity
The Example of "Sabil al-Salām fī Iḥqā' al-Maqām
Salim Niang, independent scholar, Dakar

All Muhammad, All the Time: The Poetic, Prophetic Cosmology
and Epistemology of Shaykh Ibrahim Niasse in Three Treatises and Poems
Oludamini Ogunnaike, University of Virginia

The diwans of Shaykh al-Islam al-Hajj Ibrahim Niasse:
A Detailed Introduction
Fakhruddin Owaisi, International Peace College, South Africa

Shaykh Ibrahim Niasse and the Political Philosophy of Global Islam: The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict as a
Case Study
Mohammed Darkhalil

PANEL 4

APRIL 23, 2021

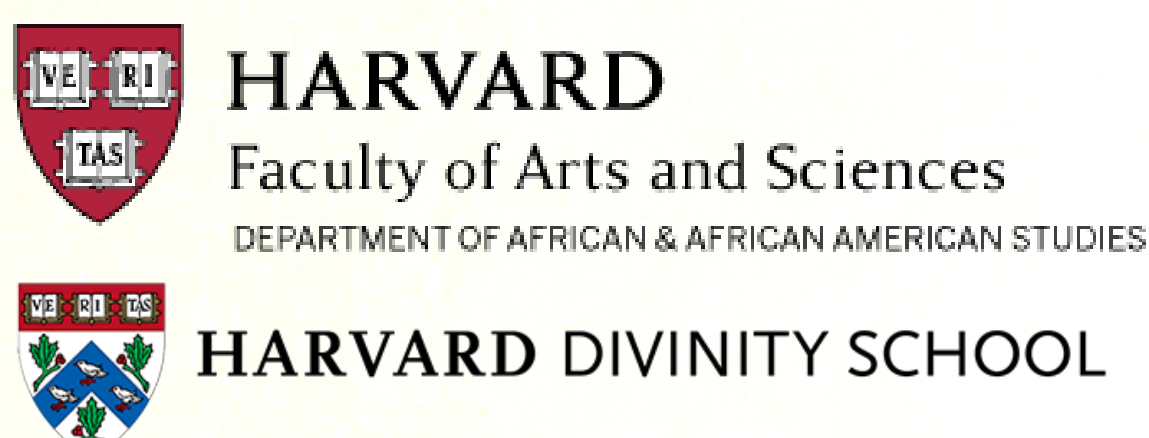
8:00 AM – 10:00 AM EASTERN TIME

GLOBAL SPREAD OF THE FAYḌA TĪJĀNIYYA I

The Metamorphosis of Leadership in the Faydah of Sheikh Ibrahim Niasse Cheikh
Abdoulaye Niang, UCAD

Introduction and Expansion of the Tijāniyya in South Asia with Special Reference to Kerala
Suhail Chitrath, Tijānī zāwiya of Kerala

The Sun Rises in the African West: New York City's Black American Tijānī Spiritual Seekers
Rasul Miller, University of California Irvine



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PANEL 5

APRIL 23, 2021
10:30 AM-12:30 PM EASTERN TIME
GLOBAL SPREAD OF THE FAYḌA TĪJĀNIYYA II

In the Floodplains: The Islamic Society for Spiritual Cultivation and its Tijānī Roots
Armaan Siddiqi, Harvard University

Tijānī Festivals in Europe
Ahmad Boukar Niang, Al-Najah Institute

The Flood in the South: The FayḌa of the Ṭarīqa Tijāniyya in South Africa
Muhammad Milanzi

Spiritual not Religious? Baraka Boys, the FayḌa, and Young Muslim Spiritual Practice in the West
Amadu Kunateh, Harvard University

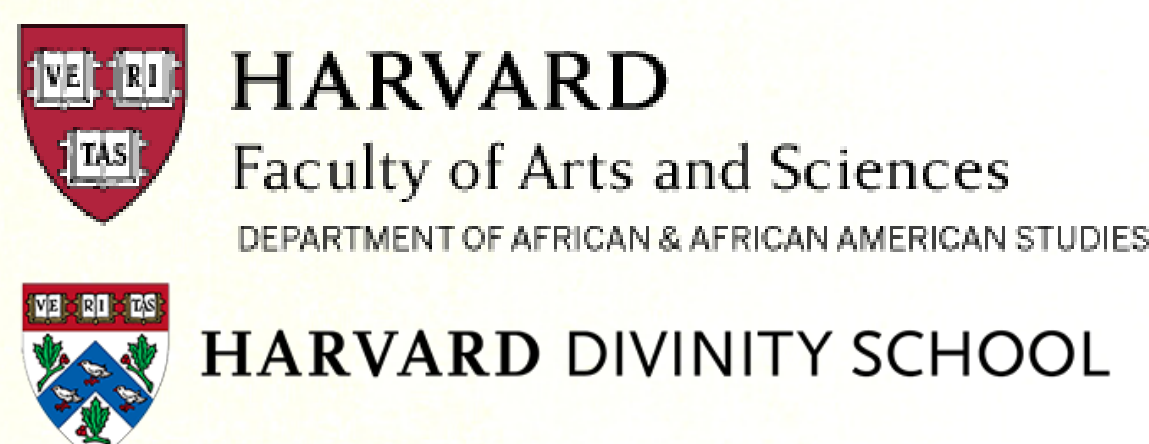
PANEL 6

APRIL 23, 2021
2:00 PM – 4:00PM EASTERN TIME
TRANSNATIONAL LINKAGES

Aḥmad al-Tijānī of Fes: the Multivocality of a Transnational Pilgrimage Site
Johara Berriane, Marc Bloch Center, Berlin

Rihla in the New Medina: African American Tijānī Youth Studying in Senegal
Samaha Rahman, California State University Long Beach

The Limitless Zāwiya: The FayḌa Tijāniyya and Social Media
Antonio de Diego González



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PANEL 7

APRIL 24, 2021

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM EASTERN TIME
NEW FAYḌA TIJĀNIYYA FEMALE LEADERSHIP

Shaykha Ruqayya Ibrahim Niass
Babacar Niang, Al-Najah Institute

Shaykha Mariam Ibrahim Niasse
Ben Omar Kane, Dar al-Quran, Senegal

Shaykha Oumou Khayr Niasse of Niger
Sekou Aboubacar Hassoumi, Minister of Mines, Niger

From Hidden to Resplendently Wrapped Treasures: Tijānī Women's Changing Spiritual Authority
Joseph Hill, University of Alberta

THREE UMARS CONCERT

APRIL 24, 2021

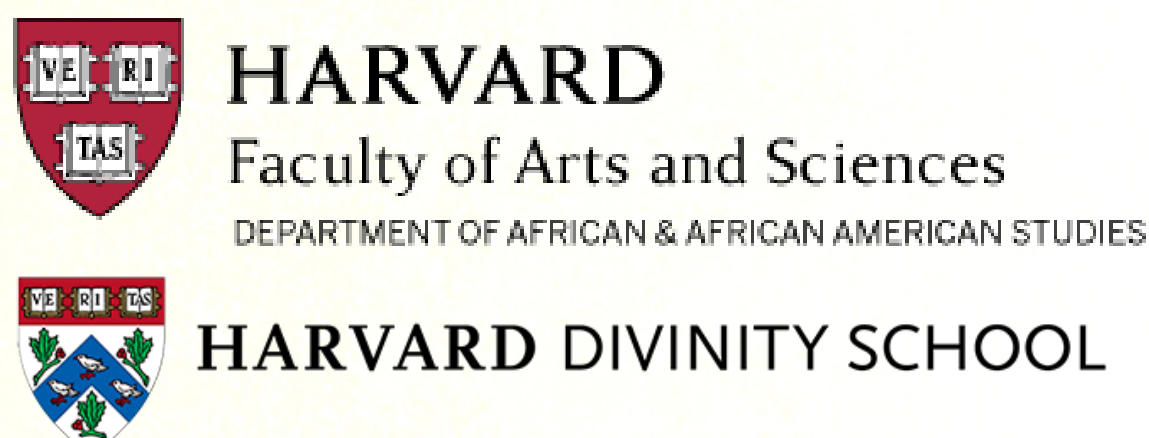
3:00 PM – 5:00 PM EASTERN TIME

Tijani Ben Omar, Oumar Niane and Pape Oumar Niang
Singing prophetic praise poems of Shaykh Ibrahim Niasse

Poems from the dīwāns Jabr al-Kasr, Taysīr al-wuṣūl ila ḥaḍrat al-rasūl and Sayr al-qalb

Tijani Ben Omar
Tijani Ben Omar
Oumar Niane
Oumar Niane
Pape Oumar Niang
Pape Oumar Niang

Qad ṭala'al Hilālu (Dīwān Jabr al-Kasr)
Ma'āni Abi 'Abbās (Dīwān Taysīr al-wuṣūl ila ḥaḍrat al-rasūl)
Ṭabībī qarībun (Dīwān Sayr al-Qalb)
Iwān Kisrā (Dīwān Sayr al-Qalb)
Aba al-qalbu (Taysīr al-wuṣūl ila ḥaḍrat al-rasūl)
Habānī khayr al-nās birran (Dīwān Sayr al-Qalb)



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