

CHISHTI NIZAMI SUFI ORDER OF BENGAL



GHULAM RASOOL



CHISHTI-NIZAMI SUFI ORDER OF BENGAL

(Till Mid 15th Century)
and its Socio-religious Contribution

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Md. Gholam Rasool

PREFACE

In this dissertation of mine it has been my humble endeavour to study the life, thought and activities of Sufi saints in general and the Chishti and Chishti-Nizami Sufis, in particular, to show how far they had exerted profound influence not only on the religious, but also on the social and cultural aspects of Muslim life. In fact, Prof. Habib, Prof. K.A. Nizami, in particular, have dealt with this aspect, and many others too have contributed a lot to it. As a humble student of Sufism, I have only followed them. The outstanding scholars in this field have inspired me to take up this work. I have humbly but sincerely tried to follow in their footsteps. I have used the original sources, viz, Persian and Arabic writings of the celebrated Sufi writers and poets. I have also quoted verses from the Quran and the Traditions, where necessary. I have also used *Maktubat* and *Malfuzat* of the renowned Sufis in this work.

Finally, I like to further emphasize that glory and greatness of Islam has been due to the piety, devotion and humanitarian activities and the rich literary and cultural heritage that the sufis have left. Indeed, the posterity will find enough source of light and guidance from their work and ideas.

I am indebted to the eminent scholars in this field and also to my supervisor Prof. M. Quamruddin of the Deptt. of Islamic History and Culture of Calcutta University.

I would deem my labours and expectations amply rewarded if this thesis of mine is published and liked by scholars and experts in the field.

Md. Gholam Rasool

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INTRODUCTION

Much valuable work on mysticism and sufism has been done by the great orientalists and professors E.G. Browne, R.A. Nicholson, A.J. Arberry, H.A.R. Gibb, Alessandro Banskani, Margaret Smith, Whinfield, Minorsky, Palmer, Annemarie Schimmel, Muhammad Habib, K.A. Nizami, Hasan Askari, Athar Abbas Rizvi, Khalifa Abdul Hakim and S.M. Ikram and some others. It is very difficult to contribute anything new or to add something substantial to their rich contribution in the said field. I have, however, ventured to take up the Chishti order and Chishti-Nizami order in particular, of Bengal, of which the nucleus was Pandua and its environs of Malda district in the 14th and 15th centuries A.D., only because of the fact that though much scholarly work has been done in the field of mysticism and Islamic mysticism (or sufism), proper emphasis has not been laid on the Chishti-Nizami sufi order of Bengal, which traces its origin from one of the eminent Chishti sufis, Khwaja Nizam al-Din Auliya, who was the fourth sufi Shaikh in succession from the great founder of the Chishti order in India, the celebrated Khwaja Mu'in al-Din Chishti, who settled in Ajmer (India) and lies buried there.

I have, therefore, selected this subject to particularly emphasize the Chishti-Nizami order of Bengal, the founder of which was Shaikh Akhi Siraj al-Din 'Uthman of Pandua, the disciple of Khwaja Nizam al-Din Auliya of Delhi. While highlighting the origin and development of the Chishti-Nizami order in the life time of Shaikh Akhi Siraj, Shaikh Ala al-Haq and his disciple Syed Ashraf Jahangir Simnani, and Shaikh Nur Qutb 'Alam and his disciple Husam al-Din Manikpuri in particular, I have had to trace the origin of the main Chishti order of India, which obtained nourishment from

Khwaja Mu'in al-Din Ajmeri, the founder, and from Khwaja Qutb al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki, Khwaja Farid al-Din Shakargunj, Khwaja Nizam al-Din Auliya, after whom a branch of the Chishti order was shifted to Pandua through his reputed disciple Shaikh Akhi Siraj al-Din 'Uthman. I have also pursued the course of the Chishti order after the demise of Khwaja Nizam al-Din Auliya, after whom the Chishti order was maintained by Khwaja Nasir al-Din (Chiragh-i-Delhi), who passed his life in Delhi, and thereafter the order passed to the Deccan, when Chiragh-i-Delhi's disciple Syed Muhammad Gesudaraz migrated to Gulbarga (the Deccan). The Chishti order also passed to Kalyar (Bihar), Malwa, Gujrat, Chanderi, Hansi, Nagaur, and previously to Pak Patan (the Punjab), when Khwaja Farid al-Din (Baba Farid) shifted there.

Though a brief history of the Chishti order has been furnished in this thesis, the main emphasis has been laid obviously on the Nizami branch of Bengal. Not only in the religious domain but also in the social, political and cultural domain the Chishti and Nizami sufi contribution has been especially focussed.

Before taking up the actual topic, at the very outset, a comparative study of all types of mysticism, viz., Neo-platonic, Jewish, Christian, Buddhist, Jain, Hindu with all its ramifications and Islamic, has been made, showing their affinities as well as differences.

That sufism is mainly Islamic in origin, based on the esoteric teachings of the Our'an and the practices and ideals of the Prophet, acquiring or assimilating ideas from various non-Islamic creeds and religious with which it came into contact in the different countries of the world, has been maintained on the basis of the eminent authorities and after critical analysis. Interaction among various creeds and doctrines has been a quite natural phenomenon in all times. No idea or creed can live in isolation, and intermingling of ideas and ideals is bound to produce a fusion which sometimes proves wholesome, and sometimes again may not prove so. However, healthy change is certainly desirable, but unhealthy or degenerating features should be purged out not to defeat the desirable objective. However, the growth and evolution of culture is nevertheless interesting and instructive.

The Sufi concept of God, man and the universe and the mystic concept in general has then been discussed; pin-pointing the fundamental agreements in ideals and beliefs.

Sufi khanqahs and their importance in the religious and social life of Muslims along with the origin and evolution of khanqah as an institution has been duly emphasized.

Sufi concept of *Sama'* which was practised by Chishti and Maulvi orders particularly, as an aid to ecstasy, has been discussed, quoting reliable authorities for its sanction, and pointing out the dangers and pitfalls into which abuse or misuse of *Sama'* might lead to.

Chishti attitude to government and politics, which is a distinguishing feature of the Chishti ideal, has also been dwelt on.

Above all, mysticism, Islamic and non-Islamic, has been discussed to show that the mysticism is in fact the kernel and essence of all religions and as such their meeting-ground so to say. It has been shown that mysticism or sufism alone could rise above all sectarian wranglings and schismatic conflicts and hold a loft a beacon-light to guide the erring humanity from religious, moral and social chaos and confusion to the realm of peace, tranquillity and order, which alone can solve the present maladies and problems from which humanity has been suffering from a long time without any hope of redemption.

I have also at length shown the natural impact of sufism and other mysticisms with reciprocal benefits.

I have also suggested some reasons for the decline of sufism at the present time and have tried to suggest some remedies to retrieve it from its present decay and disintegration.

In writing this dissertation I have used the original works in Arabic and Persian and also secondary sources like English, Bengali and Urdu. A list of all these works has been furnished in Bibliography. I have also used journals—English and Bengali, which have also supplied me abundant materials in my subject. I have also used *malfuzat* and *maktubat* of sufis with great benefit.

Indeed, without a study of sufism and its proper, objective evaluation, the history of a country can never be complete and adequate. I have endeavoured to show that Sufism was not only a religious revolution, which opened a new vista in the mental outlook and horizon of the Muslims, but besides it was an intellectual and cultural revolution, which elevated the Muslim mind and society and left behind a rich legacy of thought and literature for the benefit and guidance of posterity and future Muslim world.

Rightly says Prof. Habib: "The History of India, as Indians have understood it, is the history of her religious and cultural movements".¹ Again, the scholar says: "It is a grave injustice to the Mussalmans of India to judge them by the character of their kings, for whom they were in no way responsible, while their religious leaders, their artists and poets who exercised an immeasurably greater influence over them, are ignored".² As a matter of fact, the sufi saints by their indomitable personality, implicit trust in God, and their unimpeachable character exerted greater influence over people, high and low, than kings and nobles. The spiritual leaders were held in high esteem because of their piety and independent spirit, which placed them above powerful princes and potentates. The latter inspired fear and awe but the former inspired love and veneration in the minds of people. The kings and emperors ruled over kingdoms, but the sufi saints ruled over innumerable hearts. So, the influence of the latter was more profound and enduring than that of the former. In this perspective I have selected the subject of my thesis, particularly emphasizing the Chishti-Nizami Sufi order of Bengal, which has not received so much attention from scholars as it really deserves.

Mystic faith and ethics, however, can prove to be the panacea for the present malaise that we are suffering from in our individual and social life. In the present age of general disintegration of faith and morals mystic teachings alone can restore our faith and trust in religion and ethics.

1. Muhammad Habib, *op. cit.*, K.A. Nizami, *Politics and Society in Early Medieval Period* (New Delhi: Peoples' Publishing House, 1974, Introduction), p. XIII.

2. *Ibid.*

Though mysticism has received a setback at the hands of pseudomystics and pretenders, yet some good and devout souls could even now provide us necessary light and guidance on the path leading to the sublime truth. In every age some souls can not but hanker for spiritual food, since this hankering is innate in human nature and can not but find expression in the devout souls.

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Mysticism and Sufism—Origin, Evolution and Characteristics

Mysticism or Sufism (called *Tasawwuf* in Islam), is the basic of all religions. It is a metaphysical doctrine, and an ethics, or a particular way of life. It is an approach to religion which emphasizes the spirit rather than mere form, the intuition rather than intellect or sense-perception as means for the realization of the supreme Reality. It is not an intellectual theory, but an apprehension of the nature of the ultimate truth through direct experience, i.e., through intuitive or ecstatic union with the Deity. Mysticism means a spiritual grasp of the aims and problems of life in a much more real and ultimate manner than is possible to mere reason.¹

Though the mystics do not deny the utility of sense-perception as a means of understanding the Reality, yet they do not attach so much importance to it, since mere vision cannot probe into the mysteries of the unseen; at best it can give us a vague idea about spiritual things. As Iqbal observes: "In its attitude towards the ultimate reality it (religion) is opposed to the limitations of man; it enlarges his claims and holds out the

1. S.N. Dasgupta, *Hindu Mysticism* (Delhi : Motilal Banarsidas, 1976), Preface IX.

prospect of nothing less than a direct vision of Reality.”² Again, “Philosophy sees Reality from a distance as it were. Religion seeks closer contact with Reality. The one is theory; the other is living experience, association, intimacy.”³

Al-Ghazzali (1058—1111 A.D.), Jalal al-Din Rumi (1207—1273 A.D.), Mahmud Shabistari (b. 1250 A.D.) and in fact, all the mystics have exposed the weakness or inability of intellectual faculty or sense-perception in grasping the Reality. Ghazzali says that physical sight is deceptive, since it does not give us the correct knowledge and comprehension of things, because to the eye the huge sun, the moon and planets etc. appear to be like plates or dots in the firmament and moving objects as stationary and static objects as moving.⁴

According to Rumi, intellect or language in contrast with love or intuition stands no comparison. The ‘heart’ is a kind of inner intuition or insight which brings us into contact with aspects of Reality other than those open to sense-perception.⁵

2. M. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Lahore, 1965), p. 1.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 61.

4. Ghazzali, *Mishkat al-Anwar*, Tr. W.H.T. Gairdner (Lahore, 1952), p. 89 (1st Ed. Royal Asiatic Society, London, 1924). Montgomery Watt says: “Seeking for necessary truths al-Ghazzali came, like Descartes, to doubt the infallibility of sense-perception, and to rest his philosophy rather on principles which are intuitively certain.” W.M. Watt, *The Faith and Practice of Al-Ghazzali, Introduction* (Tr. of Ghazzali’s *Al-Munqidh minal-Dalal*), London: George Allen and Unwin, 1953. Ghazzali himself says that mysticism is something which cannot be apprehended by study, but only immediate experience (*dhauq*—literally tasting), by ecstasy and by a moral change. *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

5. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, pp. 15-16. Rumi himself says in his *Mathnawi* (p. 144).

کرچہ تفسیر زبان روشن گراست لیک عشق بے زبان روشن تراست

“Although language makes a thing clear, yet love unexplained is clearer.” Philosopher Kant believed that there is a higher kind of truth than that offered by human intelligence, the moral law within us which guarantees the world of values.—S.E. Frost, *op. cit.*, *Basic Teachings of the Great Philosophers* (New York, 1962), p. 69.

According to Mahmud Shabistari, 'There is a way beyond reason by which a man is able to know the secret of reality. This intuitive power of man is hidden within him as fire in implicit within stone.'⁶

In short, mysticism (or Sufism) is an intuitive apprehension of the Reality and things unseen. It is the essence, the spirit and the hidden esoteric meaning of all religions. It helps us to grow into the likeness of the Divine and to live from the depths of the spirit.⁷ Religion is not true and meaningful unless it

6. *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, Ed. M.M. Sharif, Vol. II (Germany, 1963), p. 941. In the words of Shabistari himself—

زہے نادان کہ او خورشید تابان
بنور شمع جوید در بیابان

'what a fool he is, who seeks in the desert the bright sun in the dim light of a candle' (*Gulshan-i-Raz*).

The Philosopher Kant too holds the view that theoretical reason can analyse only what the senses yield, and it cannot solve the more important questions of philosophy and religion, such as the existence of God, the nature of His attributes, the immortality of the soul, etc.,—M.M. Sharif *op. cit.*, *Muslim Thought—Its Origin and Achievements* (Lahore: Ashraf, 1951), p. 79.

Sufi Al-Kalabadhi also holds that intellect can be sufficient for guiding the acts, which man, as servant, performs for God, but it does not serve the purpose as a guide to God—*Kitab al-T'arruf li madhab ahlal-tasawwuf*, Tr. A.J. Arberry, *The Doctrine of the Sufis* (Lahore: Ashraf, 1966), p. 51.

Iqbal maintains: "In the interests of securing a complete vision of Reality therefore, sense-perception must be supplemented by the perception of what the Quran describes as 'Fuad' or 'Qalb', i.e. heart."—*The Reconstruction of Religious Thought In Islam*, p. 15.

7. G.C. Dev too holds the same view that intellect and intuition supplement each other.—*Idealism and Progress* (Calcutta : Das Gupta and Co., 1952), p. 118.

S. Radhakrishnan, *Religion and Society* (London : George Allen and Unwin, 1966), p. 120.

ceases to be a traditional view and becomes personal experience.⁸ Above all, it is a genuine life-process.⁹

Mysticism : Neoplatonism

Plotinus,¹⁰ the pupil of Plato,¹¹ and the founder of Neoplatonic Philosophy, believed in the pre-existence of soul: that there was an original state of the soul with God before it became united to the body by birth. According to Plotinus, this is its origin as well as its goal. He maintained that by its nature the soul might ascend to its origin and God, by His nature, could be seen through inner vision or intuition (called *Kashf* or *mushahida* by the Sufis). He termed the ascent of the soul to God after the physical death of a man as 'Flight of the Alone to the Alone.'

Plotinus believed in the spiritual elevation of soul to such a height as to make the subject and the object as one. The seeker, according to him, loses even his own consciousness and attains his objective by making God the sole object of his

8. S. Radhakrishnan and C.A. Moore, Editors, *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy* (Princeton, N.J. University Press, 1957), p. 614; "Religion is the reaction of the whole man to the whole Reality"—*Ibid.*, p. 615.

According to Iqbal : "Religion is not a departmental affair : it is neither mere thought, nor mere feeling, nor mere action : it is an expression of the whole man."—*The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 2.

9. "True mysticism is active and practical, not passive and theoretical. It is an organic life-process....." E. Underhill, *An Introduction to Mysticism*, London, 1930.
10. Plotinus (204—270 A.D.), born at Lycopolis in upper Egypt, was a disciple of Ammonius and later of Plato. His biographer and disciple was Porphyry. For twenty years he was a teacher of Philosophy in Rome. His work is known as the *Enneads*. He adopted a mystic way of life. He was a vegetarian and he led a simple life—*Encyclopaedia Britannica* (University of Chicago, 1952), pp. V—VI.
11. Plato was the disciple of Socrates. His monumental work is called the *Republic*. He regarded intuition as superior to intellect and sense perception—Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy* (London : George Allen and Unwin, 1965), pp. 123, 195.

search and by abandoning the cravings of the senses and the promptings of his will.¹²

Plotinus, like Plato, believed in the incommunicability of mystical experience and was of opinion that no secret should be divulged to the uninitiated.¹³ He maintained that the other world or the invisible world was superior to this visible world, but the latter was never illusory and profane. He appreciated the beauty perceived by the senses.¹⁴

Christianity

Christian monasticism was the early form of Christian mysticism. Monasticism was widely prevalent throughout Syria, Medina, Oman, Hirah, Egypt and some other lands. Abu Rukayya Tamim Ibn Aus al-Dari, originally a Christian, embraced Islam and was included among the Companions of the Prophet. For his piety and devotion he was called Rahib al-Umma, 'the monk of the people' by his associates.¹⁵ Abu Amir, who later embraced Christianity, was called a monk in

12. Plotinus, *Eanneads*, Ed. Fr. Dubner, Didat (Paris, 1896); Abdul Qader, *The Life, Personality and Writings of Al-Junayd* (London: Gibb Memorial Series, 1962), p. 108. Plotinus regarded reason as impotent to conceive the Absolute and intuition as competent for the purpose. He also held that man's object should be to attain likeness to God as far as possible.—*op. cit.*, by E.H. Whinfield and M.M. Kazvini, the translator of Jami's *Lawaih* (Sufi treatise), Royal Asiatic Society, London, 1928, Appendix, pp. 54-55; cf. the Saying of the Prophet—'Adorn thyself with the attributes of Allah

(تَخَلَّفُوا بِأَخْلَاقِ اللَّهِ)

13. Plotinus, *Eanneads*, p. 110.
cf. Hafiz—

گوهر یک دانده جز خواص

"Don't give a grain of the jewel except to the select"—*Diwan*.

14. Bertrand Russel, *History of Western Philosophy*, p. 295.
15. Ibn Khallikan, II, p. 21; J.C. Archer, *Mystical Elements in Moham-mad* (Yale University Press, 1924), p. 61.

Medina and Tuhair, the chief of Banu Abs, became a Christian monk in Oman.¹⁶

Christian monasteries were numerous and organised monastic life was widely prevalent, Dair Hali (Dair is the Syriac word for monastery), Dair Ayyub, and Dair Haumad were founded in Ghassan about 405 A.D.¹⁷ Hind (d. about 540 A.D.), a queen of Hirah, founded a cloister in her dominion.¹⁸

It has been maintained that the first Sufi monastery was founded in Damascus in the middle of the 8th century.¹⁹ The early Sufis were attracted to asceticism by the example of the Christians in Syria where the first Sufi convent was built.²⁰

In Africa, across the Red Sea from Arabia, monasticism continued to the Prophet Muhammad's time from the time of its early foundations there. During the 4th century A.D. Egypt was full of monks.²¹ Monks also lived near the site of ancient Thebes. From Egypt Christianity spread South into Abyssinia and there into South Arabia (Yemen). It is well-known that the Prophet, in his boyhood, while accompanying his uncle Abu Talib had met a monk named Bahira in Syria. It is also well-known that about hundred Muslims including Uthman, Caliph of Islam, took shelter in the court of the Christian King Negus of Abyssinia, in the days before the immigration of the Prophet and the Muslims to Medina (622 A.D.). Ibn Hisham

16. *Sirat-i-Ibn Hisham*, p. 562; J.C. Archer, p. 16.

17. Sprenger, *Life of Muhammad*, p. 100; J.C. Archer, *The Mystical Elements in Muhammad*, p. 61.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 62.

19. A.E. Krynesky, 'A Sketch of the Development of Sufism Down to the End of the Third Century of the Hijra', *Islamic Quarterly* (London: Islamic Cultural Centre, October, 1959 and January, 1960) p. 231.

20. Abdur Rahman Jami', *Lawaih*, Tr. E.H. Whinfield and Mirza Muhammad Qazvini (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1928), Preface, XV. This view has been contradicted by R.A. Nicholson, who is of the opinion that in the first two centuries of Islam no foreign influence is traceable—'A Historical Enquiry concerning the origin and Development of Sufism.'—*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, London, 1966.

21. *Paradise of the Fathers*, Ed. A.E. Wallis Budge, XIVII. cited, *Ibid.*, p. 62.

tells of twenty Abyssinian Christians who visited the Prophet.²² Crowds of Arabians had flocked to Antioch to visit the monk Simon of the Pillar.²³

But even if some Christian influence is traceable in the development of early Sufism, yet it may also be maintained that asceticism in the early form of Sufism, might have been derived from the example of the Prophet himself, who, for a long time, say not less than fifteen years, or so, took to a life of seclusion (*Tahannus* in Islamic term) in the Mount Hera. Though at times he used to come home, yet he preferred the solitary life in the cave, because he deemed it necessary for the development of his potentialities and spiritual enlightenment. Of course, his attitude to the world was never that of a recluse, nor did he neglect the worldly life for the life hereafter, but he struck a balance between the two extremes; indeed he adopted a life of seclusion for a period of time for his spiritual development, but never adopted seclusion as a way of life, or, in other words, his practical life demonstrated just the opposite ideal: he lived a married and social life and yet never forgot his mission of life for a single moment.

Buddhism

Some scholars have traced Buddhist influence on Sufism. The Buddhist 'Nirvana', which has some analogy with the Sufi 'Fana',²⁴ is the final state that the disciple reaches with the completion of the course of his training. It is the final state of rest which man enters when meditation detaches him from the world of phenomena. The path to the attainment of Nirvana, to the elimination of selfishness and ignorance is the famous eight fold path of morality, namely, (1) right understanding, (2) right thought, (3) right speech, (4) right action, (5) right livelihood, (6) right effort, (7) right mindfulness, (8) right con-

22. *Sirat-i-Ibn Hisham*, p. 259. According to Ibn Hisham, the Christians were Najrani (Arabians) rather than Abyssinians.

23. Adency, *Greek and Eastern Churches*, p. 156; J.C. Archer, *Mystical Elements in Mohammad*, p. 66.

24. "Nirvana is purely negative, fana is accompanied by *baqa*, everlasting life in God."—R.A. Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, Introduction, p. 18; The Sufi *Fana* is only the preliminary to *Baqa*, continued

centration. Buddha did not approve of the two extreme, viz. self indulgence and austere ascetic practices and recommended the middle way between the two extremes, which by following the eight fold path, might lead to enlightenment.²⁵

For Buddhism the final release is achieved by a process of training of the self. The disciple in his meditation devotes himself to purifying his mind from five hindrances, viz., sensual passion and fascination for the world, malice, sloth and torpor, distraction or lack of concentration and doubt.²⁶ These are

existence in the One Real Being—Jami, *Lawaih*. Tr. E.H. Whinfield and Mirza Muhammad Qazvini (London : Royal Asiatic Society, 1928), preface, XVI. The highest *Fana* is annihilation of annihilation

(رفنا عن الفنا) , when the consciousness of having lost cons-

sciousness ceases. In the words of Jami (*Lawa'ih*), (Flash IX):

صاحب فنارا اگر شعور فنا شد صاحب فنا نیست

Fana, according to Nicholson, was first propounded by Bayazid of Bistan, who may have received from his teacher, Abu, 'Ali of Sind al-Sarraj, *Kitab al-Duma*, p. 177; *The Mystics of Islam*, (Introduction, p. 17); H. Ritter, *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Ed. Vol. I (Leiden, 1960), p. 162. But A.J. Arberry does not endorse this view. He says that Abu 'Ali Sindi was not a man of Sind (India), but of a village named Sind in Khurasan. Therefore, Bayazid's indebtedness to Indian *Vedanta* in respect of his theory of *Fana* does not stand. Arberry, *Revelation and Reason in Islam* (London : George Allen and Unwin, 1957), p. 90.

25. H. Saddhatissa, *Buddhist Ethics*, pp. 90-91 (London : George Allen and Unwin, 1970), p. 70; S. Radhakrishnan, *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy* (Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 272. It is interesting to note that the Eight fold Path of Buddhism emphasizes the same ideals as Islam enjoins upon a follower as most essential, rather as the *sin qua non* for the full success and consummation of a Muslim's life. So, in respect of ethics and morality Islam and Buddhism come very close. Buddha's *bodhi* (enlightenment) amounts to realizing in the spirit and in life the basic unity of existence, the spiritual communication pervading the whole universe. Anesaki, *History of Japanese Religion*, 1930, p. 53; See also Radhakrishnan, *An Idealist View of Life* (London : George Allen and Unwin, 1961, Rep.), p. 101, footnote.
26. E.I. Thomas, *The History of Buddhist Thought* (New York, Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1971, Rep.), p. 120.

various bonds or fetters which hinder insight, and, therefore, the disciple must get rid of them to obtain his release. Buddha stressed the necessity of eschewing egoism and sensuality and recommended for his votaries a life of noble thoughts, words and deeds. Further, he emphasized the pre-eminence of the spiritual life, compared with the temporal life and appreciated the quality of the deeds according to the spirit in which they were performed and he upheld sincerity and good motive as the highest virtue.²⁷

A true Buddhist does not feel any attraction for reward in lieu of good deeds; in other words, his mind is detached from any self interest or any kind of return.²⁸

Although Balkh (formerly Bactria), which had been a Buddhist monastic centre in central Asia during the first centuries of Islam, later became the home of a number of eminent Sufis and Buddhist ascetic meditations too left their marks on Sufism.²⁹ Nevertheless, Nicholson's observation is noteworthy.³⁰

In the opinion of Goldzihar, the 'Noble Path' and the mystic Path (*Tariqa* of the Sufis) are analogous, and moreover, the affinity is also traceable in the Sufi concentration (*Muraqaba*) and the Buddhist (or Hindu) *Samadhi*³¹ or *Dhyana*. The Sufi robe (*Khirqah*) regarded by Sufis themselves as a heritage

27. Maurice Percheron, *Buddha and Buddhism* (London: Longmans, 1954), p. 70.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 70.

29. A.E. Krynesky, "A Sketch of the Development of Sufism Down to the End of the Third Century of the Hijra", *Islamic Quarterly* (London: Islamic Cultural Centre, July and October, 1961), p. 89.

30. "The features which the two systems have in common only accentuate the fundamental difference between them. In spirit they are poles apart. The Buddhist moralizes himself, the Sufi becomes moral only through knowing and loving God." R.A. Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, pp. 16-17.

31. Jami, *Lawa'ih*, Tr. E.H. Whinfield and Muhammad Gazvini (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1938), Preface XII, Sidney Spencer, *Mysticism in World Religion* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966), p. 75; Goldzihar, *Muhammad and Islam* (New Haven, 1917), p. 175; Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment*, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1964); p. 176.

from the practice of the Prophet, is regarded by Goldzihar as an imitation of Buddhist and by Nicholson of Christian origin.³²

Buddha insisted on conduct, works, concentration (*Samadhi*³³ as the Buddhists called) and insight to achieve enlightenment and *Nirvana*.

Tantric Buddhism, however, is marked by the same characteristics as are to be found in Tantric Hinduism. The greatest stress is laid on such methods as breath control and recitation of *mantras* (secret words taught by the 'Guru' or Teacher) by which sins are expiated and dangers are averted and supreme knowledge is acquired.³⁴

Tantric Buddhism, which rose to its height in the Pala period, was the source of many cults that flourished in Bengal, one of which is the Sahajia.³⁵

The mystical religious system such as Zen Buddhism of the Far East was introduced from India into China in the 6th century and was established in Japan at the beginning of the 13th century. It emphasizes the practice of meditation, which culminates in a sudden flash of mystical illumination.³⁶ In their concentration some branches of Zen neglect the study of the scriptures and the accepted moral discipline.³⁷ The realization of the Man or the real self is a kind of metaphysical or ethical

32. Al-Hujwiri, *Kashf al-Mahjub*, Tr. R.A. Nicholson (London: Gibb Memorial Series, 1936), p. 45; Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), p. 10; Goldzihar, *Muhammad and Islam*, p. 123.

33. *Samadhi* in Buddhism takes the place occupied in other religions by prayer—prayer, that is in the sense of ecstatic communion with the divine being—Charles Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968, Rep.), Vol. I, p. 221.

34. Sidney Spencer, *Mysticism In World Religion* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966), p. 94.

35. S.K. Mitra, *A Marvel of Cultural Fellowship* (Bombay: Lalvani Publishing House, 1967), p. 72.

36. 'This idea bears affinity with the Sufi practice called 'Muraqiba', the goal of which is mystical illumination.

37. Sidney Spencer, *Mysticism in World Religion*, p. 91.

self, which lives in and confined to a finite world of relativity.³⁸ Another feature of *Saran* (refuge) is characteristic of both Buddhism and Bhakti cult. It is the devotee's self-surrender to the Lord, such as is enjoined in the Bhagavad Gita.³⁹

Again, the idea of the senior Lord (*Avatarvada*) is common to both Buddhist canon and the Bhagavata scripture. The idea of God appearing in human form from age to age to rescue the poor and the helpless may be ascribed to the influence of the Bhakti cult on Buddhism, but that perhaps cannot be categorically maintained.⁴⁰

Buddhist philosophy of the one and the All (God and creation) may be expounded by a poem 'on Trust in the Heart'.

The one is none other than the All, the All none other than the One.

Take your stand on this, and the rest will follow of its own accord.⁴¹

As regards the question of soul or no soul, Buddha never thought that there is no self, in the sense of an Absolute beyond the reach of words.⁴² As to the nature of the self the Buddha maintained a 'noble silence', for no words can describe the Indescribable.⁴³

The Buddhist way is the process of the death of self. As self dies that self grows, and the self is purified of self, the awareness of enlightenment grows in the mind. He who admits of no self beyond the limits of our low desires and clouded minds,

38. D.T. Suzuki, *Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1960), p. 32.

39. Sukumar Dutt, *The Buddha and The Five After-Centuries* (London: Luzac and Co., 1957), pp. 200-201.

40. Raichaudhuri maintains the theory of the influence of the Bhakti cult on Buddhism, but Sukumar Dutt contradicts him by saying that it (*Avatarvada*) is not only in the *Mahayana*, but also in the *Hinayana* Buddhism and earlier—*Ibid.*, p. 208, footnote.

41. By Sengts'an, Tran. Takakuku, cited, Christmas Humphrys, *The Buddhist Way of Life* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1969), p. 149.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 36.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

will find no happiness and no release, not even for himself, much less for mankind.⁴⁴

As a matter of fact, all religions agree that the soul is pure and unsullied in its nature and the *summum bonum* of life is attained when all impurities are removed and the pure nature of the self is thoroughly apprehended.⁴⁵ Buddha holds that the world we know, whether outward or inward, does not possess intrinsic reality, which belongs to the knower, the *Atma*, the self of all selves. Brahma and *Atma* are one. Knowledge of this supreme truth, the realization of the identity of the self of man and the spirit of the universe is salvation.⁴⁶

Buddhism, however, has not been all along the same; it has undergone changes in its evolution. Buddhism which developed after the death of Buddha was mainly divided into two schools, viz., Theravada and Mahasanghika. The former was monkish or monastic and the latter was popular, not based on the monk made scripture, and not dogmatic.

The popular school which opposed the former school is called Mahasanghika. It was a revolt against the purely monkish religion.⁴⁷ This school originated at Pataliputra or Vaisali.⁴⁸

44. *Ibid.*, pp. 43-47.

45. S.N. Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, 1969), p. 75.

46. After Buddha's death 500 *Bhikkus* or monks (Theras) gathered at Rajgir (Bihar) in a council to collect Buddha legends and stories. *Theravada* means the school (*Vada*) founded by the monks (*Theras*). It was the primitive and orthodox Buddhism—Sukumar Dutt, *The Buddha and Five After—Centuries* (London: Luzac & Co., 1957), p. 143, footnote.

Another writer explains *Theravada* as "Teaching of the Elders," who laid stress entirely upon the rules of discipline. By contrast, the group known as Mahasanghika or "Members of the Great Order" claimed that they were the true followers of the teaching of the Buddha by mingling with common people, sharing their sufferings, and encouraging them in the practice of the Buddhist faith. Daisaku Ikeda, *Buddhism the First Millenium*, Tr. from Japanese work, Burton (Tokyo, 1974), Watson (Tokyo: Kodansha International Ltd., 1977), p. 32.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 133.

48. *Ibid.*, p. 134.

In course of time Buddhism was split up into two main schools, viz., Hinayana (the small or low vehicle) and Mahayana (the great vehicle). The former was so called because its adherents sought to attain his own nirvana or salvation and the latter was so called, because its exponent was the seeker of salvation for all.⁴⁹ In subsequent times the Buddhists in order to cherish the memory of Buddha sought various emblems and relics, and in quest of more tangible relics the Buddha image⁵⁰ emerged which became the object of adoration of Mahayana school of Buddhism. It may, however, be said that Mahayana view was the result of psychological background in preparation over several centuries.⁵¹

As a result of the contact of Buddhism with Bactrian Hellenism the Buddha images were conceived and fashioned in the tradition of Hellenistic art.⁵² Mahayana Buddhism might also have assimilated some of the speculative philosophies of the Manichaeus and the Neo-Platonist.⁵³

Before we conclude the discussion about Buddhism let us see what Buddha himself thought and felt. He refused to discuss metaphysics not because of his ignorance but because of its practical utility.⁵⁴ Buddha did not like to discuss what he knew of reality and its relation to the world of ignorance we live in, because to all and sundry that knowledge would not be intelligible and that would not help them in turning from the earthly attractions and in the subjection of all desires, leading to peace, knowledge, illumination and to Nirvana.⁵⁵

49. S. Dasgupta, *A History of Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, 1969), Vol. I, p. 126.

50. According to Do Lacy O'Leary, the deification of Buddha is usually ascribed to the spread of the principle of Bhakti or personal devotion to a deity, a principle evolved in the Bhagavata religion which penetrated Buddhism about 100 B.C. and led to the representation of Buddha.

51. Sukumar Dutt, *The Buddha and Five After—Centuries*, p. 234.

52. *Ibid.*, pp. 242-43.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 243.

54. G.C. Dev, *Buddha The Humanist* (Dacca: Paramount Publishers, 1969), p. 168.

55. *Ibid.*, pp. 169-70.

Buddha's message has an appeal to the common man. Buddha succeeded where the Hindu philosophers and interpreters of the Upanishads (Shankar and Ramanuja) failed. The liberalism of the Upanishads could not be materialized in actual practice in the Hindu society. But Buddha, centuries before them, introduced it in reality. The Hindu social reformer merely made an attempt to undo the social reform that Buddha introduced more than a millenium before.⁵⁶

It is generally believed that Buddhism declined because of the destruction of Buddhist monasteries of Uddandapur, Vikramsila and Nalanda by the Muslim conqueror Bakhtiyar Khalji and also on account of the withdrawal of patronage and financial assistance of the Buddhist Pala kings after their downfall. It may be argued that destruction of some monasteries cannot obviously bring about the extinction of a religion. There are, of course, some strong and plausible reasons which led to the liquidation of Buddhism from Bengal and some parts of India.

Buddhism declined when it surrendered to the rituals and practices which were denounced by Buddha. And as it bowed to beliefs and practices which were not inculcated by Buddha, it became practically indistinguishable from popular Hinduism.⁵⁷

56. *Ibid.*, p. 69. It is in respect of equality of man that Buddhism and Islam came closer, and the spread of Islam in Bengal was accelerated by that fact. And the Brahmins only accentuated the bitterness by their persecution and that also facilitated the expansion of Islam in this region.

57. *Taranath's History of Buddhism*, ed. Debi Prasad Chatterjee (Simla: India Institute of Advanced Study, 1970), Preface XII. In this connection mention may be made of persecution of the Buddhists by the Brahmins, which compelled the former to embrace Hinduism and merge with the Hindus; some others embraced Islam to escape from the tortures of the Brahmins and to enjoy the fruits of Islamic equality and justice. Thus, the Buddhists gradually became extinct from the soil. The persecution rose to its height in a village named Jajpur in the district of Hoogly. *Sunnya Puran*; D.C. Sen, *Brihat Banga* (Calcutta University Publication, 1341 B.S.), pp. 332-33.

According to Vikekananda, the Buddhists were oppressed by Kumaril, Sankarachaya, Ramanuja and Nadhab to establish Brahmin hegemony. Kumaril alone was responsible for killing several

The germs of the destruction of Buddhism lay within itself.⁵⁸ Buddha, himself a devout soul, renounced worldly life and took to seclusion and monastic life and he dedicated his life to the development of Sangha or monasteries. He did not try to develop a social system, nor did he formulate laws or prescribe norms applicable to everyday practical life. Secluded monastic life is not suitable for all and sundry. So, Buddhism had no base in the life of common people. That is why, Buddhism had no strong footing among people, who were only engaged in the worship of Buddha image and relics, and when patronage of the Pala rulers was withdrawn, Buddhism was badly affected, being parasitic by nature, having no strength of its own. In striking contrast Islam has endured and embraces within its fold innumerable votaries throughout the world, in-as-much-as Islam has a definite and clear code of life for the observance of Muslims. Some other religions like Christianity and Jainism have also some code of life or guiding principles of life. But the Buddhists have not followed any uniform pattern of life and ideals. The learned Buddhists were engaged in philosophical discussions and reflections on the problems of life, whereas the illiterate common folk gave way to worship of deities and frivolous enjoyments.⁵⁹

thousands of Buddhist through the help of a king of Maharashtra. (*Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, p. 69). The way in which the low-caste Hindus embraced Islam enmasse to escape from Brahminical torture, R.C. Dutt remarks, was a sad reflection on Hinduism. *Op.cit.*, *ibid.*, p. 74. This mass conversion has also been reported by a European traveller Barbosa of the 14th century—Bhupendra Nath Dutt, *op.cit.*, *Banglar Itihash* (Calcutta: Naba Bharat Publishers, 1383 B.S., 2nd ed.), p. 66. The Buddhists and the lower-caste Hindus hailed the Muslim conquest of Bengal as deliverance from the high caste Hindu domination and persecution—D.C. Sen, *Brihat Banga*, p. 333; see also his *History of Bengali Language and Literature* (University of Calcutta, 1954).

58. Narendra Nath Bhattacharya, *Bharatiya Dharmiya Itihash* (Calcutta: General Printers and Publishers, etc., 1384 B.S.), p. 189.

59. Narendra Nath Bhattacharya, *Bharatiya Dharmiya Itihash*, p. 189. According to the writer, even Harshavardan, a great believer in Buddhism and its patron, worshipped the Sun and the god Shiva — *ibid.*, p. 189.

Over and above these drawbacks, other factors that contributed to the decline were the complicated rituals and worship of numerous gods and goddesses introduced by Mahayana Buddhism, which could not be reconciled with Hinayana Buddhism, which was averse to such worship, and the want of any social or political system in the regime of the Pala kings, which made them dependent on Brahminial cannons (*Shastras*), based on caste system.⁶⁰

Lastly, the evolution of Buddhism into Hinayana, Mahayana, Tantric Buddhism, etc. altered it so much that time came when Buddhism lost its separate entity and was merged with other creeds.

Nath Cult—Its Origin and Doctrines

Nath cult or Nathism has been derived from 'Shiva' or 'Nath',⁶¹ meaning Lord or Master, which may also be termed as '*Prabhu*' (a Sanskrit word). It is related that Suryabati, the daughter of the king, named Sudhanua, by the blessings of Mahadeb, gave birth to a son named Yoganath. The latter, under the advice of Mahadeb, married Surati, who gave birth to Adinath, Minanath, Satyanath and other sons, sixteen in number. They trace their origin from Yoganath and hence they call themselves Yogis too. Among the sixteen sons Adinath, Minanath, Satyanath, Sachetnath, Kapilnath and Nanaknath lived settled life and the others took to travelling.⁶² The Nath

60. *Ibid.*, p. 189.

61. Yogis of this sect are known as Nath in the Himalayas, the Punjab and Bombay. In western India the Yogis are called 'Dharmanathi', after the name Dharmanath, a disciple of Gorakshanath after 8th century A.D., who revived and revitalised the Nath cult, when it was becoming almost extinct. This revived creed, known as Nath Pantha, exercised enormous influence for several hundred years in Bengal and eastern India. The Nath followed the Yoga practices—Kalyani Mullick, *Nath Sampradaer Itihash, Darshan O Sadhanpranali* (a book in Bengali), Calcutta University, 1950, pp.2-8; Shivanath Shastri, 'Nathpantha', *Prabashi* (Calcutta, 1322 B.S.)—Speech delivered in the 8th session of Bangiya Sahitya Sammelan.

62. Radhagovindanath, *Bangiya Yogijati* (Editorial), *Samaj*, 1st year, No. 1 (Calcutta, 1316 B.S.).

Siddhas were strict celibates, because women were regarded as the greatest danger in the path of Yoga.⁶³

The Naths, in order to distinguish them from the other Yogis, pierce their ear and use rings, which they call '*darshan*' and that is why they are also called '*darshani*'. By '*darshan*' they mean that they have beheld the divine being (*Paramatma*) and hence, they regard themselves fit to use '*darshan*'.⁶⁴

It is mentioned in the introduction to *Sunya Puran* that Nath cult was evolved as a result of fusion of Buddhism and Saivism.⁶⁵

A treatise on *Yogasadhana* (Yoga practices) named *Harmala* has been brought to light from the Nathpara in the neighbourhood of Kishoregunj in the district of Mymensing (Bangladesh). The Naths of that region live by various occupations, viz., weaving, cultivation and medicinal herbs and rural medical treatment. The treatise contains discussions on mysteries of creation, attributeless Brahma, five senses and primary elements, body, soul, mind, breath control and many other subjects.⁶⁶

Regarding creation the treatise says that God was the only eternal and formless Being, who created the firmament, out of which was created wind, and then came heat, water and the universe. At the outset there was neither water, nor land, but

63. S.B. Das Gupta, *Obscure Religious Cults*, p. 244.

64. *Kalyani Mullick*, p. 9. These Yogis are also called Kanphata (a Bengali word, which means pierced ears—*Ibid.*, p. 9. The Buddhist Yogi of Bogra bear this name—Haragopal Daskundu, *Bogurai Buddha Yogi* (Buddhist Yogi in Bogra), *Prabashi* (Calcutta, Ashar, 1317 B.S.). In the Punjab the title, Raul which is equivalent to Nath is prevalent among Muslims too—*Kalyani Mullick*, p. 9.

65. *Kalyani Mullick*, p. 9. These Yogis are also called Kanphata (a Bengali word, which means pierced ears'—*Ibid.*, p. 9. The Buddhist Yogis of Bogra bear this name.—Haragopal Daskundu, 'Bogurai Buddha Yogi' (Buddhist Yogi in Bogra), *Prabashi* (Calcutta, Ashar 1317 B.S.) In the Punjab the title 'Raul' which is equivalent to Nath is prevalent among Muslims too—*Kalyani Mullick*, p. 9.

66. *Sunya Puran*; P.C. Chakravarty, *Nath Dharma O Sahitya* (Alipurduar, Jalpaiguri, 1955), p. 28; Sk. Mitra, *A Marvel of Cultural Fellowship* (Bombay: Lalvani Publishing House, 1967), p. 74.

was all darkness. The human body, it says, is the replica of the universe. Whatever is in the universe is to be found in the body in miniature.⁶⁷ That is why, the body is called the little universe.⁶⁸

As regards the creation of body the Nath treatise says that the body is composed of earth, air, fire, water and wind.⁶⁹ It holds that the body is active because of food (*khiti*), wind, water, heat (sunshine) and sky (the void). Among these elements wind is the most important one. Next comes water and then heat, without wind no creature can survive for a minute. It says that the main elements that keep the body active are wind and vitality, called *rasa* (in Bengali). These things keep the body moving and strong and the want of these again cause its weakness and decline. Heat helps the preservation of the body.

The vitality is created by the functioning of wind and heat and then the vitality flows through the veins and strengthens the body. Vitality is converted into blood and semen, and these constitute life, light and delight. One who is excessively fascinated by wealth and women loses one's wind and vitality, which shortens one's life. So, the Nath Yogis always controlled their senses and kept them absorbed in the meditation of Brahma (God).

'*Pranayama*' (breath control) has been recommended as most essential for the physical and spiritual welfare. This is a process by which one has to inhale breath by the left nostril

67. This very idea is to be found in one of Lalan Shah's songs. Lalan Shah was a mystic poet of the 19th century Bengal, Lalan says—
"Jaacche bhande Taiacche brahmmande".

68. The body, the little universe, is called microcosm and the greater universe is called macrocosm in English. In Sufi terminology the body, the little universe, is called '*Alam-i-Saghir*' and the greater universe is called '*Alam-i-Kabir*'!

69. The Muslims call the four elements as, *Ab* (آب) —water, *Atash*

(آتش) —fire, *Khak* (خاک) —earth and *Bad* (باد) air.

and keeping it inside for sometime has to exhale it by the right nostril and vice versa. The control of the mind is the Yoga per excellence and the control of the breath leads to the control of the mind through the process of '*Pranayam*'. For the control of the mind the control of the wind has been regarded as very important in the Nath Literature.⁷⁰

The Naths believe that if by inhalation and exhalation of the breath (*Pranayam*) the wind which is of vital importance to the body is controlled, one can acquire full control over one's body and by achieving willforce can do impossible acts. And they also control semen, which has creative power. The semen is preserved in '*Kundalini*', which resembles the shape of a serpent, seated like a coil. The control of the wind and semen and concentration of mind leading to meditation ('*dhyān*') results in the success of a Yogi, who is then called '*Nath-Shiddhā*' or '*Shiddhacharya*'. The word *Shiddha* means one who attains *Shiddhi* or success.

The final end of the *Natha Shiddhas* is immortality in a perfect body and in a divine body.⁷¹

According to Harmala, when strength (*Sakti*) is combined with *Siva*, mental restlessness goes and equilibrium prevails and the animality in a man is curbed. Harmala says that *sakti* and *siva* resemble the two opposing forces—positive and negative—of electricity: The goal of the Nath Yogi is to unite the two forces, otherwise, the soul is handicapped by the predominance of animality or egoism.⁷² When the union of jibatma or the human soul with *Paramatma* or God takes place, all fetters cease to exist, and then the individual obtains liberation and his animality is converted into divinity.

The Buddhist sahajiya is fundamentally akin to the Nath cult. The Absolute, is the sahaja, the ultimate reality behind the self and the not self.⁷³

70. S.B. Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults* (Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyaya, 1969), p. 269; Muhammad Shahidullah, *Bangla Sahityer Katha* (Dacca: Renaissance, Printers, 1382 B.S.), p. 47.

71. S.B. Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults*, p. 25.

72. P.C. Chakravarty, *Nath Dharma O Sahitya* (Alipurduar, Jalpaiguri, 1955), p. 24, footnote.

73. *Obscure Religious Cults*, Introduction, XXXVI.

The original home of the Nath cult is North and North-East Bengal and from these regions it spread to other areas sometime after the 12th or 13th century.

The Nath treatise (Harmala) maintains that the creator manifests himself in diverse creations and throughout the world. His work of creation, preservation and destruction has been going on. Man has to realise the one among many—unity in diversity, and then only he will attain his peace and ultimate goal. That one is beyond the Ken of intellect and He is in every heart as soul. Man has to detach his mind from various fascinations and allurements and by subduing his animal or base nature he has to develop his divine nature.

According to Natha view the body has to be purified, otherwise mind cannot be purified, since body and mind are inseparably connected. Unless man gets rid of various desires and propensities he cannot attain success, for if one remains impure the other will be affected by that impurity. So, both have to be purified by Yogic meditation and practices. Indeed, all religions lay emphasis on the purification of both body and mind. In fact, the Natha goal is the attainment of liberation through *Kaya sadhana* from the gross animal life of sorrow and suffering and emancipation from maya or illusions and frailties and infirmities, so that the Natha Yogi becomes free from all passions and attains immortality even in this life.

Yoga was in vogue among the non-Aryans and the Aryans. It was also adopted by the Buddhists and Jainas. Even the Muslim Sufis and saints adopted it.⁷⁴

According to Nath philosophy *Kaya-sadhana* embodies the idea of the two primary elements out of which the visible body is made, viz., the sun (*agni*) and the moon (*rasa* or *soma*), the former implying the seed of the father and the latter the ovum of the mother, through the combination of which proceeds the visible body. Thus, *Agni* and *Soma* are the two primordial elements of which the whole creation is made.⁷⁵

74. *Ibid.*

75. S.B. Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults* (Calcutta, 1969).

Jainism

Jainism is split into two sects, viz., the Digmabara and the Svetambara, following in most respects identical doctrines and customs, but they refuse to intermarry or eat together.⁷⁶

The Digmabara sect maintains that absolute nudity is a necessary condition of saintship.⁷⁷ The other division or Svetambaras, those who are dressed in white, admit that Mahavira, the founder of Jainism went about naked, but maintain that the use of clothes does not impede the highest sanctity.⁷⁸ Nudity as a part of asceticism was practised by several sects in the time of Mahavira, but it was denounced by others, including all Buddhists, who felt it to be barbarous.⁷⁹ At the present time most Digmabararas wear the ordinary costume of their district and only the higher ascetics attempt to observe the rule of nudity.⁸⁰ When they go about they wrap themselves in a large cloth, but lay it aside when eating.⁸¹

The Digmabararas are divided into four principal sects, and the Svetambaras into not less than eighty-four which are said to date from the tenth century A.D.⁸² The Jains flourished in the districts corresponding to Oudh, Tirhut and Bihar in the period following Mahavira's death, and we hear of them in Ceylon before the Christian era.

Right conduct, enjoined upon the Jains, is based on five vows taken by them: (1) not to kill, (2) not tell a lie, (3) to take nothing that is not given, (4) to observe chastity, (5) to renounce all pleasures in external objects.⁸³

Knowledge, faith and virtue signify the comprehensiveness of Jainism as taught by Mahavira, who meditated for twelve years with supreme knowledge, faith and conduct. Knowledge

76. Charles Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968 Rep.), Vol. I, p. 112.

77. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

78. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

79. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

80. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

81. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

82. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

83. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

is characterised as right knowledge, faith as right faith, and virtue as right conduct. These three constitute the path to Nirvana or liberation.⁸⁴

Virtue, as Mahavira said, consists in right conduct. There is no right conduct without right belief and no right belief without the right perception of truth. The essence of right conduct is the purity of morals, which is achieved by the restraint of body, speech and mind.⁸⁵

Hinduism

So far as the Hindu view of mysticism is concerned, the Upanishads and the Bhagavad-Gita furnish us the doctrine and philosophy. The Upanishads are the concluding portions of the Vedas and the basis for the Vedanta philosophy. The Upanishads have dominated Indian philosophy, religion, and life for nearly three thousand years.⁸⁶ The ideals which haunted the thinkers of the Upanishads are the ideals of the perfection of knowledge, the vision of the Real in which the religious hunger of the mystic for direct vision and the philosopher's ceaseless quest for truth are both satisfied.⁸⁷ Of more than 200 Upanishads, of which some belong to the 8th and 9th centuries B.C. and they are definitely pre-Buddhistic.⁸⁸

The Upanishads—the utterances of sages who spoke out of their illumined experience—are vehicles more of spiritual illumination than of systematic reflection. They give us knowledge as a means to spiritual freedom.⁸⁹ The Upanishads speak to us of the way in which the individual self gets at the ultimate reality by an inward journey, an inner ascent.⁹⁰ The Upanishads pose the question: "What is that which, being known, everything else becomes known?" There is one God of whom all the

84. B.C. Law, "The Concept of Morality in Buddhism and Jainism," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bombay*, 1959-60, Vol. 34-35.

85. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

86. *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*, Ed. S. Radhakrishnan and Charles. A Moore (Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 37.

87. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

88. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

89. *Ibid.*, p. 38.

90. *Ibid.*, p. *Mundaka Upanishad*, Li, 3.

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vedic gods are manifestations, for fear of whom fire burns, for fear of whom the sun shines, for fear of whom the winds, the clouds and death perform their offices.⁹¹

The inner ascent requires adequate preparation. The self is not to be attained without fortitude and discipline⁹².....To see the self one must become "calm, controlled, quiet, patient and contented."⁹³

The Upanishadic God is described as the 'thread (*sutra*) that runs through all things and holds them together. He is the central truth of both animate and inanimate existence and accordingly not merely a transcendent but also an immanent principle.⁹⁴ He is the Real who is at the heart of the universe and is reflected in the infinite depths of the self.⁹⁵

The Isa Upanishads, the smallest of all the Upanishads, tends to deny the doctrine of the unreality of the empirical world which is stressed in some phases of later Indian Philosophy, since it holds that neither knowledge of the supernatural nor knowledge of the natural alone can be sufficient for true wisdom.⁹⁶

The idea of God in the Upanishads, it is to be particularly noted, differs fundamentally from the old vedic view of *deva* or god—a luminous something, but aloof from us and not connected with us or foreign to us, so to say, but according to the Upanishads, whoever worships a deity thinking him to be different from himself, he does not know.⁹⁷ The Upanishads

91. *Ibid.*, III, II, 4; the universe is said to be a reality, but the real in it is Brahman alone. It is on account of Him that fire burns and the wind blows. He is the active principle in the entire universe. S.N. Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, 1969), Vol. I, p. 48.

92. *Taitriya Upanishad*, II, VII.

93. *Bhadaranyaka Upanishad*, IV, 23.

94. M. Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1967, Rep.), p. 82.

95. *A Source Book on Indian Philosophy*, p. 38.

96. *Ibid.* p. 39.

97. *Br. Upanishads*, I, IV, 10; see also M. Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, p. 82. In this connection it may be noted that the sufis

also emphasize the need of devotion to Guru, the channel through whom knowledge of God comes to us.⁹⁸

The philosophy of Shankar who lived in the 8th and 9th centuries is known as *Adwaita* (non-duality or monism). For Shankar the one Reality is Brahman, and it is in the knowledge of the Reality alone that men can find true freedom and abiding joy. As in the Upanishads he believed in the inability of intellectual consciousness to reach the Infinite. The relationship of Brahman and the soul has been conceived by Shankar as one of pure and simple identity and that the Eternal is real and the fleeting world is unreal.⁹⁹ 'The fleeting world' implies the whole realm of finite experience, which is subject to time and change and multiplicity. 'The whole empirical reality with its names and forms.....rests upon *avidya*.¹⁰⁰ Shankar's attitude

too stressed the paramount necessity of the feeling of oneness with the Deity. As long as the consciousness of separation exists, the full realisation of God is not possible.

98. *The Upanishad*, VI, 23, also *Hiriayanna*, p. 112. The 'Guru' is the counterpart of the '*murshid*' of the sufis. He is the medium, who, as expert, conversant in the spiritual knowledge and the Path (*Tariqa*) leads a neophyte or a disciple (*murid*), ignorant of the Path, to the knowledge and realisation of the supreme Reality. So, a *murshid* is only a *via media*, a means to the end, i.e. realization of God. For instance, one can receive some water of a sea from a man who has visited it or sailed in it. The man who offers water from the sea is never the sea himself. Likewise, the *murshid* who offers guidance to a *murid* can never be confused with God, nor can he be deemed as a partner with Him—such an idea will be shirk or infidelity. In this connection see Md. Abdul Karim's *Irshad-i-Khaleqia* (Jessore, Bangladesh, 1356 B.S.), p. 454. Jalal al-Din Rumi says in his *Mathnavi* (Vol. 5) that a *pir* or a *murshid* should be treated as a Prophet of his time in the spiritual sense, for the light of the Prophet shines through him. In the words of Rumi (*Op. cit.*, *ibid.*, p. 454):

کرنی دقت خویش است ای مرید زانکه از او نور نبی آمد پدید

99. Sidney Spencer, *op. cit.*, *Mysticism in World Religion* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966), p. 36.
100. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy* (Princeton University Press, 1957), II, p. 579; Sidney Spencer, *Mysticism in World Religion*, p. 36.

to the world is not altogether consistent or clear, for he sometimes suggests the world is an illusion due simply to the blindness or ignorance (*avidya*) of finite beings.¹⁰¹

The greatest and the most influential of Vaishnava Philosophers was Ramanuja, Ramanuja's philosophy is above all characterized by Bhakti, which plays a great part in the teaching of the Bhagavad Gita. Ramanuja's philosophy, known as a variety of *Advaita*, is described as Vishistadaitabad (qualified non-dualism), which is in contrast to Shankar's system of pure and simple non-dualism. It is a system of identity in difference. God is eternally one, yet in that oneness there exists from all eternity the potentiality of the infinite variety of created beings.¹⁰² In other words, God as unity manifests Himself in diverse phenomena, which may be briefly described as unity in multiplicity or diversity. Madhab's philosophy is known as *Dwaita* (dualism). Madhab's philosophy is the highest form of monism. He regards Brahman as the one independent Reality, from whom all things come into being and who is the operating cause of all events or the ultimate and final cause of all things. There is no real agent as Brahma and man's great error is to regard himself as a real agent.¹⁰³ Madhab believed that the self and God are two totally different entities.¹⁰⁴

The main goal of the Vedanta Philosophy is to reach beneath the surface of appearances and realize the final and ultimate truth underlying man, the microcosm and the universe, the macrocosm.¹⁰⁵

The Bhagavad Gita is a part of the Mahabharat and its authorship is attributed to Vyasa. It takes up the Upanishadic conception of Brahman as absolute reality. In the Gita the supreme is at once the transcendental, the cosmic, and the

101. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

102. *Ibid.*, p. 41; S.R. Bhatt, *Studies in Ramanuja Vedanta* (New Delhi: Heritage Publishers, 1975), p. 59.

103. Sidney Spencer, *Mysticism in World Religion*, p. 46.

104. M. Hiriayanna, *The Essentials of Indian Philosophy* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1951), p. 151.

105. Man, the microcosm (the little universe—*Alam-i-Saghir*) reflects in miniature, the macrocosm (the greater universe—*Alam-i-Kabir*).

individual reality. The supreme not only supports but also governs the whole cosmic action. The same supreme which is one in all and above all is present in the individual.¹⁰⁶ He is responsible for the creation, preservation, and destruction of the universe.

The outlook of the Gita is in essentials substantially the same as that which is characteristic of the Upanishads. God is the imperishable, the supreme, the light of all lights, who transcends the created world of which He is the source and the goal. Just as in the Upanishads, equal stress is laid on the immanence as on the transcendence of God.¹⁰⁷ As the Gita says, all things dwell in God and He dwells in all things. 'He is seated in the hearts of all, unperishing within the perishing.'¹⁰⁸ He who sees Me everywhere, and sees everything in Me, of him I never lose hold, and he will never lose hold of Me.¹⁰⁹

According to the Gita, the right way of life lies in the disinterested service and devotion and in the spirit of detachment and surrender of ourselves and all our actions to God.¹¹⁰ The Gita has emphasized Bhakti (love), which purifies the soul and prepares the way for union. 'He who offers to Me with devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit, a cup of water, that offering of a loving soul is acceptable to Me.....Be assured that none who loves Me shall perish.'¹¹¹

106. *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*, p. 101. The conception of the Supreme as mentioned above, has close affinity with the Quranic and sufi view.

107. Sidney Spencer, *Mysticism in World Religion*, p. 30.

108. XIII: 18, 28.

109. VI: 30: 'I am taste in the waters, I am the light of the sun and the moon.' cf. 'Allah is the light of the Heavens and the earth.'—(Al-Quran XXIV. 35).

110. قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

"Say, verily my prayers and sacrifice and my life and death are for Allah, the Lord of the universe"—(The Quran, VI: 163).

111. 26, 30 f; cf. Hafiz—

هرگز نمیرد آنکه دلش زنده شد عشق ثبت است بر جریده عالم دوام ما

'Never dies one whose heart has been awakened with love'. Our

The Gita is interested in the process of redeeming the world and so this aspect of Vishnu is emphasized. Krishna represents the Vishnu aspect of the supreme. The Gita says that Krishna is an incarnation or descent of the Divine into the human frame. The theory of Avatara is an eloquent expression of the law of the spiritual world. Arjuna offered his love and devotion to Krishna as the visible manifestation of God, the embodiment in human form of the divine grace and love. If God is looked upon as the Saviour of man. He must manifest Himself whenever the forces of evil threaten to destroy human values.¹¹²

The world for the Gita is the scene of an active struggle between good and evil in which God is deeply interested. He bestows all his gifts of love and power in helping man to resist the forces of evil.¹¹³

According to the Gita, the goal of union with God may be attained by Jyanayoga (the way of knowledge), bhaktiyoga (the way of devotion) and karmayoga (the way of action). Knowledge, devotion and work are complementary both when we seek the goal and after we attain it.¹¹⁴ As the Gita says, we may climb the mountain by different paths but the view from the summit is identical for all.¹¹⁵

Saivism and Vaishnavism

To the Hindu Vishnu and Siva form the two poles of his religions. Siva is the destroyer and rebuilder of various forms

names are written in the external record of the universe—*Diwan*, V. 39.

112. *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*, p. 101.

113. God cannot but desire the triumph of good over evil, but for the appreciation of good there is the necessity of evil, as light cannot be appreciated without darkness. So, the opposites are always indispensable.

114. Sufis too hold the view that 'Ilm (knowledge), 'Ishq (love) and 'Amal (work) are essential and complementary in the attainment of the spiritual goal.

115. S. Radhakrishnan, *The Bhagavad Gita* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1949, Rep.), p. 75.

of life; he has charge of the whole circle of animated creation, the incessant round of birth and death in which all Nature eternally revolves.¹¹⁶ Manifold are the forms in which he manifests himself.

The Saivas represent the conservative force in the history of Hinduism. Saivism has developed into some sects, such as Urdhabahus, who extend the arms over the head till the muscles wither from non-use, the Akasamukhins, who keep the neck bent back looking up to the sky; the Kapaliks, who use a human skull for a drinking-cup.¹¹⁷

Two of the Saiva sects, the Smartas and the Lingayats deserve special mention. The Smartas, those who follow tradition (Smriti), are Brahmans of the South Deccan and Madras. Though they refer their origin to the teaching of Sankaracharya, the Saiva missionary, they are not exclusively Saivite in their beliefs. They teach the identity of man's spirit with the One spirit (Atman, Brahma, which is to be realized only through meditation. They recognize Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva as co-equal manifestations of the one Eternal spirit, and destined ultimately to be reabsorbed into this spirit.¹¹⁸

On a much lower level are the Lingayats (wearers of the lingam or phallus). The founder of the sect was Basava, the bull on which Siva rides. He was Brahmin of Bijapur and prime minister of one of the Kalachurya kings of Kalyani (1145—1167 A.D.).¹¹⁹

The extension of Saivism was the work of two great missionary preachers. The first was Kumaril Bhatta, a Brahman of Bihar, who is said to have instigated the persecution of Buddhists and Jains in Southern India.¹²⁰ His more famous disciple was Sankaracharya. The rise of the Smarta sect of Brahmans was due to his teaching. To him is attributed the foundation of monasteries from Sringeri in Mysore to Badrinath in Kumaun.

116. *The Imperial Gazetteer of India* (New Delhi: Today and Tomorrow's Printers and Publishers, 1885-87), Vol. I, p. 420.

117. *Ibid.*, p. 421.

118. *Ibid.*, p. 422.

119. *Ibid.*, p. 422.

120. *Ibid.*, p. 421.

Much of his life was spent in wandering along the hill country from Kashmir to Nepal. His missionary work largely contributed to the downfall of Buddhism in Northern India. Saivas have deified him as an incarnation of Siva himself.

The forms of Vishnu are manifold. His most important incarnations are Krishna and Rama. Krishna whose name first appears in one of the Upanishads as a scholar, is a prominent personage in the Mahabharat, but always invested with some degree of mysticism.¹²¹ The headquarters of his cult are at Mathura, which was an early seat of Jainism.

Vaishnavism, as it appears in the cult of Rama, preserves the kindness and charity of Buddhism, as well as the tenderness for animal life. The foundations of the Vaishnava beliefs were laid in the Vishnu Purana by some sixth century A.D.

The popularization of the creed was the work of a line of reforms, of whom the first was Ramanuja, a south Indian Brahman, who is said to have flourished between 1017 and 1137 A.D. Ramanuja in opposition to Sankaracharya, maintained that there was one supreme spirit; that individual beings are separate spirits, and the universe non-spirit and God pervades the universe just as individual soul pervades its body.

Fifth in succession to him was Ramananda, who lived during the 14th century and popularised Vaishnavism in Northern India.

One of his twelve disciples was Kabir (1380—1420 A.D.). His teaching even inspired the later founders of Sikhism. Its chief note is to link Hinduism with Islam. A weaver by caste, he taught spiritual equality of all men. According to him, emancipation and release are to be gained by recognizing the Divine spirit under the manifold illusions of the world. The way to peace and salvation is not by religious rituals, but by

121. *Ibid.*, p. 424; The old Vaishnavas regarded Buddha as an incarnation of Vishnu. In '*Haribhatibilas*' of the Gauriya Vaishnavas command of worship of Buddha as incarnation of God has been issued—Bhupendra Nath Dutta, *Banglar Itihash* (Calcutta: Nababharat Publishers, 1383 B.S. 2nd ed.), p. 82.

fervent faith (bhakti) and meditation on God.¹²² He prohibited the use of liquor and worship of idols.

The preaching of this creed in Bengal was undertaken by Chaitanya (1485—1527 A.D.). He preached in central Bengal and Orissa. He preached vehemently against the use of animal food and preached Bhakti or fervent devotion to God as the means to salvation.¹²³

Vaishnavism and Saivism have taken over the main features of Upanishadic teaching—doctrine of *Karma* (work), and the aspiration for emancipation from the round of rebirth and for union with Brahma. Saivism, however, like Tantrickism played an important part in effecting a fusion of Buddhism and Hinduism.¹²⁴

Bhakti is loving devotion to God. It involves complete surrender and means, all actions must be performed for God's sake. Such devotion leads to the realization of God and the union of soul with Him.¹²⁵

According to the Bhagavad Puran there are nine forms of Bhakti of which three are most important: (1) *Sravana* or listening to the praise of God, (2) *Kirtana* or singing the praise of God, (3) *Swarana* or remembering God's name, God's name should be repeated in all circumstances and regularly. All difficulties and obstacles are overcome by this practice if it is accompanied by love. The remembrance of God's name leads to the loss of self in rapture, which the Sufis call '*Hal*'

(حَال) . According to Vishnu Purana, the repetition of

122. *Ibid.*, p. 425.

123. *Ibid.*, p. 426.

124. S.K. Mitra, *A Marvel of Cultural Fellowship* (Bombay: Lalvani Publishing House, 1967), p. 73.

125. L.D. Barnell, *The Heart of India*, p. 80, cited, Sidney Spencer, *Mysticism in World Religion* (London; George Allen and Unwin, 1966). According to Dr. Iswariprasad Bhakti movement started against the rigidity of Vedic religion—(*Medieval India*, 1955, p. 550); according to Dr. Tarachand, Dr. Qureshi and Hunter, Bhakti movement was inspired by Islam but J.N. Sarkar holds that it was propagated in the Gita long before the advent of Islam—op. cit., M.R.

divine names brings deliverance from all sins, which fly like wolves frightened by a lion.¹²⁶

Chaitanya departed from this world in 1533 A.D. About 1591 both Sanatan and Rupa, the main pillars of Bengal Vaishnavism; left this world leaving behind them their nephew Jiva, Lokanatha, Gopal Bhatta, Krishnandas Kaviraj, Raghunandan Das and others and Vrindavana.¹²⁷ Krishnandas wrote some Sanskrit works, and one book in Bengali, viz., Chaitanya Charitamrita, regarded as an authoritative source of reference by the students of Vaishnava literature.¹²⁸

Vaishnavism bridged social gulfs and established a brotherhood of the spirit. Chaitanya insisted on the unity of the Godhead underlying the multitude of idols of popular worship. He thought that God can be realized only by means of a love as ardent and all-embracing as the conjugal passion. He exhorted people to work out their salvation, by pious and strenuous living and not to think of achieving it by any other man's exertions or the mechanical performance of any ritual.¹²⁹

Chaitanya, unlike Kabir and Nanak (1469—1538 A.D.), was not so determined an opponent of caste. He did not himself hate the low-caste people but upheld as right the prejudice of others.¹³⁰

In its philosophy the Bengal school is orthodox, since it accepts the Upanishads, the Brahma *Sutras* and the Gita as authoritative sources. It agrees with the Vedanta in describing that Reality as possessing the three familiar attributes, *sat*,

Srivastava, *Society And Culture In Medieval India*, Allahabad, 1975, p. 39.

126. VI: 8; Sidney Spencer, *Mysticism In World Religion*, p. 49.

127. Radhagovinda Nath, 'A Survey of the Chaitanya Movement,' *The Cultural Heritage of India* (Calcutta: Rama Krishna Mission Institute of Culture, 1956 Rep.), p. 188.

128. *Ibid.*, p. 188,

129. J.N. Sarkar, *Chaitanya's Life and Teachings* (Calcutta: M.C. Sarkar and Sons' Ltd., 1932), pp. 12-13.

130. M.T. Kennedy, *The Chaitanya Movement* (Calcutta: Y.M.C.A., 1925), p. 118; Both Kabir and Nanak reserved their most savage contempt for the inordinate pretensions of the Brahmins—*Ibid.*, p. 183.

chit, ananda. To the Vaishnava the third term, *ananda*, offers the key to the interpretation of the supreme Being. To the Vaishnava, *ananda* offers the interpretation of the supreme Being. It is pure bliss, the ground of all life and the source of all the sentiments (*rasa*) that give human life its meaning and value.¹³¹

From this interpretation of Reality the doctrine of a personal God of love and grace emerges, with loving devotion (*Bhakti*) as the natural relation between this Being and the creatures which have sprung from His creative will.¹³²

Bhagavan or Hari, the name given to the Supreme, is infinite in nature, power and attributes. The creative, destructive and sustaining aspects which appear in Hindu theology as Brahma, Siva and Vishnu, are manifestations of His nature. He is the source of infinite forms. Of all these forms, that of Krishna is the most perfect.¹³³

The Supreme Being seeks the loving devotion of his worshippers, and graciously gives himself to them.¹³⁴ He is Himself the essence of love, the home of all blissfulness and delight. His Supreme delight is in love.¹³⁵ Only by love and adoration can He be attained.¹³⁶

So long as Chaitanya lived Vaishnava society was in order. Disorder and dissention occurred after his death. Different centres came into being around different rival gurus (spiritual preceptor). Such centres were Santipur, Khardah and Srikhanda (district of Burdwan).¹³⁷

Even sometime before the death of Chaitanya signs of schism began to appear. Nityananda was the leader of the party which was chiefly concerned with extending the sway of Vaishnavism among the masses. Virbhadrā continued in his

131. M.T. Kennedy, *The Chaitanya Movement*, pp. 91-92.

132. *Ibid.*, p. 93.

133. *Chaitanya Charitamrita*, II, XV, p. 292.

134. *Ibid.*, II, VIII, p. 213.

135. *Ibid.*, III, IV, p. 498.

136. Nani Gopal Goswami, *Chaitanyer Yuge Gauriya Vaishnava* (Calcutta: Karuna Prakashani, 1379 B.S.), pp. 11-12.

137. M.T. Kennedy, *The Chaitanya Movement*, p. 69.

father's (Chaitanya's) footstep until there was danger of a split. The differences were, however, patched up when he was threatened with excommunication by the Gosvamis of Brindaban.¹³⁸

Later 1,200 bhikshus and 1,300 bhikshunis (Buddhist monks and nuns) were admitted into the fold at Kharadah when Buddhism decayed. They were attracted to the faith of Chaitanya because of its resemblance in many ways to their own faith.¹³⁹

Saivism, Saktatism, Buddhism have mainly two elements: one as the element of rites and rituals, which are neither Hindu, nor Buddhistic in origin, but are of heterogenous nature, representing common stock of heritage,¹⁴⁰ These in fact form the texture of the different schools of Hindu and Buddhist philosophy, giving rise to the different esoteric schools.¹⁴¹

All the Yogic practices of the Tantric Buddhists have grown with the fundamental ideology of Upaya and Prajna, which is essentially the same as that of Siva and *Sakti* of the Tantric Hindus and Krishna and Radha of the Vaishnava Sahajiyas.¹⁴² The Hindu traditional belief is that Siva is the original instructor of all Yoga and the Tantric Buddhists believe that Lord Buddha performed the same function. And Nath cult maintains that Adi Nath is the instructor of all Yoga, and he is none but the Siva of the Hindus and the Buddha of the Buddhists.¹⁴³

Among the non-Islamic mystic cults the so-called Bauls have points of similarity or affinity with other mystic creeds, viz., Vedantism, Vaishnava Sahayia, Baoddha Sahayia and Sufism. The Baul believes in his 'Man of the heart,' as the Sufi

138. *Ibid.*

139. *Ibid.*, p. 70.

140. S.B. Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults* (Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhaya, 1969), pp. 194-195.

141. *Ibid.*, p. 195.

142. The Tantric system or the Tantra, holds that personal contact with the Guru is a more efficacious method of salvation than mere reading of books.—Edward Conze, *Buddhism* (Oxford: Bruno Cassirer, 1953), p. 180.

143. *Ibid.*, p. 195; S.K. Mitra, *A Marvel of Cultural Fellowship*, p. 74.

believes in the presence of his Beloved God within his heart—a spark from the Divine essence.¹⁴⁴ In fact, every creed believes in the all-pervading existence of God as well as his presence within the human heart. That Supreme Being residing in the human heart is man's true self, with whom he is in deep love and it is his ceaseless endeavour to gradually pass away from the human nature (*nasut* in Sufi term) into Divine (*Lahut* in Sufism).

In fact, as already said, besides the common factor, viz., the presence of the Beloved (called Sahayia by the Sahaiyas) in human heart there are also other common factors, viz., breath control (called *Pranayam* in Nathism), the importance of the spiritual guide (called Pir in Sufism and Guru in other Indian religions), and the finite as symbol for the Infinite, to be found in Baul philosophy and other religions, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Nathism and Sufism.¹⁴⁵ Again, all mystical creeds including the Bauls believe that man is the microcosm in which all attributes of the Absolute are united, and in him alone does the absolute become conscious of itself in all its diverse aspects and man (the microcosm) is the epitome of the whole universe (the macrocosm). In short, the philosophy common to all religions in this that the whole universe proceeds from the love of God and love is the underlying principle of the cosmic process as a whole.¹⁴⁶ This is evidenced by the fact that one thing attracts another; in love does the mother conceive the child, in love does the earth hold fast the root of the tree, and its branches, flowers and fruits, and in love does the fruit accumulate juice in its kernel. Thus, love is a powerful creative impulse. God out of love in His infinite mercy created the universe, so that He might be known to His creation. So, creation had its origin in love, which alone maintains and sustains it. This very idea is the key note of Jnana Sagar of

144. وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي

'I (Allah) have breathed of My spirit into him (man)—al-Quran, XV: 29.

145. Khitimohan Sen, *Banglar Baul*, 1954, p. 49.

146. S.B. Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults*, pp. 177-178.

Ali Raja in which Sufistic ideas have been blended with Yoga and other local ideas.¹⁴⁷ This philosophy has been epitomised in Bauls' 'Dehatatta'.¹⁴⁸

The Baul cult of Bengal is indeed a transformed form of the Nath cult, which is now practically dead. The Bauls have adopted the Yogic practices of the Naths and have inherited their mystic poetry.

According to Upendra Nath Bhattacharya, Baul cult had its origin, evolution and development approximately between 1650 and 1925 A.D.¹⁴⁹ But Khitimohan Sen is of the opinion that before the advent of Chaitanya Baul cult seems to have existed. Baul cult was known to Chaitanya and his compatriots and at times they are said to have called themselves as Bauls.¹⁵⁰

That the Muslim Sufis of Bengal were influenced by the Yogic culture is evidenced by the fact that an Arabic translation of a Sanskrit work on Yoga named Amrit Kundu, was made with the help of a converted Hindu Yogi from Kamrupa named Bhujar Brahmin, by Rukn al-Din Samarqandi, the Imam and chief qazi of Lakhnawati during the rule of Ali Mardan Khalji in Bengal (1210—1213 A.D.).¹⁵¹

The presence of so many Natha elements in the Sufi literature of Bengal is an evidence of the fact that most of the Tantric and Yogic ideas prevailing among some of the Sufis, had come through the channel of Nathism.¹⁵²

147. Ali Raja, *Jnanasagar*, p. 26; S.B. Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults* pp. 33-35.

148. Surajit Das Gupta, *Bharatbarsha O Islam* (Calcutta: Shankar Prakashan, 1383 B.S.), p. 112.

149. U.N. Bhattacharya, *Banglar Baul O Baul gan* (C.U., 1364 B.S.), p. 132.

150. K.M. Sen, *Banglar Baul*, 1954, pp. 48-50.

151. A.B.M. Habibullah, *The Foundation of Muslim Rule in India* (Allahabad: Central Book Depot, 1961), p. 309; M.R. Tarafdar, *Husain Shahi Bengal* (Dacca: Asiatic Society of Pakistan, 1965), p. 221. The Arabic version is called,—*Haudal-Hayat* and the Persian version was made by the Shattari Saint Muhammad Ghaus of Gwalior early in the 16th century and was named *Bahral-Hayat*.

152. *Ibid.*, p. 213.

Sankhya and the Yoga Philosophies

Sankhya means reasoning. The Sage who is said to have propounded this school was Kapila, according to whom there are two entities, spirit and matter, *purusha* and *prakriti*. The phenomenal world and all beings and their actions are all the manifold manifestations of matter. Matter is nousentient and is constituted of three dispositions called guna-purity (*sattva*), passion (*rajas*) and darkness (*tamas*).¹⁵³

Sankhya and Yoga philosopher hold, like the Buddhists, that experience is sorrowful and momentary pleasures are ineffective in eradication of the roots of sorrow. Unless and until man realises the utter futility of pleasure and the world and our experiences are full of sorrow, he will not be anxious for *mukti* or the final deliverance of sin.¹⁵⁴ Sacrifice of animals, sanctioned by the Vedic rites, is not sanctioned by the four systems (*Sankhya*, *Yoga*, *Jainism* and *Buddhism*), since it involves pain and therefore some sins.¹⁵⁵

The school of Yogis is ascribed to Patanjali. *Yoga* means to join two persons or things. *Yoga* sets forth a system of controlling body and mind through physical and ethical disciplines. Besides that, it has a special significance in philosophical parlance and that is a union of the individual with the Supreme Soul. The practical side of the system comprises several means called '*Margas*' (paths) leading to the goal. They are broadly speaking divisible into three classes, namely *Juana-marga*, *Yoga-marga*, or *Upasona-marga* and *Karma-marga*. The follower of the *Yoga-marga* has however to go through a prescribed course of exercises, which may be physical or mental, till the mind is brought under full control and the Pure Essence is pleased to reveal its own secret.¹⁵⁶ An aspirant

153. *Sources of Indian Tradition* (Columbia Univ. Press, 1958 and 1966), p. 297.

154. N.B. Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp. 264-65.

155. *Ibid.*, p. 265.

156. P.C. Divanji, "Bhagavat Gita and Bhagavat Purana As Model For The *Yogavasistha*," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bombay*, 1959-60, Vol. 34-35, p. 45.

following this *marga* does an act with pure and unselfish motive and leaves the result thereof to the Almighty.¹⁵⁷ He works in a spirit of detachment and resignation to the will of the Almighty. And when that kind of wisdom is attained the soul experiences a state of perfect freedom, in which state it is immaterial whether one discharges one's duties or lives in a far away solitary jungle.¹⁵⁸

The main goal of the *Vedanta* philosophy is to reach beneath the surface of appearances and realize the final and ultimate truth underlying man, the microcosm and the universe, the macrocosm.¹⁵⁹

After elaborate discussion let us finally analyse the affinity and difference among the *Vedanta*, *Sankhya* and *Yoga* philosophies. The *Vedanta Sstras* refute the *Sankhya* in many places by pointing out that insentient matter cannot explain creation and that a sentient Supreme alone can be the source of this universe.

Closely related to the *Sankhya* is the school of *Yoga*, ascribed to the Sage Patanjali. This school accepts the philosophical doctrine of the *Sankhya*, with one important difference in that it accepts a God as the supreme or sentient eternal Teacher. The *Yoga*, as already said, sets forth a system for controlling the mind and body through physical and ethical disciplines.

Judaism

The Jewish mystic belief is this that although man has a separate existence and is a mortal being, he is still in his essence a spiritual being. His body is an outer covering, a veil, not the man himself. Yet the human form has a cosmic significance. It is a microcosm, which includes all things, higher and lower, in itself.¹⁶⁰ This is just what *Sufism* maintains. So *Sufis* also say

157. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

158. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

159. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

160. Sidney Spencer, *Mysticism in World Religion* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966), p. 193.

that the real man is his soul, a spark of the Divine Soul, which temporarily connected with the body, is yet immortal and imperishable; its ultimate goal is the union with the original source, God, the creator.

So far as soul is concerned, Jewish mystic belief too is akin to Sufi belief. According to it, the lowest soul is the principle of life ('*nefesh*'). The next higher soul is spirit ('*Ruh*')—the soul as the Seat of moral attributes and of the intellect or reason. The highest of all is the 'holy soul', the divine spark (which has been infused into man), which provides man with its light (this spirit has been termed as 'Neshama'), and which is 'the breath of higher spirituality, the bridge which connects man with the heavenly world.'¹⁶¹

Sufism

Sufism was originally a practical system of religious beliefs and not a speculative system. It was a system of thought or action based on the noble ideals of human nature, holding that man is capable of self-fulfilment and of ethical conduct. It absorbed the essence of Islamic teachings, but later the wisdom of the ancient Masters and the learning of the humanists was added to it. It assimilated many a divergent ingredients and presented them in a new dress. In course of time it broke with the formal, dogmatic theory by giving a new interpretation of the creator and the creation. It became monistic rather than dualistic, believing in identity and fusion rather than separation like orthodox Islam.¹⁶²

In a nutshell the origin and historical evolution of Sufism has been crystallised here. Let us examine how far it was Islamic originally and to what extent it absorbed the foreign or extraneous elements. It is to be investigated as to how Sufism was inspired by the Quran and the life and example of

161. Miller, *History of Jewish Mysticism*, p. 102; Sidney Spencer, *Mysticism in World Religion*, pp. 193-194; the idea is Platonic as well as Jewish. E.I.J. Rosenthal, *Judaism and Islam* (World Jewish Congress, Britain), p. 123.

162. S.H. Askari, 'Maktub Literature as a Source of Socio-Political History: 'The Maktub of Sufi of Firdausi order of Bihar', *Khuda Bakhsh Library Journal*, No. 1, Patna, 1977

the Prophet, and how it came to have accretions in later ages from various creeds and religions such as Christianity, Neoplatonism, Buddhism, Hinduism, etc.

As regards the origin of Sufism, Massignon is of the opinion that the mystical Tafsir of the Quran and the mystical *Hadiths* of the inner life of the Prophet about which we know very little are comparatively late and therefore suspect. But the tendencies to mystical life, akin to other countries and nations, were not lacking in the Islam of Arabia, of the first centuries of the Hijra.¹⁶³ Originally though he emphasized the Islamic influence more than any other non-Islamic influence, later he became more and more convinced that Greek and particularly Christian influences had been at work.¹⁶⁴

Gibb is of the opinion that Sufism was stimulated by contact with Christian mysticism and gnosticism.¹⁶⁵

Thulock and Von Kremer are of the opinion that Sufism may be considered to be an indigenous Arab phenomenon arising independently and not imported.¹⁶⁶

So far as the contention of Thulock and Von Kremer is concerned, we have some other strong evidence to corroborate them. Ibn Khaldun too is of the opinion that Sufism virtually has been prevalent since the time of the Prophet,¹⁶⁷ although the term Sufi was introduced later. In the opinion of Massignon

163. Louis Massignon, 'Tasawwuf', *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leyden, 1924), pp. 684-685.

164. Karl John, *op. cit.*, 'Origin, Development and Ideology of Sufism,' *History of Iranian Literature* (University of Leyden, 1956), p. 229.

165. H.A.R. Gibb, *Studies on the Civilization of Islam*; A.E. Krymsky, 'A Sketch on the Development of Sufism to the end of the third of the Hijra', *Islamic Quarterly* (October, 1959, January, 1960), pp. 129-30.

166. *Ibid.*

167. Ibn Khaldun points out that all the later characteristics of Sufism are found in the life of the Prophet and his Companions; complete devotion to God, constant remembrance of God, aversion to false splendour of the world and abstinence from pleasure, property and position, an attitude of retirement from the world, etc. are found in the life of the Prophet and his followers as well as in the lives of Sufis.—*Muqaddima*, Tr. Franz Rosenthal (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958), p. 76.

the term Sufi was applied first to Jabir bin Hayyan (d. 867 A.D.) and Abu Hashim of Kufa (d. 767 A.D.).¹⁶⁸ Archer observes: 'In any historical survey of Islam mystical current is seen to loom large. Its source has not plainly appeared in the view. Greek, Persian and Buddhist waters have joined the stream and swelled it, but it arose first of all out of the deserts of Arabia—not a mirage, but a bubbling spring, a mohammedan origin, the experience of the Prophet himself.'¹⁶⁹

Titus Burckhardt holds similar view when he says that there is no adequate reason for doubting the historical authenticity of the spiritual 'descent' of the Sufi masters, a descent which can be traced in an unbroken 'chain' (*Silsilah*) back to the Prophet himself.¹⁷⁰

Again essentially the same view is maintained by Trimmingham when he says that Sufism was a natural development within Islam, owing to non-Muslim sources though receiving radiations from the ascetical—mystical life and thought of eastern Christianity. The outcome was an Islamic mysticism following distinctive Islamic lines of development. Subsequently, a vast and elaborate mystical system was formed which, whatever it may owe to Neo-Platonism, gnosticism, Christian mysticism, or other systems, we may truly regard, as did the Sufis themselves, as 'the inner doctrine of Islam, the underlying mystery of the Quran'.¹⁷¹

Nicholson is of the opinion that Greek mystical ideas, viz., the doctrines of emanation, illumination, gnosis and ecstasy were easily accessible to the Muslims of western Asia and

168. Mynorsky, 'Sufism', *Islamic Quarterly* (London: October, 1957 and January, 1968); Jami, *Nafahat al-Uns*.

169. J.C. Archer, *Mystical Elements in Muhammad* (Yale, U.S.A., 1924), Preface, p. 5. According to Richard Bell, 'He had the mystic quality of a seeker after truth, but that did not destroy his practical bent; it only gave it a religious direction.'—*The Origin of Islam in Its Christian Environment* (London: Frank Cass and Co., 1968 Rep.), pp. 71-72.

170. T. Burckhardt, *An Introduction to Sufi Doctrine* (Lahore: Ashraf, 1963 Rep.), p. 5.

171. S. Trimmingham, *The Sufi Orders In Islam* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 2.

Egypt where Sufi theosophy first took place.¹⁷² After Justinian's decree (529 A.D.) Neo-Platonism, having declined in Greece, lingered on in Syria and survived upto the Muslim conquest.¹⁷³

In the opinion of Krymsky, the influence of Greek Philosophy (Neo-Platonism) on Sufism must not be considered primary and basic but rather supplementary. The extraneous influence which was to modify and then radically to change the primitive nature of Arab Sufism came not from the West, but from the East. It came from Iran and Neo-Platonism only lent its support.¹⁷⁴

As a matter of fact, no idea can evolve and progress unless it has some root; extraneous influences can provide some stimulus, but cannot create anything out of nothing.¹⁷⁵

So far as the term Sufi is concerned, no etymology or analogy can be found for this term in the Arabic language. It is obvious that it is a nick-name. Theories deriving the word from *al-Safa* (purity or sincerity), *as-saff* (row) and *Ahl-i-suffa*¹⁷⁶ (People of the Bench) in the mosque of Medina are improbable from the point of view of linguistic analogy.¹⁷⁷

172. R.A. Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), Introduction, p. 13.

173. Krymsky, 'A Sketch of the Development of Sufism'. *The Islamic Quarterly* (London: The Islamic Cultural Centre, January-April, 1961), p. 81.

174. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

175. M. Iqbal, *The Development of Metaphysics in Persia* (Lahore: Bazm-i-Iqbal, 1959), p. 76.

176. Ahl-i-Suffa lived on the veranda of the mosque of Medina, devoted to prayers, meditations, recitations of the Quran and learning of traditions (*Hadith*). Like the early ascetics they lived austere and pious life, Al-Kalabadhi, *Kitab-al-T'aarruf li Madhhab ahl al-Tasawwuf* Tr. A.J. Arberry (Lahore: Ashraf Publication, 1966), p. 8; Hujviri, *Kashf al-Mahjub*, Tr. R.A. Nicholson (London: Gibb Memorial Series, 1959), p. 22; Margaret Smith, *Studies in Early Mysticism In The Near And Middle East* (London: The Sheldon Press, 1931), p. 154; J.C. Archer, *Mystical Elements in Mohammad* (Yale University Press, 1924), p. 24.

177. al-Qushairi (986-1072 A.D.), 'Tasawwuf,' *Risala* (Cairo, 1367/1948), p. 126; Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddima*, Tr. Franz Rosenthal, p. 77.

The most obvious etymology is that which connects the word with *Suf*¹⁷⁸ (wool), because the Sufis generally used coarse woollen garments. They were opposed to a life of luxuries and enjoyments. The term Sufi was applied to the great souls a little before the end of the second century of the Hijra or the 8th century.¹⁷⁹

Man, the best creation, is possessed of certain potentialities, good and bad latent in him. A perpetual conflict between his good qualities and bad propensities goes on within him and in that struggle he is to emerge triumphant by subduing his evil proclivities and developing his noble faculties, and then he can be true to his self and realise that loyalty to God virtually amounts to loyalty to his own ideal nature, since God is the ultimate spiritual basis of all life.¹⁸⁰

The noble potentialities that a man possesses are his *qalb* (heart), *fuad* (inner heart), *ruh* (soul) and *nafs* (lower self). Al-Tirmidhi, however, divides the heart into four parts (he calls them *maqamat*), viz., breast (*sadr*), the heart proper (*qalb*), the inner heart (*fuad*), and the intellect (*lubb*).¹⁸¹ Each of these *maqamat* has its own characteristics and functions. Thus, the breast is the abode of the light of Islam (*Nur al-Islam*). By Islam Tirmidhi means in a restricted sense the knowledge of the Shari'ah, such as prayer, fasting, etc.¹⁸²

The heart proper (*qalb*) is the abode of the light of faith (*Nur-al-Iman*). By faith is meant the acceptance by the heart of the truth of God's revelation. The light of faith is constant and neither increases nor decreases.

The inner (*Fuad*) is the abode of the light of gnosis (*Nur al-M'arifat*).¹⁸³ The inner heart (*Fuad*) is the seat of vision

178. *Ibid.*, p. 77.

179. *Ibid.*, p. 77; Jami, *Nafahat al-Uns*, p. 31; Margaret Smith, p. 158.

180. M. Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Lahore: Ashraf, 1965), p. 147.

181. Abu 'Abdullah Muhammad Ibn 'Ali Al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi, *Bayan al-Farq baynal-Sadr wa al-qalb wa al-Fuad wa al-lubb*, Tr. Nicholas heer, *The Muslim World* (Leiden: Hartford Seminar Foundation, 1961), p. 25.

182. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

183. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

(*Mushahida*) of reality, whereas the heart (*qalb*) has mere knowledge of the Reality. When knowledge and vision are combined, the unseen becomes seen and the servant becomes certain in his belief through knowledge and vision.¹⁸⁴

The intellect (*lubb*) is a simple light, like elemental things; it is the same as the '*aql*.'

The spirit (*ruh*) is basically luminous. It increases in righteousness through Divine assistance and through excellence in conduct and true humility.¹⁸⁵

The self (*nafs*), as already said, is like a hot smoke and is not a part of the heart but is in the stomach and is the cause of evil desires and propensities. It is of four categories, viz. *nafs al-ammara* (the undisciplined, misguiding self) belonging to the rank of a Muslim, *nafs al-Mulhamah* (the inspired self), which is somewhat less evil and belongs to the rank of a *mumin*. *Nafs al-Lawwamah* (the blaming or reproaching self) is the self of the gnostic ('*arif*') and *nafs al-Mutmainnah* (the peaceful soul), of the Perfect man. The four stages of the development of self corresponds to the four stages of the spiritual development of the Sufi.¹⁸⁶—*Shari'at, Tariqat, M'arifat* and *Haqiqat*.

The *nafs* or lower self (*nafs-i-ammara*) has to be subdued and controlled before a man can proceed on the onward journey of spiritual development. When he conquers this *nafs*, he proceeds on to the other higher stages of spiritual development till he attains the highest stage, becomes perfect and contented with his Lord, who also becomes contented in him. Now his will is merged in the Divine will or he is in complete union with his Lord, having surrendered or renounced his own will

On the contrary, when the lower soul (*nafs*) overpowers the heart or in other words, the smoke like substance of *nafs* (i.e. evil desires and passions) obscures the light of the heart, the latter ceases to illumine the breast, which is then controlled by *nafs*. This brings about the ruin of a man.

184. *Ibid.*, p. 163.

185. *Ibid.*, p. 246.

186. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

The *m'arifah* (gnosis) cannot be complete and perfect without the knowledge of shari'ah (outward knowledge) and the shari'ah alone will not be fruitful unless it is supplemented by *m'arifah*. And *m'arifah* is obtained by adopting *tariqah* to which a salik or a traveller of the Sufi path is initiated. When the salik follows the commands of the shariah¹⁸⁷ and acts upto the teachings and practices of the Prophet, he is rightly guided, and in following the guidance of his spiritual preceptor he follows the guidance of God and His Prophet. And then he understands the gnosis (*m'arifah*) and realises the mysteries of love of God and ultimately attains the Truth (*Haqiqat*). When he reaches this stage, he attains union with his Lord, who is both his origin and his ultimate goal. At this stage he declares God with his mind, his tongue and his actions to be one, and he acts only for the satisfaction of God and never acts from hope or fear other than God, which to him is nothing short of blasphemy or infidelity. He also puts his trust on none else other than God and keeps his heart always in remembrance of God.¹⁸⁸

So far as the 'Path' is concerned it has seven stages, which a salik or a traveller on the 'Path' has to traverse in order to reach his goal. The seven stages are—(1) Repentance, (2) Abstinence, (3) Renunciation, (4) Poverty, (5) Patience, (6) Trust in God, (7) Satisfaction. The 'Stages' constitute the ascetic and ethical discipline of the Sufi and they are to be

187. Shaikh Abdullah Ansari of Herat says:

حقیقت دریاست و شریعت کشتی، تو دریا بے کشتی چه گذشتی؟

'Truth is an ocean and shari'at is a boat. How will you cross the ocean without a boat?'

V. Zhukovsky, 'Songs of the Elder of Herat'. Tr. (from Russian), L. Bogdanov, *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal*. Calcutta, 1940, Vol. V., p. 211.

188. Poet Hafiz in his Diwan says:

حضور می گریه می خواهی از غائب مشو حافظ

'If you want nearness (to God),
Never remain absent from His recollection, O Hafiz!

distinguished from 'stages' (*ahwal*, plural of *hal*), which are ten in number, viz. meditation, nearness to God, love, fear, hope, longing, intimacy, tranquillity, contemplation, and certainty. The 'stages' (*hal*) can be acquired by one's own efforts, the 'states' (*maqam*) are spiritual feelings over which a man has no control.¹⁸⁹

A stage (*hal*) is not permanent; it changes, but a state (*Maqam*) is permanent. Again, a 'stage' or *hal* may be elevated to a 'state' on *maqam*. For instance, 'Muhasiba' (self-analysis) may be a 'stage' (*hal*) of a Sufi for some time, but it may turn into his 'state' (*maqam*) later, similarly 'muraqiba' (meditation) may be *hal* for some time and it may again be his *maqam*. When 'nafs' or lower self is subdued and the higher self gets the upper hand *hal* or lower self is subdued and the higher self gets the upper hand *hal* is converted into *maqam*. One, in the *maqam* of 'mushahida' (keen observation of the glories of God) may pass from one *hal* to another *hal*, so that he reaches the elevated position of 'Fana' (self-annihilation) and from there he passes on to *Baqa* (everlasting life in God) or he passes from the position of 'Aynal Yaqi'n' (firm faith in the Reality) to the position of 'Haqqal-Yaqi'n'¹⁹⁰ (realization of the Reality).

As regards the ethics of a Sufi, patience (*sabr*) in adversity and humility (*Ijz*) in prosperity have been recommended, as admonished by the Prophet and saints.¹⁹¹

So far as repentance (*Taubah*) is concerned, it implies three things, fulfillment of which makes it perfect—

- (i) To express regrets and feel ashamed over commission of a sin committed against the command of Shari'ah;
- (ii) To abstain from a sin, committed before;

189. Abu Nasr Sarraj, *Kitab al-Lum'aa fi'l-Tasawwuf*; R.A. Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), pp. 28, 29.

190. Muhammad Shihabal-Din Suhrawardy, 'Awarif al-M'arif, Urdu tr. Hafiz Syed Rashid Ahmad Arshad (Lahore: Shaikh Gholam Ali and Sons, 1965, 2nd Ed.), p. 534.

191. *Ibid.*, p. 289.

(iii) To vow not to commit a sin, committed before.¹⁹²

To the Sufi God is the one real Being which underlies all phenomena. The latter are regarded sometimes as an emanation from God, sometimes as a mirror which reflects Him; and yet they are essentially one with Him. The aim of the Sufi is to realise that all appearance of 'otherness' is false, and that his own 'phenomenal self' is likewise a delusion; and through this realisation to escape from the bondage of his unreal selfhood and reunite with the one real Being from whom he originally came forth.¹⁹³ The problem for the Sufi then, is to attain to this realisation and through it to escape from self.

The novice enters upon the 'path', and at the direction of the Shaikh, he now undergoes a course of ascetic discipline, the immediate object of which is the mortification of the lower self or '*nafs*'.¹⁹⁴

Mortification, called '*Mujahida*' by the Sufis, consists in the humbling of pride, the resisting of the passions, and the recognition, through suffering, of the vileness of the original nature. The surrender of the will to God and mental concentration (*Tawajjuh*) upon Him not only extinguish the evil qualities, but also replace them by their opposites, i.e. humility, purity, and self-knowledge.¹⁹⁵

Mortification of the '*nafs*' may be said to be negative side of the Sufis discipline and mental concentration its positive side, and the latter finds its chief expression in the practice of the '*dhikr*' or recollection (of God). Among the outward means of mortification, are fasting, silence and solitude.

192. Hadith, cited, Al-Qushairi, *Risala*, Urdu tr. by Pir Muhammad Hasan (Islamabad: Idara-i-Tahqiqat-i-Islami, 1970), p. 153. On the authority of Anas bin Malik a *Hadith* runs to the effect that one who repents of his sin is deemed to be one who has not committed any sin at all; see *Risala* Urdu tr., p. 153.

193. R.A. Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1963), p. 83.

194. 'Self-mortification, practised with the aid of God, is the direct cause of union with God.'—Nicholson (tr.), *Kashf al-Mahjub*, p. 201.

195. Pleasant Hurst, 'The Mysticism of the Desert', *The Moslem World* (New York: Kraus Reprint Corporation, 1966), p. 19.

The Sufis deliberately cultivated a certain state of mind known as "ecstasy" as the condition of receiving the revelation of God. To induce such a state of mind is of the paramount importance to the Sufi, who believes it to be the only means whereby man can communicate with God and be united with Him. Singing and even dancing were used to bring it about. Ghazzali, Rumi and many other Sufis have highly spoken of the efficacy of music as an aid to ecstasy.¹⁹⁶ The Sufi forgets as though his own existence and remains ever conscious of the presence of God, the consciousness of duality i.e. 'Thou' and 'I', vanishes from him.¹⁹⁷ The fleeting and evanescent pleasures and objects of life have no charm for him, he seeks the substance, the Reality.¹⁹⁸ The Sufi is never allured by any worldly fortune or by any self and power or by any prospects of heavenly enjoyments.¹⁹⁹ Indeed, the mystic conception of love has imparted an extraordinary beauty and charm to the

196. P.K. Hitti, *Islam—A way of Life* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970).

197. Rumi says:

مکانم لامکان باشد، نشانم بے نشان باشد
نه تن باشد نه جان باشد، که من از جان جانا نام

'My space is spaceless, my sign is signless, Neither there is body, nor is there soul for I am from the soul of the Beloved—*Diwan-i-Shamsi Tabriz*; And again Amir Khusrau of Delhi says:

من تو شدم تو من شدم، من تن شدم تو جان شدم
تا کس نگوید بعد ازین، من دیگرم تو دیگری

In the above verses too the distinction of Thou and I vanishes when Amir Khusrau says that I become Thou and thou I, and I become the body and thou the soul, so that the distinction or 'separateness' is altogether obliterated, as it were.

198. Rumi says: "The Sufis take the meat leaving the bones for other to fight over", *op. cit.*, H.E.E. Hayes, 'Sufism In the West', *The Moslem World* (New York: Krans Reprint Corporation, 1966), p. 31.

199. cf. The views of Shaikh Abul Hasan Khurqani, Sari Saqati and Bayazid of Bistam,—R.A. Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1959), pp. 87, 107.

religious observances. Gibb is of the opinion that when the orthodox institution had partly because of its rigidity and partly because of its alliance with the secular authorities, lost much of its power to touch the hearts of the ordinary Muslims, the sufis endowed the rituals of Islam with a warmth and intensity and also gave power and depth to Islamic teachings which were lacking in the rituals of orthodox Muslim.²⁰⁰ Here lies the justification of Sufism. Now, on the whole, it may be said: "Sufism was intellectually born in Arabia, devotionally reared in Persia, and spiritually completed in India".²⁰¹

Now, an important point of distinction has to be noticed between the expansion of Islam in North India and South India and islands of South-east Asia. The Arab merchants having embraced Islam came to Kerala (South India) and the people of the place listened to a new message of Islam brought by the Arab Muslim merchants. The message was this that mankind has been created in different races, yet humanity is judged not on the basis of birth but on the basis of conduct and work.²⁰² The depressed lower caste people of Kerala, so long under the tyrannical Brahmin subjection, listened to the Islamic message of hope and they sought asylum in Islam.²⁰³ They had tasted of liberalism and tolerance during Buddhist ascendancy, but it was ousted by Brahminism by the 5th century A.D.

In the 12th century (during the life time of Ramanuja) Islam was spread by the Muslim merchants and Sufis on the Malabar coast, Gujarat and even on the Coromondal coast, a region called by the Muslim merchants and travellers an M'abar. Trade connections of the Arabs with the Malabar coast led to the establishment of Arab colonies there. The Arabs married the native and settled there. The later Moplas were the

200. H.A.R. Gibb, *Studies on the Civilization of Islam* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), p. 217.

201. Pleasant Hurst, 'The Mysticism of the Desert', *The Moslem World*, p. 16

202. The Quran, 49: 13-15.

203. Zain al-Din, *Tuhfat al-Mujahidin*; Surajit Dasgupta, *Bharatbarsha O Islam* (Calcutta: Shankar Prakashan, 1383 B.S.), p. 128; Narendra Nath Bhattacharya, *Bharatiya Dharmer Itihash* (Calcutta: General Printers and Publishers, 1384 B.S.).

descendants of these Arabs. The Arabs dealt in spices, tusk, sandal, cotton and silk, which were exported to the west. Till the advent of the Portuguese in the 15th century the Arabs enjoyed supremacy in trade.²⁰⁴

Islam came, in any case, by sea and on the heels not of conquest but of trade. Its initial triumphs were consequently along the coastal regions such as Northern Sumatra, South-west Malaya, South Borneo, South Celebes, and, most important of all, North Java. In the non-Javanese areas Islam, which had come to the island not out of Arabia but India, remained largely confined to the coastal areas, to the harbour towns and their immediate environs.²⁰⁵

In South-east Asia expansion of Islam was done by Sufis who were closely connected with the merchants who visited the said area for the purpose of carrying on trade. Gibb is of the opinion that after the fall of Baghdad and the Abbasid Caliphate in 1258 A.D. the Sufis played an important part in preserving the solidarity of the Islamic world and they developed affiliations with the trade and craft guilds or corporations of which the Islamic city was composed.²⁰⁶ These Sufi orders became so important that by the 18th century membership of a mystical order was practically synonymous with the profession of Islam.²⁰⁷

The Sufi Shaikhs passed through Indonesia islands on their outward journey if they travelled to China by ship, via the Indian ocean, or on their homeward journey, if they travelled there by caravan, to return to sea, via Annam, Malaya, Sumatra, Java, Ceylon, the Gujarat and back to the middle east.²⁰⁸

204. Yusuf Husain, *Glimpses of Medieval Culture* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1973 Rep.), p. 11.

205. Clifford Geertz, *Islam Observed*, Yale University Press, 1968, p. 12.

206. H.A.R. Gibb, "An Interpretation of Islamic History, *Islamic World* (January, 1955), II, V. 2, p. 130; A.H. Johns, "The Role of Sufism in the spread of Islam to Malaya and Indonesia," *Journal, Pakistan Historical Society* (Karachi: January, 1961), Vol. IX, p. 146.

207. Gibb and Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West* (Oxford University Press, 1957), Vol. I, pp. 72-79.

208. *Ibid.*, p. 146.

As early as 1299 Marco Polo found Islam established by Muslim traders at Perlak, little port on the north coast of Sumatra.²⁰⁹ Even before this, between the 7th and 13th centuries of the Christian era Islamic settlements enjoyed varying fortunes in southern China, Bengal, Arakan, Champa, Thailand, in the east coast of Malaya, Sumatra and Java.²¹⁰ The existence of these communities may be attributed to merchant colonies, and to Allied or Shi'ite refugees from persecution under the Ummayyads.²¹¹ In about 1370 Muslims from Persia, Arabia, Gujarat, India and Bengal began to trade and settle on the coastal region and establish gradually their hegemony over them.²¹²

In 1389 the gradual decadence of the Buddhist Majapahit power gave an opportunity to Muslims to spread more rapidly than before into the areas of Indonesia to which merchants came and the Malay Peninsula and Malacca gradually became the new focus of economic and political activity in South-east Asia.²¹³

In 1424 Parameswara, the King of the Buddhist state of Majapahit, before his death, embraced Islam and adopted the name Iskander Shah and became the first ruler of Malacca.²¹⁴ The Parsi, Bengali and Arabian merchants went there in large

209. Richard Winstedt, *The Malays—A Cultural History* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1953), p. 33; B. Pearn, *An Introduction to the History of South-east Asia* (Longmans of Malaysia, 1961), p. 30; D.F. Lach, *South-east Asia*, (University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 573.

210. A.H. Johns, "The Role of Sufism In The Spread of Islam To Malaya And Indonesia" (Karachi: *Journal, Pakistan Historical Society*, January, 1961), Vol. IX, Pt. I, p. 144.

211. S.Q. Fatemi, "The Role of China in the Spread of Islam in South-East Asia", a paper presented to the First International Conference of the Historians of South-East Asia, p. 8.

212. D.F. Lach, *South-East Asia* (University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 575.

213. *Ibid.*, pp. 572-573.

214. Richard Winstedt. *The Malays—A Cultural History* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1953), p. 34; B.R. Pearn, *An Introduction to the History of South-East Asia* (Longmans of Malaysia, 1961), pp. 33, 34.

numbers with Sufis and missionaries.²¹⁵ The most important effect of Malacca's rise to greatness was the expansion of Islamic influence, subsequently Pahang, Kedah, Kelantan, Tranggam, Pattani, Kampur, Indragiri and Siak in Sumatra, Java and Malaya, Borneo and Celebes accepted Islam.²¹⁶

Malacca in the 16th century and Aceh in the first half of the 17th century witnessed the compromise and harmony between orthodoxy and Sufism. Two of Aceh's prominent mystics were Hamzah of Barus (d. 1600) and Shams al-Din of Pasai (d. 1630). They upheld the doctrine of the Unity of Existence (*wahdat al-wujud* in sufi terminology) and the theory of the Perfect Man (*Insan al-Kamil*), the mirror by which God is revealed to Himself and therefore the final cause of creation.²¹⁷

But a question arises as to why the efflorescence of Islamic civilization did not take place until the 13th century, although, as said before, the Muslim settlements had started from so early time as the 7th or 8th centuries. This was presumably due to the remarkable development of the Sufi movement and the organization of the Sufi orders between the 13th and 18th centuries throughout the Muslim world.²¹⁸

Though not all the archipelago embraced Islam, and the main land countries of South-East Asia were little affected by Islam, and in Sumatra and Borneo Islam made little progress and Bali remains Hindu to this day and parts of Java were not finally converted till the 18th century and Vietnam, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia and Laos still adhere to Buddhism, yet by 1500 four coastal towns in northern Java were ruled by Muslims as were the important islands in the Malaccas. Malaya Peninsula and Malacca turned into the new focus of economic and political activity in South-East Asia.

215. Richard Winstedt, *The Malays—A Cultural History*, p. 34.

216. D.F. Lach, *South-East Asia*, p. 573; Richard Winstedt, *The Malays—A Cultural History*, pp. 34-35.

217. Richard Winstedt, *The Malays—A Cultural History*, pp. 38, 39.

218. A.H. Johns, "The Role of Sufism in the Spread of Islam to Malaya and Indonesia", *Journal, Pakistan Historical Society* (Karachi, January, 1961), IX, Pt. I, p. 145.

The outcome of the impact of Islam on Javanese society was the abolition of cremation and sculpture that had been in practice there.²¹⁹ And numerous sufi writings, mostly manuscripts, have been found extant in Indonesia bearing testimony to the fact that sufism was quite strong there and that Qaderi, Naqshabandi, Shattari and Suhrawardy orders worked for the expansion of Islam.²²⁰ Besides, Rifai, Samenani, Khilwati orders too were prominent there.²²¹

Now, after a discussion of the origin, evolution and characteristics of Islamic mysticism and other kinds of mysticism that prevailed among other nations of the world, we may conclude with some remarks common to all mysticisms. Some common beliefs that emerge are the pre-existence of the soul before the actual creation of man,²²² the Supreme Reality that transcends the empirical world and at the same time pervades the whole creation, the possibility of union of the soul with the Divine spirit or in other words, the possibility of an inward journey, an inner ascent to the ultimate Reality and the paramount necessity of a pious, pure and dedicated life for the noble purpose of attaining the ultimate goal of transcending the limitations of finite existence and of securing the direct intuitive perception of the Real Being. And lastly every kind of mysticism maintains the view that in meditation and ecstasy man is liberated from the delusion that the world of the senses is real, and further that man is a miniature of Reality and the

219. A.G. Johns, "The Role of Sufism In The Spread of Islam To Malaya and Indonesia", *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* (Karachi, January, 1961), Vol. IX, Pt. I, p. 154.

220. *Ibid.*, p. 152.

221. E.S. Craighill says: "The ancient esoteric teaching in cosmology postulated the pre-existence of a self created world-soul which evolved the world and the universe out of itself and called manifest existence out of nothingness by the power of the Word. D.C. Sircar, *op. cit.*, Rigveda, Early History of Vaishnavism, *The Cultural Heritage of India* (Calcutta, Ramkrishna Mission Institute of Culture, 1957), Vol. IV, p. 113 footnote. The very same thing is the belief of the Muslims. God, the self-created world-soul created the world and the entire universe by the word '*Kun faya Kun*' (Be and it becomes) —(The Quran: XXXVI, 82).

222. K.W. Morgan, *Islam—The Straight Path* (New York, 1958).

microcosm, in whom are reflected all the perfect attributes of the macrocosm, and that the Perfect Man was the cause of the universe, being the epiphany of God's desire to be known; for only the Perfect Man knows God, loves God, and is loved by God.²²³

223. Albert Schweitzer, *Indian Thought and Its Development* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1956 Rep.), p. 131; A.J. Arberry, *Sufism*; London, George Allen and Unwin, 1956, 2nd Ed.), p. 101.

The Quran also conveys the same idea in a verse which says: "O, possessor of the peaceful soul, return to thy Lord, who is pleased with thee and thou too is pleased with Him..." (LXXXIX: 27-28).

The Sufi Concept of God, Man and the Universe

The doctrine of Divine unity or tauhid forms the axis of all Sufi metaphysics, as it is also the fundamental postulate of Islam. There is, however, some difference between the concept of tauhid held by the Sufis and that professed by the Muslims in general. To the latter, Allah¹ is one and worthy of worship, but they cannot make Him the only object of their pursuit or the only goal of their life. A Sufi not only believes Him to be one, worthy of worship, but also regards Him as the only Reality and the only goal of his life and aspiration. He is not satisfied with saying merely, 'There is no deity but God', but he further says, 'There is no reality (maujud— موجود) besides

1. Regarding the real nature of Allah the Quran says:

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ

(XLIII.2) 'There is nothing like Him'. Regarding the attributes of Allah Shaikh Al-Hujwiri says: 'His attributes are not He, nor a part of Him, but exist in Him and subsist by Him,'—*Kashf al-Mahjub*, Tr. R.A. Nicholson (London: Luzac & Co., 1959), p. 14.

God and there is no object of pursuit (مقصود) apart from

God'.² As the compass circles round a point, the thoughts and actions of a Sufi and even his very being revolves, so to say, around God. He cannot stray from his course any more than a star can leave its orbit.³

A Sufi regards God as the only Reality, because He is the only self-subsisting (حَتَّى) , eternal (قَيُّوم) and

necessary Being (واجب الوجود) who is independent of His

whole creation (ذاتِ مطلق) ; in the Quran this idea about

Him is conveyed by the word 'Samad' (سَمَد) , which

exactly implies that all is dependent on Him, but He is free from all. Everything in this universe, being dependent on God,

has a contingent existence (ممكن الوجود) .

God is both immanent and transcendent.⁴ He is immanent because He is in everything and specially in the soul of man,⁵

2. Jalal al-Din Rumi, *Diwan-i-Shamsi Tabriz*, Tr. R.A. Nicholson (Cambridge, 1952), Introduction, p. XXXIX.

3. *Ibid.*, Introduction, p. XXXIX.

4. هُوَ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ إِلَهُ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَهُ

He is the God who exists in the Heaven as well as in the universe. (al-Quran-XLIII. 48).

5. وَفِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ

He is within thee, Dost thou not see?

since it was His own spirit which breathed into man.⁶

God is also transcendent, because nothing is like Him,⁷ and He cannot be bound by time and space or limited by anything, for He is that 'which has no other', since 'any other' would be a boundary to Him and so limit Him.⁸ Therefore He is also transcendent.

A Sufi maintains that Allah, being the ultimate basis of all life, and all lives subsisting through Him, is the Real Being and everything else is shadowy and transient, and as such, they have no reality apart from Him. All things are nothing but His reflections, as the shadow of a man is only his reflection, and, as such, has no independent existence. God is the Real Being and objects are limited reflections of the Real Being in the mirror. When the reflections occupy our thoughts and we forget the Real Being, we shall worship the former instead of the latter.⁹

In reality the one remains and many change and pass,¹⁰ and, therefore, they can never be the object of one's worship; the ineffable and abiding reality alone is the ultimate goal.¹¹ To a

6. وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي

And I have breathed of My spirit into him (al-Quran, XV. 29).

7. لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ -

There is nothing like unto Him. (al-Quran, XLIII. II).

8. The Quran, in the above sense, has used the word 'Ahad' in Sura Ikhlas. The very same thing is meant by the Upanished when it speaks of God as "the one without a second".

9. Khaja Khan, *The Secret of Ana'l Haq* (Lahore: Ashraf Publication, 1965), p. 90.

10. Cf. Shelley—'The one remains and many change and pass

Heaven's light forever shines

Earth's shadows fly.....'

(Quoted from the poem—'Adonias', LII).

11. The same idea has been expressed in his book *Gulshan-i-Raz* by the poet Mahmud Shabistari (b. 1240 A.D.) in the lines quoted below:

Sufi God is ever present and a moment does not pass without His thought.¹²

The Sufis in fact were split up into two factions advocating for *wahdat al-wujud* (pantheism) and another for *wahdat al-shuhud* (panentheism). The protagonist of the first group was Muhi al-Din al-'Arabi¹³ (d. 1240 A.D.). Many Sufis later followed him.

Ibn Taimiya¹⁴ and his disciple Ibn Qayyim,¹⁵ and Ibn

'See but one, say one, know but one

In this are summed up the roots and branches of faith'—

(from *Gulshan-i-Raz*, Tr. Florence Lederer (Lahore: Ashraf Publication, 1959), p. 21. The Exalted Being has really no duality, as Shabistari says.

12. The poet Hafiz says:

حضور می گرهی خواهی ازوغائب مشوحافظ

'O Hafiz If you want proximity to Him,
Never remain aloof from Him—*Dewan-i-Hafiz*, V. 7 (Cawnpur: Majidi Press).

13. Ibn al-'Arabi of Spain (Shaikh al-Akbar) was a renowned Sufi and a prolific writer who is said to have written more than 400 works or nearly 500 works. According to *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Vol. 111), p. 708, he wrote more than 400 works. He was a staunch exponent of *wahdat al-wujud*. His most famous works are *Futuh al-Makkiya* and *Fusus al-Hikam*. His thoughts influenced many later Sufis.
14. Ibn Taimiya (1262-1327 A.D.) was a great thinker, well-versed in Hadith, *Tafsir* and Jurisprudence. He wrote some 500 works (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Leiden, 1971, III, p. 953). He was not, as alleged, anti Sufi. He was particularly critical of the greatest exponent of *wahdat al-wujud*, viz. Ibn al 'Arabi. In his time he observed the decadent Sufism of the countries sacked by the Mongols and thereby formed an adverse opinion about the Sufis. But he was respectful to Sufis like Shaikh Abdul Qader Jilani, Ghazzali, Sahl Tustari, Abu Talib Makki and some others who adhered to orthodox Islam (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Leiden, 1971, III, p. 953).
15. Ibn Qayyim, the pupil of Ibn Taimiya, was also anti-Sufi. But he as well as his teacher admired the authority and *tariqa* of Junaid and spoke highly of him—Ibn Taimiya, *Minhaj*, V. 3, p. 85, Ibn Qayyim, *Madarij*; Ali Hassan Abdul Qader, *The Life, Personality and Writings of Al-Junayd*. (London; Gibb Memo. Series, 1962), p. 34.

Jauzi¹⁶ and much later Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi¹⁷ criticised Ibn al-‘Arabi. But it is interesting to note that Ibn Taimiya and his disciple Ibn Qayyim did not condemn Sufism itself, as it is alleged, but they denounced “inadmissible deviations in doctrine, rituals or morals.”¹⁸ There is evidence also that they admired and appreciated the ideas, writings and *tariqa* of Sufis like Abu Talib al-Makki,¹⁹ Sahl Al-Tustari,²⁰ Qushairi,²¹

16. Ibn Jauzi (d. 597/1200) was an eminent scholar who wrote *‘Ulum al-Quran wa ‘ilm al-bayan, Al-Muntazam fi Tarikh al-muluk wa’l umam* and other books. On account of his anti-Sufi attitude and particularly for his aversion or disregard for Shaikh ‘Abdul Qader Jilani he was imprisoned and passed five years in captivity. He was released in 590 A.H. He was born in Baghdad and died there—*Urdu Daira-i-Maarif-i-Islamiya*, Vol. I (Lahore: Danishgah-i-Punjab, August, 1914), p. 469.
17. Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi (d. 1605 A.D.) was a renowned saint of Naqshbandi order and a disciple of Shaikh Baqibillah (1563-1603 A.D.). Shaikh Ahmad was a vehement critic of *Wahdat al-Wujud*. He launched a powerful movement against Din-i-Ilahi of Mughal emperor Akbar (d. 1605 A.D.). Many civil and army officers of Akbar supported his move. Apprehending danger Akbar imprisoned him. Later his son Jahangir released him and became his disciple.
18. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, III, (Leiden, 1971) Vol. III, p. 953; Ibn Taimiya, *Minhaj*, Vol. III, p. 85 and Ibn Qayyim, *Madarij*, Vol. VII, p. 137, op. cit. Ali Hasan Abdul Qadir, *The Life, personality and writings of Al-Junnayd* (London: Gibb. Memo. Series 1962), p. 34.
19. Abu Talib Al-Makki (d. 386/998), an eminent Sufi, is the writer of *Qut Al-Qulub*, a Sufi treatise.
20. Sahl Al-Tustari (817-896 A.D.) was a theologian and Sufi. He led a quiet and solitary life. He wrote nothing, but his “thousand sayings” have been collected and edited by his pupil Muhammad Ibn Salim (d. 297/909)—*Encyclopaedia of Islam*, I (Leiden, 1924) Vol. I, p. 63.
21. Abul Qasim al-Qushairi (b. 376/986) of Nishapur was well-versed in theology, *Tafsir* and *Tasawwuf* (Sufism). He was neither an escapist from life nor was allured by its lust and enjoyments. Even in small details he tried to imitate the Prophet. His writings known as *Rasail* contain his views of Sufism. He was a theologian and commentator of the Quran. Like Junaid and Ghazzali Qushairi was respected by all as Sufis adhering to orthodox Islam—Rashid Ahmed, “Abul Qasim al-Qushairi as a theologian and commentator.” *The Islamic Quarterly* (London: Islamic Cultural Centre, January-March, 1969).

Junaid,²² Ghazzali,²³ Abdul Qadir Jilani,²⁴ who strictly adhered to shariah or orthodox Islam.²⁵

Let us examine the views of Ibn al- 'Arabi. His views may thus be expressed while God is absolutely transcendent with respect to the universe, the universe is not completely separated from Him, that the universe is mysteriously plunged in God.²⁶

It signifies that to believe in any order of reality as autonomous apart from the Absolute Reality is to fall into cardinal sin of Islam, namely polytheism.²⁷ In other words, the world and the things in it are not God but reality is none other than His; otherwise they would be completely independent realities, which is the same as considering them to be deities along with

22. Junaid was the disciple of Sari Saqati and the founder of the Baghdad School of Sufis, Ghazzali and later Sufis were influenced by the ideas and writings of Junaid. Junaid's Rasail embodies his views on Sufism. He was the spiritual preceptor of Mansur Hallaj.
23. Ghazzali (1058-1111 A.D.) was a famous theologian and mystic. He was formerly a Professor of Nizamiya College of Baghdad in the reign of Saljuq Sultan Malik Shah. Later he took to the Sufi path and after 12 years of training and experience he turned a Sufi. Some of his monumental works are *Ihya 'Ulum-al-Din* (the Persian version is called *Kimya-i-S'aadat*), *al-Munqidh minad-Datal*, *Mishkat al-Anwar* (a treatise on Sufism), *Minhaj-al-'Abedin*, *Tahafut al-Falasifa*, *Maqasid al-Falasifa*, etc. He effected a compromise between Sufism and Orthodox Islam and made Sufism itself orthodox so to say. He followed in this respect line of al-Muhasibi (d. 243/857) Al-Junaid (d. 910 A.D.) and al-Qushairi (d. 1038 A.D.) and completed their work.
24. Shaikh 'Abdul Qadir of Jilan (1077-1165 A.D.), the founder of Qaderi order, was a renowned Sufi, venerated almost throughout the muslim world as the greatest saint. His famous work on Sufism is *Futuh al-Ghaib*. His another work is *Ghuniyat al-Talebin* which deals with various religious and theological topics. He led an austere and devoted life of prayers and meditations for 25 years, away from the locality and in his nightly visits absorbed himself in supererogatory prayers and meditations for long 40 years.
25. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, III, (Leiden, 1971), p. 953.
26. Seyyed Hossian Nasr, *Three Muslim Sages*, (Cambridge Mass. Harvard University Press, 1969), p. 106.
27. Ibn al-'Arabi *Fusus al-Hikam*, op. cit., S.H. Nasr, *Three Muslim Sages* (Cambridge Mass. Harvard University Press, 1969), p. 106.

Allah.²⁸ Sufi doctrine does not assert that God is the world but that the world to the degree that it is real cannot be completely other than God.²⁹

The relationship between God and His creatures is that of an object reflected in countless mirrors. The reflections cannot obviously exist without Him, and in a way, they are He when we are conscious that the reflected image is but a reflection; they are not He when we forget the object they reflect and accept them as final realities.³⁰

This idea of relationship between God and His creatures should never be confused with neither Union (*ittehad*) nor incarnation (*Hulul*), for the slave is slave and the Lord is Lord: the slave does not become Lord, nor the Lord a slave.³¹

A Sufi, however, in his supersensuous experience perceives as though the multiplicity is effaced and God alone appears to be existing; this is a subjective experience and not an objective reality. According to Ghazzali, it resembles the mental absorption of one who is engrossed in the contemplation of an earthly

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 106-107.

29. S.H. Nasr, "Sufism and the Integration of Man," *Islamic Review* (London: Eccleston Square, Victoria, September, 1967), p. 12. The Upanishads as well as the Philosopher Spinoza too maintain that the world cannot be other than, or fall out of God.—*Chhandogya Upanishad*, VII, 21, Tr. from *Hindu Scriptures*, New York. Everyman's Library, E.P. Dutton & Co Inc., p. 183. Cf. W.T. Stace, *Mysticism and Philosophy* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1961), p. 242.

30. Rom Landau, *The Philosophy of Ibn 'Arabi* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1959), p. 32.

31. Abdul Karim al-Jili, *Insan-i-Kamil* (Cairo, 1300 A.H.), p. 44; *op. cit.*, B.A. Dar, 'Mahmud Shabistari, al-Jili and Jami,' *A History of Muslim Philosophy* (Germany, 1966), Vol. II, pp. 846-847. Ibn 'Arabi too, known to be a Pantheist, says

الحق حق وان تنزل والعبد عبد وان ترقى

God remains God, howsoever He might descend, man remains man howsoever he might ascend," *op. cit.* Yusuf Hussain, 'Shah Muhibullah and His Mystical Thought,' *Islamic Culture* (Hyderabad, India: Islamic Culture Board, 1964), p. 321.

beloved, as happened in the case of Majnun, who saw only Laila and none else in the world; Laila alone was the object of his pursuit; similar is the case of a man who is in love with God.

The early authorities on the basis of the Prophet's Tradition³² agree upon the point that Allah is on His throne ('*Arsh*) separated from His creation and that nothing of His created things is a part of His *dhat* or essence.³³

The Reality that underlies the multiplicity is one.³⁴ And again, he says that we call the world as the manifestation of God and He is manifested in the parts and forms of the phenomenal world without becoming many.³⁵

The idea of Divine unity in diversity or multiplicity of phenomena may be compared with the Sun, which remaining one illuminates all the objects in the universe.³⁶

As regards the basic unity of the cosmic spirit it may be said that there is a fundamental unity in the multiplicity of human egos.³⁷

32. *Majmuat al-Rasail Wa'l-Masail* (Cairo, 1341 A.H.) cited, Serajul Haq, 'Su'al Li Ibn Taimiya.' *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan* (Dacca, 1957), Vol. II, p. 167.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 157.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 36.

35. *Ibid.*, Chapter 62, Para I, *op. cit.*, P.A. Dar, 'Mahmud Shabistari, al-Jili and Jami', *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, Vol. II (Germany, 1966), p. 845.

36. Abdur Rahman, Jami, *Lawaih* (A Sufi Treatise). Jami further says: 'The universe is the outward visible expression of the Real, and the Real is the inner unseen reality of the universe', *op. cit.*, R.A. Nicholson. *The Mystics of Islam* (London; Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), p. 82.

37. هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْشَأَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ

'It is He who created you of one spirit' (al-Quran, VI. 99).

There are evidences to show that Allah is both transcendent and immanent.³⁸

The relation between the finite and the infinite may be expressed by means of an analogy. The finite must be distinct from the infinite, though not isolated, as the body is distinct from the soul and yet it is not isolated. Divine life is in touch with the whole universe on the analogy of the soul's contact with the body. The soul is neither inside nor outside the body; neither proximate to nor separate from it. Yet its contact with every atom of the body is real.³⁹

As regards the man who attains *Fana* and consequently *Baqa* (*Insan-i-Kamil* or the Perfect Man) dies to his self and lives in God; in other words, his human qualities, i.e. qualities relating to *nafs* or base nature of man, called by the Sufis

'*Awsaf-i-Sufli* (اوصاف سفلی) are annihilated or extinguished

38. There are verses in the Quran testifying to the transcendence as well as immanence of God:

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

"Allah is the light of the Heavens and earth" (al-Quran, XXIV. 35).

Again,

رَسَّخَ كُرْسِيِّهِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

"His throne or seat pervades the Heavens and the earth" (al-Quran, II. 255). And again:

هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ

"He is the First and the last and the outward and the inward" (al-Quran, LVII. 3). Cf. "I am the taste in the waters, I am the light of the sun and the moon". (The Gita, VII, 8f); see also Sidney Spencer, *Mysticism in World Religion* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1966), p. 31. He is seated in the hearts of all, unperishing without the perishing (XIII: 18, 28).

39. M. Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Lahore: Ashraf Publication, 1965), p. 135.

and thereafter the divine qualities in him become strong and that leads him to union with God. In fact, emancipation from 'Ghayr' (i.e. *Ghair* al-Allah, things other than God) is *Fana* and absorption in Allah is *Baqa*.⁴⁰ But the *Fana* does never mean that human personality can ever be merged and extinguished in the being of God. This annihilation may be compared to burning by fire something the quality of which is transmuted to the quality of the fire, but yet the essence of the thing remains unchanged.⁴¹

According to Suso, a Christian mystic, the spirit receives some attributes of the Godhead but it does not become God

40. Shaikh Junaid says:

المعرفة وجود جهلك عند قيام علمه

"Ma'arifat is the perception of the existence of your real ignorance in the face of God's knowledge" (Quoted from Junayd's *Rasail*).

41. Khaja Khan says: "Fana is the disappearance of the cognition of 'Ghayr' (the other); baqa is the knowledge of God, which one gains after the disappearance of the knowledge of Ghayr"—*The Secret of ANA'L HAQ* (Lahore: Ashraf, 1965, Reprinted), p. 104. Qushairi says: "Tasawwuf is that God should make you die from yourself and should make you live in Him",—*Rasail*, p. 126. Cf. Hujwiri, *Kashf al-Mahjub*, Tr. R. A. Nicholson (London: Luzac & Co., 1959), preface, p. XIII. Jalal al-Din Rumi has used the analogy of iron and fire in his *Mathnawi*. Jami says in his *Lawaih* (Flash IX)

صاحب فنا را اگر لبنتای خود شعور شد صاحب فنا نیست

"If the annihilated person is conscious of his annihilation he is not annihilated",—Abd al-Rahman Jami, *Lawaih*, Tr. E. H. Whinfield & M.M. Qazvini (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1928), p. 10. It is pure unitary consciousness wherein awareness of the world and of multiplicity is completely obliterated". Martin Buber, *Between Man and Man* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1947), p. 88. Regarding the nature of such a soul who is absorbed in the contemplation of God, Shaikh Abdul Qader Jilani says that the devotees of God abstain from all desires and hankerings, regarding them contemptuous and remain absorbed in the praise and adoration of God, and these become their food and drink—*Futuh al-Ghaib*, Text with Bengali translation, Moulana Muhammad Hasan (Chittagong: Islamia Library, 1962), pp. 78-79.

by nature..... it is still something which has been created out of nothing, and continues to be this forever.⁴²

The famous utterance of Mansur Hallaj: *Ana'l Haq*⁴³ (I am the Truth) has been misconstrued. His utterance has been interpreted by some as blasphemous anti-shariah. As a matter of fact, this does not appear to be valid.⁴⁴

Mansur Hallaj, who said, 'I am the truth', distinguished the human nature (*Nasut*) from the Divine (*Lahut*). Though mystically united they are not essentially identical and interchangeable. Personality survives even in union.⁴⁵

42. Henry Suso, *Life of Henry Suso*, Tr. T.F. Knox, Chap. 56, *op. cit.*, W.T. Stace, *Mysticism and Philosophy* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1961), p. 244.

43. *انا الحق* *Aham Brahma asmi* (I am the supreme spirit). *The Unpanishads*—(Chandogya Upanishad, Tr. Hindu Scriptures, New York), p. 183.

44. M. Massignon, *Lapassion d'al-Hosayn Ibn Mansur Al-Hillaj, martyr mystique del Islam*, 2 Vols. (Paris, 1922) and his *Essai Sur les origins due lexique technique dela Mystique nuesulenans* (Paris, 1922). Iqbal also upholds the opinion of Massignon and he has referred to him in following comment "The contemporaries of Hillaj, as well as his successors, interpreted these words pantheistically; but the fragments of Hallaj, collected and published by the French Orientalist, M. Massignon, leave no doubt that the martyr-saint could not have meant to deny the transcendence of God. The true interpretation of his experience, therefore, is not the drop slipping into the sea but the realization and bold affirmation in an undying phrase of the reality and permanence of the human ego in a profounder personality". —Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Lahore: Ashraf Publication, 1965), p. 96.

45. R.A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism* (Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 80. In this connection Shaikh 'Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavi observes that Mansur was not the real speaker but the divine power within him uttered it.—'Abdul Haq, *Akhbar al-Akhyar*, Urdu Tr. Subhan Mahmud and Muhammad Fazl (Karachi: Madina Publishing Co.), pp. 298-99. In support of this contention 'Abdul Haq has also cited a Hadith:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَنْطِقُ عَلَى لِسَانِ عَمْرٍ

The utterance of Mansur Hallaj should neither be interpreted as *Hulul* (incarnation), which is un-Islamic, nor should it be interpreted as *Ittehad* (identification of man with God); on the contrary, it is a bold affirmation of *Tauhid* (unity of Godhead).⁴⁶ Not to become like God or personally to participate in divine nature is the Sufi aim, but to escape from the bondage of unreal selfhood and thereby to be reunited with the one Infinite Being.⁴⁷

Fana is a subjective experience and not an objective reality.⁴⁸ In the light of the sun the dust particles become invisible, likewise the seeker of God having attained the divine light does not see anything besides. That does not mean that he becomes non-existent.⁴⁹ It is, however, an intuitive experi-

'Allah speaks with the tongue of 'Umar'—*ibid*, pp. 298-99. According to Jalal al-Din Rumi 'Not so much as a hair's tip of separate existence has remained in them (the Saints). In the hands of omnipotence they are as a shield; the movement of the shield proceeds not from the shield. This is the meaning of the statement 'I am the Truth'.—Jalal al-Din Rumi, *Fihi ma Fiti*, Tr. A.J. Arberry (London: John Murray, 1961), pp. 84-85,

46. Ghazzali has differentiated between *Ittehad* (Identity) and *Tauhid* (unity of Godhead). He says that 'wine is the wine glass' is *Ittehad* and 'wine is as though the wine glass' is *Tauhid*. There may be likeness between the two things, but they are never the same. This is exactly the relation between God and the perfect man.—*Mishkat al-Anwar*, Tr. Z. A.H. Gairdner (Lahore: Ashraf Pub.), pp. 84, 85.
47. R.A. Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), p. 83.
48. Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi, *Maktubat*, *op. cit*; Yousuf Husain, *Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1957), p. 51.
49. Shaikh Sharaf al-Din Yahya Maneri, *Maktubat-i-Sadi* (Lucknow: Nawal Kishore Press, 1896), p. 6. In the words of Amir Khusrau the state of union between man and God is thus expressed:

من تو شدم تو من شدی، من تن شدم تو جاں شدی
تا کس نگوید بعد ازین، من دیگرم تو دیگری

I became Thou and Thou became me
I became body and Thou became soul,
So that none can say thereafter that
Thou and I are two separate entities.—(quoted from the poet's *Diwan*).

ence and a detachment from the world and all that is other than God.⁵⁰

The allegory of iron and fire explains the relationship of man and God very clearly. Iron in contact with fire does not become fire, nor fire in contact with iron becomes iron. Likewise man and God remain separate, though like red-hot iron, man acquires some divine properties.

In fact, love urges man and everything to rise higher and higher in the scale of existence and perfection. An intense desire urges a lover to assimilate the qualities and virtues of the beloved. The individual is lost as the candle or the stars are lost in the morning in the dazzling brilliance of the light of the sun.

The Chishti Sufis too maintain the same view.⁵¹

Khwaja Muin al-Din Chishti was a believer in both transcendence and immanence of God.⁵² Shaikh Farid al-Din Shakar-gunj makes his view explicitly clear when he says that it is not the God of Deism, who after the creation became aloof from the universe and left the universe to go on mechanically, nor was it the God of Pantheism, who himself manifested in the

50. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

51. In his *Diwan* (edited by Nawal Kishore, Cawnpur, p. 10), Khwaja Mu'in al-Din says:

چشم بکشی که آفاق پُر از نور خداست
خالی از نور خدا این همه آفاق کجاست

“Open thy eyes and see that the whole universe is full of divine effulgence, where wilt thou find any place empty of His light”. And again: ‘Never say that existence of many objects are irreconcilable with divine unity. See the reality of the objects—all is unity. *Ibid.*, p. 15. Again, he says: ‘If you want to see the beauty of the beloved look at the atoms of the universe.

So that in every atom you will behold His majesty’.—*Ibid.*, p. 18.

52. Noor Nabi, ‘The Conception of God as Understood by the Early Mystics of India, *Islamic Culture* (Hyderabad, India, Oct., 1965), pp. 292-93.

universe and became immanent in it, but it was the God of theism who was both Transcendent and immanent.⁵³

Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya and his disciple Shaikh Nasir al-Din (Chiragh-i-Delhi) rejected the doctrine of Pantheism, although God is not separate from a single particle of the universe.⁵⁴

Shaikh Nur Qutb 'Alam advocated for the doctrine of Pantheism (*Wahdat al-Wujud*) in his letter.⁵⁵ Shaikh Husam al-Din Manikpuri (d. 1410 A.D.), a *Khalifa* of Shaikh Qutb 'Alam, was an exponent of Pantheism.⁵⁶ Shaikh Hasan Tahir (d. 1503 A.D.) of the same order was also a Pantheist.⁵⁷

Shaikh 'Abdul Quddus Gangohi (1455-1537 A.D.) and Shaikh Muhibbullah Allahabadi of Chishtia Sabri order, another branch of the Chishti order, were also Pantheists. But, as already said, it was not that Pantheism, which does not admit of the transcendence of God.⁵⁸

Shah Wali Allah, however, tried to reconcile the two views and maintained that both the views are indicative of different stages and looking at the same thing from different angles of vision.⁵⁹

53. Noor Nabi, "Baba Farid Shakarganj and His Mystical Philosophy," *Islamic Culture*, (Hyderabad, India, October, 1974), p. 241.

54. Noor Nabi, "The Conception of God as Understood by the Early Mystics of India," *Ibid.*, pp. 292-93.

55. Hasan Askari, "The Letters of Nur Qutb 'Alam;" *Bengal: Past and Present*, Calcutta, 1948, pp. 38-39.

56. Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavi, *Akhar al-Akhyar* (Delhi, 1309 A.H.). p. 171, cited, Noor Nabi, 'The Indian Muslim Contribution to Religious Thought', *Islamic Culture* (Hyderabad, January, 1978), p. 34.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

58. *Maktubat-i-Shah Muhibbullah* (Aligarh: Azad Library, Muslim University), cited, M. Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims* (London: G.A. & Unwin, 1967).

59. Shah Wali Allah's words may be quoted:

بدانکہ اکثر اختلاف احوال اہل اللہ بر اختلاف استعداد ایشان مبنی است

"The difference among the conditions of devotees is due to their difference in capabilities," cited, G.M. Jalbani, *The Teachings of Shah Wallaullah* (Lahore: Ashraf Publication, 1967), p. 71.

To conclude, pure Pantheism, which means the universe is not a creation distinct from God and that God is the universe, and the universe is God, is not tenable, since God, being the creator can never be identical with His creation, although He is not detached from it. Secondly, the theory of identity cannot be maintained, because God is eternal and the universe is perishable, and as we know, God created the universe out of nothing, when He intended to manifest Himself in the universe.

Thirdly in the sense of the Upanishads⁶⁰ and Spinoza,⁶¹ the western philosopher, Pantheism cannot be accepted as valid, since complete identity is irreconcilable or incompatible with the essence (*Dhat*) ذوات of God. Pantheism, if carried to

excess, i.e. complete identity of God with the universe, inevitable leads to shirk or polytheism. And it is also common sense that the universe cannot be called God, nor God the universe, however, much any philosopher or mystic may choose to do so.⁶² Objects which are created and controlled by God, viz., the universe, cannot be the same as God, by any argument or stretch of imagination. Fourthly, if all is God and nothing exists besides Him, its logical result is the destruction of a moral law i.e. who in that case will be responsible or accountable to whom for the deeds that will be done in this world? Question of reward and punishment, heaven and hell, will not then arise

60. The Upanishads declare:

Thou art the fire
 Thou art the sun
 Thou art the air
 Thou art the moon
 Thou art the glory firmament
 Thou art Brahman supreme:
 Thou art the water—Thou

The Creator of all.—*Svetasvatara Upanishad*, Tr. Swami Prabhavananda & Frederick Manchester (New York, 1957), pp. 123-24.

61. The classical exponent of the philosophy of Pantheism was Spinoza. —See W.T. Stace, *Mysticism and Philosophy* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1961), p. 208.

62. Cf. W.T. Stace, *Mysticism and Philosophy* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1961), p. 211.

at all and the life hereafter becomes meaningless in as much as no moral responsibility will devolve upon any man.⁶³

So far as man's rank and position is concerned, though man came to the world last in point of time, he was in fact the object of the whole creation and man is the microcosm (the little world) and epitome of the universe, called macrocosm, which was created, as the Quran⁶⁴ says, for the service of man. This is a clear testimony that man's greatness is recognised. Moreover, because of this superiority of man angels were commanded to prostrate themselves before Adam.⁶⁵

63. E.E.H. Herbert observes in this connection: "The logical result of Pantheism is the destruction of a moral law. If God be all in all, and man's apparent individuality a delusion of the perceptive faculty, there exists no will which can act, no conscience which can reprove or applaud. The individual is but a momentary seeming; becomes and goes like the snow flake on the river, a moment seen and then gone forever. To reproach such an ephemeral creature for being the slave of its passions, is to chide the thistle down for yielding to the violence of the wind." 'The Real Tendency of Mysticism,' *The Moslem World* (New Kraul's Reprint Corporation, 1966), Vol. IV, 1914, p. 164.

64. *الْمُرْتَدُونَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مِا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ*

"Do you not see that Allah has made subservient to you what is in the Heavens and the earth" (al-Quran, XXXVIII. 20).

65. Rumi's lines may be quoted:

پس بصورت عالم اصغر تویی بس بمعنی عالم اکبر تویی
ظاہر آن شاخ اصل میوہ است باطناً بہر ثمر شاخ ہست

"Therefore in form thou art the microcosm, therefore in reality thou art macrocosm. Externally branch is the origin of the fruit; in reality the branch comes into being for the sake of the fruit" (*Mathnawi*, Book IV, lines 521-22).

Cf. Khwaja Mu'in al-Din Chishti:

گر نبودے ذاتِ حق اندر وجود آب و گل را کی ملک کر دے سجد

The soul of man being divine in essence and man being the final cause of creation, he has been endowed with faculties and potentialities which have not been vouchsafed to any other creature. Though apparently the tree is the cause of the fruit, teleologically the fruit is the cause of the trees.⁶⁶ In the scheme of creation though man came last of all, he was in fact the object for whom the whole creation was designed and to make this advent or appearance possible in this world all preparations had been going on for centuries, as he was the ultimate goal, the pivot around whom everything turned and with whose creation the purpose of God was fulfilled.

It is in the Perfect Man (*Insan-i-Kamil*) that God knows Himself perfectly and the desire of God to be known has been fully realised. And the reality (*Haqiqat*) of the Prophet Muhammad is identified by the Sufis with the logos,⁶⁷ which is the active principle in all divine and esoteric knowledge. The Perfect Man cannot possibly see his own form but in the mirror of the name of Allah; and he is also a mirror to God in whom His names and attributes could be seen.⁶⁸

Al-Jili further says that as man is created in the image of God, so the universe is created in the image of man, who is its spirit and life.⁶⁹ Adam is the world-spirit (*Ruh-i-'Alam*), through him God beheld the existent things and had mercy on them and made them live by the life of Adam in them. The world will not cease to be living so long as mankind continues

“Had there been no essence of God in human body
How could angels worship man of water and clay”.

(Quoted from the Khwaja's *Diwan*).

66. Rumi, *Mathnawi*, part I.

67.

لولاك لما خلقت الافلاك

اول ما خلق الله نوري

—But for you the universe would not have been created.—(Hadith-i-Qudsi)

—The first thing that Allah created was my light.

—(Hadith-i-Qudsi).

68. 'Abdul Karim al-Jili, *Insan-i-Kamil* (Pub. Cairo, 1300 A.H.), *op. cit.*, Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism* (Cambridge University Press, 1921, Rep. 1967), pp. 105-07.

69. *Op. cit.*, *Ibid.*, p. 121.

there. When man leaves it, it will perish and collapse as the body of an animal perishes when the spirit leaves it.⁷⁰

Adam, 'the microcosm, the Perfect Man, the absolute mirror of Divinity', as Ibn al-'Arabi says in his *Fusus al-Hikam*, is the epitome of macrocosm. It is in man that the divine attributes have been manifested.

Though man has been created out of the perishable materials like fire, water, air and earth, yet the real man is not the combination of these material elements, but the soul, which is a divine spark, is the real man, for which man has attained superiority over all the creatures. He is in fact a ray of the divine light, the effulgence of which illuminates the whole universe.⁷¹ From a well known tradition (Hadith) the superiority of man can be understood: 'The Heavens and the earth contain me not and the heart of the believing servant contains me'.⁷²

But man, though enjoying the most superior rank among the entire creation, has certain handicaps to overcome. He possesses three kinds of character which must be controlled and curbed before he attains humanity; those three kinds of character are the animal, the brutal and the fiendish. He who only eats and sleeps and gives way to lust and enjoyment leads the animal life. If, besides these, he yields to anger, cruelty and other vices, leads the brutal life and if in addition to all these, he is crafty, deceitful and harmful to others, he is fiendish. But

70. *Ibid.*, footnote, p. 121.

71. 'Allah is the light of the Heavens and the earth' (al-Quran, XXIV. 35).

72.

لا يسعني ارضى ولا سمائى ولكن يسعنى قلب عبدى المؤمن

Cf. Jalal al-Din Rumi, *Mathnawi*:

من نغم در زمين و آسمان ليک گنجم در تلوپ مؤمنان

(*Mathnawi*, Book III, line 2).

if a man controls his food and sleep, suppresses his passions and all sins, crimes and evil proclivities, and by his prayers and devotion uplifts himself spiritually and acquires divine qualities,⁷³ he attains freedom and immortality and arrives at the Divine Light, as the Prophet Muhammad did. 'His eye turned not aside, nor did it wander'.⁷⁴ And the climax of this development (i.e. spiritual development) is reached when the ego is able to retain full self-possession, even in the case of a direct contact with the all-embracing Ego.⁷⁵

The highest spiritual development is attained by man, when he conquers his lower self (*nafs*) and develops his divine nature which is latent in him, by virtue of his possession of soul, in that case he rises higher than angels.⁷⁶

The animality, referred to in the above verse, can be curbed and conquered when man is inspired by love of God, which urges him to acquire and assimilate Divine qualities, for, as Rumi says, love (Elan vital, according to Bergson) is the cosmic force which attracts one another and sustains the whole creation; love enables man to rise high in the scale of spirituality and attain God and perfection. Indeed love is the greatest mystery of life and Rumi listened to the pangs of separation which the human soul suffers, being separated from its original source, God, and he says that this yearning of love is even

73. The Prophet said:

تَخَلَّقُوا بِأَخْلَاقِ اللَّهِ

'Acquire the Divine qualities'.

74. مَا زَاغَ الْبَصَرُ وَمَا طَغَى

(al-Quran. LIII. 17). This verse refers to the Prophet's ascent to Heaven and beholding the Beautiful vision of God in his m'iraj.

75. M. Iqbal: *op. cit.*, p. 118.

76. Rumi says:

Partake of the qualities of animals and angels

Rise above animality, so that you may rise above the angels.

—*Mathnawi*.

expressed through the plaintive notes of separation of a reed-pipe, torn originally from the reed-bed.⁷⁷

Love purifies man from every kind of dross and infirmity.⁷⁸ A lover's spiritual life is elevated not by the forces of a world external to his soul but by the revelation of a new world within his soul.⁷⁹ And this occurs when the Soul is purified by faith and noble deeds.⁸⁰

77. Rumi gives the highest tribute to love when he says in his *Mathnawi*:

شاد باش اے عشق خوش سوائے ما اے طیبِ جملہ علیہماے ما
اے دوائے نخت و ناموس ما اے تو افلاطون و جالینوس ما

Be happy, our love of good tidings,
O, the antidote of pride and conceit,
O, thou, our Plato and Galen,
O, the physician of all our ailments.

(*Mathnawi*, verse XX-XXI, Cawnpur, August, 1931).

Again, in the opening lines of *Mathnawi* Rumi says:

شنو از نے چون حکایت میکند وز جدا یہ اشکایت میکند

Listen to the story of the reed-pipe,
It complains of its separation from its origin.

78. Rumi says:

ہر کرا جامہ ز عشقی چاک شد اوز حرص و عیب کلی پاک شد

One whose garment is torn by love,
Is purified from all avarice and blemishes.

(*Mathnawi*, verse XXII, Cawnpur, August, 1931).

79. M. Iqbal, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

80. قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّهَا وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّهَا

“One who purifies his self will succeed,
One who debases his self will prove a failure”.

(al-Quran, XCI: V. 9-10).

Such a pure and contented soul is called '*Nafs-i-Mutmainna*'. It is attained when '*Nafs-i-ammara*' (the corrupting soul) and '*Nafs-i-Lawwama*' (the self-reproaching soul) are subdued (al-Quran, LXXXIX. 28).

Short History of the Indian Chishti Sufis and the Chishti- Nizami Sufis of Bengal

Among the various orders, the Chishti, the Suhrawardi, the Naqshbandi, the Qaderi, the Shattari, etc. which flourished in the Indo-Pak sub-continent and influenced profoundly the social, religious and cultural life of this country, the Chishtis were the first to set their feet in this soil. Later the Suhrawardi Sufis too came to India and the leading Sufis of this order, Baha al-Din Zakaria, Sadr al-Din and Rukn al-Din of Multan were the contemporaries of the Chishti celebrated Sufis. Jalal al-Din Tabrizi, another illustrious Sufi of this order earlier came to Bengal in the reign of Sultan Iltutmish of Delhi (1216-1236 A.D.) and settled at Deotala near Pandua in the district of Malda (Bengal) and lies buried there.

The origin of the Chishti order may be traced from Abu Ishaq¹ of Syria (d. 940 A.D.), the first of the Chishti order to have assumed the title of Chishti. From Syria he shifted to

1. Amir Khurd, *Siyar al-Auliya* (Delhi, 1302), pp. 39-40; 'Abdur Rahman Jami, *Nafahat al-Uns* (Lucknow, Nawal Kishore Press, 1915), p. 296; K.A. Nizami, *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (London: Luzac & Co, 1965), VI, 50.

Chisht, a town near Herat, to fulfil the desire of his spiritual preceptor (*murshid*) Mumshad Dinawari. Thereafter this order came to be called Chishti. The other Sufi Shaikhs of this order who lived, worked and died in Chisht were Khwaja Abu Ahmad Chishti, Khwaja Abu Yusuf Chishti, Khwaja Muhammad Chishti, Khwaja Maudud Chishti, Khwaja Sharif Zindani, and Khwaja 'Uthman Harun Chishti. The Chishtis regarded *Hadrat* 'Ali as their spiritual head from whom the order traces its descent.² Khwaja Muin al-Din Chishti was the fourteenth in descent from *Hadrat* 'Ali.

Khwaja Muin al-Din, son of a devout Muslim Ghiyas al-Din Hasan, was born at Sanjar to the east of Persia in 1142-43 A.D. Khwaja Muin al-Din, an illustrious disciple of Khwaja 'Uthman Haruni, came to Delhi and settled in Ajmer in 1191 A.D. with his forty followers in the reign of the Hindu king Prithviraj.³ But Minhaj Siraj, a contemporary historian, is of the opinion that the saint came to Delhi with the second army of Shihab al-Din Ghorî in 1192 A.D.⁴ Historian Badauni (of Akbar's time) holds the same view. Ghauthi Shattari, the author of *Gulzar-i-Abrar* (of the 16th century) says that the saint reached Ajmer in 1206 during the reign of Sultan Qutb al-Din Aibak.⁵

The above apparent contradictions may, however, be reconciled after closer analysis and scrutiny. The saint did actually come to Delhi and settle at Ajmer in 1191 A.D., according to *Siyar al-Auliya*, referred to above. But the Khwaja left Ajmer shortly after, on account of the persuasion of Raja Prithviraj,

2. According to K.A. Nizami, the Pre-Indian history of the Chishti order cannot be constructed on the basis of any authentic historical data.—*Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1965), Vol. II, p. 50; generally the line of descent is traced to *Hadrat* 'Ali.
3. Khwaja Muin al-Din settled at Ajmer before the conquest of Delhi.—Amir Khurd, *Siyar al-Auliya*, p. 46; The saint reached Ajmer before its conquest by the Ghorides.—K.A. Nizam, *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden, 1965), II, 49.
4. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Tr. Raverty, Vol. I, p. 465. Another contemporary historian Hasan Nizami in his book *Taj al-M'aathir* does not mention the name of the Khwaja.
5. *Op. cit.*, Athar Abbas Rizwi, *Muslim Revivalist Movements in Northern India in the 16th and 17th centuries*, Lucknow, 1965.

who wanted him to leave his (the king's) domains.⁶ Leaving Ajmer the Khwaja went to Ghazni, when Shihab al-Din Ghuri was preparing for his second expedition to India (1192 A.D.). From Ghazni upto Peshawar the Khwaja accompanied the army of Shihab al-Din. When the army reached Multan, the Khwaja went to Lahore from Peshawar. From Lahore he reached Ajmer via Delhi. Thus, he reached Ajmer a second time.⁷

This time too Prithviraj began to put pressure on the Khwaja to leave Ajmer.⁸ On the third day Shihab al-Din reached Tarain, where the second battle was fought with Prithviraj and the victory was achieved (1192 A.D.).

Again, in 1200 A.D. the Khwaja left Ajmer and visited Baghdad and Balkh and made Maulana Zia al-Din his disciple, and leaving him his spiritual successor there, returned to Ajmer, probably by 1206 A.D. This was his third visit to Ajmer. This time he was received with honour by Syed Husain Mashhadi, who was in those days governor of Ajmer⁹ on behalf of Sultan Qutb al-Din, the successor of Shihab al-Din Ghori.

In the context of these facts, it is clear that Khwaja Mu'in al-Din came to Delhi and Ajmer before the Muslim invasion in the time of Prithviraj (1191 A.D.) and thereafter, he left Ajmer and returned at the time of the second battle of Tarain (1192 A.D.). Third time he left Ajmer and returned during the reign of Qutb al-Din Aibak (1206 A.D.). There he breathed his last in 1236 A.D.

6. Zahurul Hassan Sharib, *Khwaja Gharib Nawaz* (Lahore: Ashraf Publication, 1961), p. 53.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 55.

8. The Khwaja smiled and said: "Three days will decide the fate: during this time either I will leave or Pithora (Prithviraj)—*Ibid.*, p. 55.

9. *Tarikh-i-Firishta*, Vol. II, p. 377; Harbilas Sarda, *Ajmer* (Ajmer: Scottish Mission Industries Company, 1911), p. 90; Zahurul Hassan Sharib, *Khwaja Gharib Nawaz*, p. 58.

The Khwaja's considerable success in Rajputana in the preaching of Islam is borne out by eminent historians.¹⁰ Some modern renowned historians too have maintained that the Khwaja's first advent in Ajmer was in the Hindu regime. In Ajmer the Khwaja had to encounter a stiff opposition from the Hindu king and his men. Ajmer being a place of political and religious significance, the Khwaja's stay in Ajmer must have been a serious trial for the principles of the Chishti *Silsilah*. On his success or failure in Ajmer depended the future of the Muslim mystic movement in Hindustan.¹¹ It is said that the Khwaja was commanded by the Prophet in a dream that he should proceed to Ajmer in India for the propagation of Islam.¹²

The Khwaja's fame as a religious personality became widespread and attracted to Ajmer a large number of Hindus who embraced Islam of their own accord.¹³ On his way to Ajmer (1195 A.D.), he is said to have converted to Islam some 700 persons in the city of Delhi.¹⁴ His message of love for God and

10. Shaikh Jamali writes:

بیشتری کفار نامدار دیار (راجپوتانہ) بہ برکت آثار آن زبدۃ الاسرار
بہ تشریف ایمان مشرف شدہ۔

"Many prominent infidels of that region (Rajputana) were honoured with the acceptance of Islam through the blessings of that essence of divine secrets"—*Siyar al-'Arefin*.

11. Yusuf Husain, *Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1973, Rep.), p. 37; K.A. Nizami, *Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the 13th Century* (Aligarh, 1961), p. 184.
12. Thomas Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam* (Lahore: Ashraf Publication, 1968), p. 238.
13. Elliot, II, p. 548.
14. T. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam* (Lahore: Ashraf Publication, 1968), p. 284. K.A. Nizami is of the opinion that no authentic details are available about the way he worked in the midst of a population which looked askance at every foreigner. But he says that Prithviraj and his men might not have liked him, but common people flocked to him in large numbers.—*Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1965), II, p. 50.

human beings attracted people of other creeds and religions, many of whom embraced Islam. His piety, wide sympathies, catholic view and broad humanism attracted people to the fold of Islam.

Moreover, Islam found a congenial soil in India as well as in Bengal because of Brahminical oppression upon the lower caste Hindus, fluidity in caste and rivalry between Hinduism and Buddhism.¹⁵ Another factor which contributed no less to the disintegration and ultimate collapse of Hindu rule by giving an opportunity to the Muslim conquerors, was the inefficiency and demoralisation of the army and the nobility of the then Bengal in particular.¹⁶ The liberal and tolerant policy of the Muslim rulers of Bengal facilitated the expansion of Islam. The people of Bengal accepted their Muslim rulers as one of themselves, and the rulers on their part adopted and patronised the people's language and literature, art and culture.¹⁷

So the above factors contributed to the expansion of Islam. At length low class Hindus got emancipation from Brahminical tyranny and began to enjoy peace, security and social justice which they had never enjoyed in the Hindu regime.¹⁸ The Sufis

15. K.S. Lal, *Growth of Muslim Population in Medieval India*, Delhi, 1973, p. 180.
16. Nagendra Nath Basu, *Banger Jatiya Itihash*, Calcutta, 1334 B.S., p. 41.
17. D.C. Sen, *History of Bengali Language and Literature* (Calcutta University, 1911), pp. 10, 12 & 13-14.
18. D.C. Sen, *History of Bengali Language and Literature* (Calcutta, 1961), pp. 413-414; Tarachand, *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture* (Allahabad, 1961 Rep.), p. 218; Narendra Nath Bhattacharya, *Bharatiya Dharmar Itihash* (Calcutta: General Printers and Publishers, 1384 B.S.), p. 188; Surajit Das Gupta, *Bharatbarsha-O-Islam* (Calcutta: Shankar Prakashan, 1383 B.S.), p. 94; M.R. Qanungo, *History of Bengal*, ed. J.N. Sarkar (Dacca University, 1948), II, p. 69; Poet Ramai Pandit, S. Das Gupta, *op. cit.*, *Obscure Religious Cults* (Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyaya, 1969), p. 266; W.W. Hunter says: "Islam appealed to the people, and it derived the great mass of its converts from the poor. It brought in a higher conception of God, and a nobler idea of the brotherhood of man. It offered to the teeming low castes of Bengal, a free entrance into a new social organisation"—*The Religions of India* (The Times, 1888); T.W. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam* (Lahore, 1968 Rep.), pp. 282-283.

helped in developing humanitarian outlook with their stress on service to mankind and their insistence on their belief that love of God was not possible without love of mankind.¹⁹

The official religion in India at the time of the advent of Islam was orthodox Brahminism, which included in its fold two powerful devotional cults, which had originated in the south, had spread to the north before coming of Islam. However, its propagation as an active dynamic movement from the 14th century onwards, was influenced probably by the Sufis whose humanitarian approach to religion and mystical favour being very attractive to the lower Hindu castes posed a threat to Hinduism.²⁰ So, the ferment that was produced in the Hindu society as a result of the impact of Islam expressed itself in the north under the leadership of Ramananda and his contemporary Chaitanya (1484—1533) in Bengal.

Khwaja Muin al-Din settled at Ajmer till his death (1236 A.D.). The Khwaja was survived by three sons and a daughter. His sons were Khwaja Fakhr al-Din Abu'l Khair, Khwaja Hisam al-Din Abu Saleh and Khwaja Zia al-Din Abu Said and his daughter's name was Hafiza Jamal.

The Shaikh's great contemporaries were Shaikh Shihab al-Din Suhrawardy, Shaikh Wajih al-Din Suhrawardy, Shaikh Muhammad 'Arif of Deogir, Shaikh Muhi al-Din Ibn 'Arabi, Shaikh Farid al-Din 'Attar, Shaikh Shams al-Din Tabrizi (Shams-i-Tabriz), Maulana Jalal al-Din Rumi (1207—1273 A.D.), Shaikh Burhan al-Din Chishti, Khwaja Ajal Saujari, Shaikh Jalal al-Din Tabrizi, Shaikh Awhad al-Din Kirmani, Shaikh Baha al-Din Zakaria Multani (1169—1266 A.D.) and other renowned saints.

The great Khwaja's eminent disciple in Delhi was Qutb al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki (d. 1236 A.D.). Another notable *Khalifa* was Hamid al-Din Sufi, who settled at Nagor²¹ and another

19. Ibrahim W. Ata, 'The Spread and Influence of Sufism in India—Historical Development', *Islamic Culture* (Hyderabad—India: The Islamic Culture Board, January, 1980), Vol. LIV, No. 1, p. 43.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

21. K.A. Nizami, *Studies in Medieval Indian History & Culture*, pp. 97-98; Iqtidar Husain Siddiqi, *Modern Writing on Islam and Muslims in India* (Aligarh, 1974), p. 20.

distinguished *Khalifa*, Shaikh Abdullah Kirmani, at a village in the district of Birbhum in Bengal.²²

Khwaja Qutb al-Din's reputed *Khalifa* was Farid al-Din Shakargunj (1175—1265 A.D.), who settled at Ajodhan (modern Pak Patan) in the Punjab. His sublime character, his piety and austerities, his solitude for the distressed endeared him to the people of northern India and won numerous converts for Islam.²³

He left behind his illustrious *Khalifas* Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya (d. 1325 A.D.) in Delhi and Shaikh Ali Ahmad Sabir at Kalyar (Bihar), who founded the Sabiriya sub-order. The Nizamiya sub-order was founded by Shaikh Akhi Siraj al-Din 'Uthman, a native of Pandua (Malda district of Bengal) and an eminent *Khalifa* of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya. Among other celebrated *Khalifas* of Shaikh Farid were *Hadrat* Jamal al-Din of Hansi and *Hadrat* Imam al-Haq of Sialkot.²⁴

Since Shaikh Nizam al-Din's time Chishti order became farflung, extending to north and south India, including Bengal. Among his *Khalifas* Shaikh Qutb al-Din Munawwar settled at Hansi, Shaikh Husam al-Din at Multan, Shaikh Kamal al-Din in Gujarat, Shaikh Wajih al-Din at Chanderi, Shaikh Burhan al-Din Gharib (d. 1340 A.D.) in Burhanpur and Shaikh Akhi Siraj at Pandua in Bengal.²⁵

Khwaja Nizam al-Din's illustrious successor was Khwaja Nasir al-Din Chiragh-i-Delhi, who maintained the glory of the Chishti *Silsilah* in Delhi till his death in 1357 A.D. He denounced any sort of deviation from the Shari'ah or anything which might smack of heterodoxy. For instance, he stopped all innovations, not permitted by the Qur'an and Sunna; he declared the use of instruments in *Sama'* and prostration (*Sajda*)

22. Enamul Haq, *A History of Sufism in Bengal* (Dacca: Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, 1975).

23. K.A. Nizami, *The Life and Times of Farid al-Din Ganj-i-Shakar* (Aligarh University, 1955).

24. S.M. Ikram, *Ab-i-Kauthar* (Lahore: Firoz & Sons, 1971 Rep.), p. 224.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 249.

before a Shaikh by way of respect as unlawful and blasphemous.²⁶

Chiragh-i-Delhi's successor was Shaikh Sayyed Muhammad Gesudaraz, who migrated to Gulbarga in the Deccan and continued the Chishti tradition till his death (1422 A.D.).

The other reputed Chishti saints of the Deccan were Shaikh Aziz al-Din, a grandson of Shaikh Farid al-Din, and his disciple Shaikh Zain al-Din. Shaikh Nizam al-Din sent Shaikh Aziz al-Din to the Deccan and Shaikh Kamal al-Din to Malwa to carry on the work of *Silsilah*.²⁷

Since Chiragh-i-Delhi's death the Chishti central organization in Delhi received a setback and the centre of gravity was shifted to provincial centres, which later sprang into independent centres.

Shaikh Akhi Siraj, a native of Bengal, is now deemed by some modern scholars as a native of Badaun. But some contemporary evidences prove beyond doubt that the saint belonged to Bengal.²⁸

The earliest sources mention the saint as Panduwani.²⁹ It is clearly stated in Shaikh Abdul Haq's *Akhbar al-Akhyar* that Akhi Siraj after obtaining the *khilafat* and *khirqah* from his *murshid* Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya set out for his native

26. Hamid Qalander, *Khair al-Majalis*, pp. 37, 42, 157. In this connection Chiragh-i-Delhi's remark may be quoted from Abdul Haq Muhaddith, *Akhbar al-Akhyar*, p. 81.

مشرب پیر... حجت نبی شود، دلیل از کتاب و سنت می باید -

"The practice of a pir become the document of the Prophet, but the proof must come from the Book (al-Qur'an) and Sunna (practice) of the Prophet".

27. *Tazkirat-i-Auliya-i-Hind*, p. 11; Enamul Haq, *Bange Sufi Prabhab*, p. 102.

28. *Siyar al-Arefin*, p. 90.

29. *Akhbar al-Akhyar*, p. 86; *Gulzar-i-Abrar*, I, p. 268.

place Bengal (*Watan-i-asli*).³⁰ The compilers of *Rafiq al-'Arefin* mention the saint as Audhi.³¹

As Akhi Siraj was not educated, Maulana Fakkr al-Din Zarradi, a learned disciple of Shaikh Nizam al-Din, took charge of his education.³² Akhi Siraj also received education under Maulana Rukn al-Din and read *Kafiah*, *Mufassal*, *Quduri*, etc.³³ Till 1328 A.D., i.e. three years after his *murshid's* demise he continued his education.³⁴ He became proficient in all knowledge.³⁵ Thereafter he left for Pandua³⁶ (Malda district) in Bengal, his native place, and established the Chishti *Silsilah*, which came to be called Chishti-Nizami *Silsilah* (Nizami was derived from Nizam al-Din, *murshid* of Akhi Siraj).

But before his coming to Bengal Akhi Siraj was diffident about his success in his mission because of the presence of a

30. Quoted in *Akhbar al-Akhyar*, p. 86.

31. This confusion is due to the fact that Shaikh Nizam al-Din, a relative of Shaikh Akhi Siraj, was a native of Audh, and erroneously Shaikh Akhi Siraj has been regarded as Audhi.—A. Rahim, *Social and Cultural History of Bengal* (Karachi: Pakistan Historical Society, 1963), Vol. I, pp. 111-112.

32. Blochmann, *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1873, p. 260.

33. Jamali, Shaikh, *Siyar al-'Arefin*, p. 90; Abdul Haq Dehlavi, *Akhbar al-Akhyar*, p. 86; *Siyar al-Aulia*; 'Abdur Rahim, *Social and Cultural History of Bengal*, p. 112.

34. *Akhbar al-Akhyar*, p. 86. Shaikh Nizam al-Din used to say:

زاهد بے علم مسخر شیطان بیباشد

“A devotee without education becomes a buffoon of Satan”.—*Khazinat al-Asfiya*, p. 358; *Abdur Rahim*, p. 112.

35. *Ibid.*, *Siyar al-'Arefin*, p. 90.

36. Pandua is a deserted town, situated at a distance of 11 miles from English Bazar and 20 miles from Gaur in a North-eastern direction. Cunningham has named Pandua as 'Hazrat Pandua' to distinguish it from Pandua of Hoogly district. Pandua was also called Firuzabad. In *Riyaz al-Salatin* the mention of Pandua occurs first when Iliyas Shah ascended the throne of Bengal (1345 A.D.). Pandua continue to be the capital of Bengal till the reign of Nasir al-Din Mahmud Shah (1442-1459 A.D.), who retransferred the capital to Gaur—'Abid 'Ali, *Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua*, p. 94.

vastly learned man named 'Ala al-Haq in Pandua. His *murshid* assured him that he had no reason to fear him, for he ('Ala al-Haq)³⁷ would turn his disciple, and that very thing happened when he came to Pandua. Akhi Siraj took with him some books from the library of his *murshid* Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya.³⁸ This constituted the first library of Islamic mysticism in Bengal.

Not only 'Ala al-Haq, but people, high and low, flocked to his *khanqah* for light and guidance. He disseminated the mystic lore and attracted a large number of admirers and adherents. His *khanqah* became the resort of the scholars and saints and the asylum for the distressed and forlorn. It also served the purpose of a hospital, where the sick and the distressed were attended to. The Shaikh also started a free kitchen where the beggars and mendicants used to get food at all times. He spent so much that his disciple spent, Shaikh Abdul Haq reports, not even one-tenth of what his *murshid* used to spend.³⁹

The piety, liberalism and humanity of the Shaikh endeared him even to the non-Muslims and this accounted for the spread of Islam in Bengal as well as the development of an atmosphere of understanding and rapprochement and the fostering of a cultural synthesis resulting in the growth of common cultural institutions in Bengal.⁴⁰

History records that the Shaikh illumined Lakhnauti and its environs by his saintly radiance and the people of God began to secure initiation into his discipline. Even the rulers of that territory joined his order...His grave is the *qibla* of

37. Shaikh 'Ala al-Haq styled himself *Ganj-i-Nabat* (the Lord of wealth), while Shaikh Farid was called *Ganj-i-Shakar* (the Lord of Sugar). His disciple Shaikh Nizam al-Din took it to be an insult to his *murshid* Shaikh Farid. So he cursed 'Ala al-Haq, which made him dumb. He regained his speech when he became a disciple of Shaikh Akhi Siraj—*Tadkkira-i-Auliya-i-Hind*, Pt. I, p. 343; Enamul Haq, *A History of Sufism in Bengal*, p. 170.

38. Amir Khurd, *Siyar al-Auliya*, p. 289.

39. Abdul Haq Muhaddith, *Akhar al-Akhyar*, p. 143.

40. 'Abdur Rahim, *Social and Cultural History of Bengal*, Vol. I, p. 114.

Hindustan and his successors help the people of God up to this time.⁴¹

Regarding Shaikh Akhi Siraj al-Din and Shaikh Nasir al-Din (Chiragh-i-Delhi) another historian writes that although all the *Khalifas* of Shaikh Nizam al-Din are of lofty spiritual stature, yet among them Shaikh Nasir al-Din and Shaikh Akhi Siraj al-Din, who are the lamp of Delhi and the mirror of India respectively, had possessed some special excellence,⁴² and they produced many pious souls. Shaikh Akhi Siraj passed away in 1357.⁴³ His tomb is situated at the north-west corner of the Sagar dighi. It was erected by Sultan Abul Muzaffar Hussain Shah of Bengal, as it appears from an inscription on his tomb, dated, 916/1510.⁴⁴ Another inscription bears the date as 931/1524.⁴⁵

41. The original lines from *Siyar al-Auliya* are quoted—

آن را بحال و ولایت خود بیاراست و خلق خدا را دست بیعت دادن گرفت
چنانکه پادشاهان آن ملک داخل مریدان او آمدند..... روضه او قبله
هندوستان است، و خلفا او تا این غایت دران دیار خلق خدا را دست میدهند.

(pp. 90-91).

In this connection see also Shaikh A. Rashid, 'Some Chishti Saints of Bengal', *The Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference* (Karachi: Pakistan Historical Society, 1952), p. 209.

42. Bulaq Chisht's words from *Rauzat al-Aqtab* may be quoted:

اگرچه جمیع خلفاء سلطان المشائخ صاحب مقامات عالی بودند از آنها شیخ
نصیر الدین محمود که چراغ دہلی و شیخ سراج الدین کہ آئینہ ہند است چاشنی دگر
داشتند۔ و ازین دو بزرگ بے مردمان تکمیل و ارشاد پیدا آمدند۔

See also Ijazul Haq Quddusi, *Tadhkira-i-Sufiya-i-Bangal* (Lahore, 1965), pp. 202-205.

43. According to *Khurshid Jahan-nama* of Munshi Ilahi Bakhsh, the date of his death was 1342.

44. 'Abid Ali, p. 90.

45. This inscription declares that the gateway to the tomb was built by sultan Nasrat Shah.

His chief disciple was Shaikh Ala al-Haq, who is said to have been a descendant of Khalid bin Walid, the great hero of Islam.⁴⁶ He maintained the tradition of his master and held aloft the prestige of the *Silsilah* by his spiritual attainments and unbounded charity. He passed through a hard and austere discipline and training. He used to carry the oven on his head, on which his master's food was kept hot, so that he might serve it hot to the Shaikh whenever necessary. The practice of carrying hot pot of food made him bald.⁴⁷

The Shaikh's munificence in running free kitchen for the poor excited jealousy of Sultan Sikander Shah of Bengal, who banished him to Sonargaon on this account. But when there too the Shaikh continued the same free kitchen spending money more lavishly, he was called back to Pandua or he returned to Pandua after the death of Sikander Shah in 1392 A.D.⁴⁸

Shaikh 'Ala al-Haq had distinguished disciples like his own son, the reputed Shaikh Nur Qutb 'Alam, who shed lustre on the Sufi *tariqa*, and Mir Syed Ashraf Jahangir Simnani (of central Asia), Shaikh Nasir al-Din Manikpuri, Shaikh Husain Dhukkarposh of Purnea. The fame of the Shaikh attracted the seekers of God to him from far and near. In his time Pandua became a significant centre of the religious and intellectual life. The Shaikh passed away on 1st Rajab 800/20th March, 1398⁴⁹

46. *Ibid.*, p. 91.

47. According to Syed Ashraf Jahangir Simnani and Shaikh 'Abdul Haq Dehlavi, the writer of *Akhbar al-Akhyar*.

48. The sultan suspected that money was supplied from the treasury to the Shaikh by his brother Azam Khan, who was then treasurer of the sultan. But this proved baseless when the Shaikh continued the same *langarkhana* or free kitchen with greater hospitality. The other reason for his removal to Sonargaon is said to have been his suggestion to discontinue the practice of appointing Hindus in the key positions. In other words, his interference in the state affairs was not liked by the sultan.—A. Rahim, *The Social and Cultural History of Bengal*, Vol. I, p. 116; 'Abdul Haq Dehlawi, *Akhbar al-Akhyar*, p. 143.

49. Blochmann, *J.A.S.B.*, 1873, p. 262; another date of death which has been suggested is 25th Rajab, 786 A.H./1384 A.D.—'Abid 'Ali, *The Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua*, p. 109.

leaving behind his illustrious son and successor Nur Qutb Alam and other notable disciples.

Like his father *Hadrat* Nur al-Din Qutb 'Alam was well-versed in Islamic theology and learning. He was a fellow student of sultan Ghiyas al-Din Azam Shah of Bengal under Hamid al-Din Kunjnashin, a celebrated scholar of Nagor in the district of Birbhum.⁵⁰ He was trained in the austerities and severities of an ascetic life. His father engaged him serving the mendicants and faqirs and doing menial job for them, including cleansing of the privy; once while engaged in helping an ailing dervish going to privy, his body and garment were polluted with excreta.⁵¹ For eight years he was engaged also in carrying fuel and helping women carry their pitchers over a slippery road.⁵² Thus, Qutb 'Alam was given the most suitable training necessary for subduing passion and evil proclivities. His reputation as mystic attracted devotees like Shaikh Husam al-Din of Manikpur (d. 1477), Shaikh Kaku of Lahore (d. 1416), Shaikh Shams al-Din of Ajmer (d. 1476), and many others flocked to Pandua to be his disciples. His sons Rifaqat al-Din and Anwar and his grandson Zahid were among his distinguished disciples.

Shaikh Nur al-Haq maintained a college, a hospital and a *langarkhana*. Sultan Husain Shah of Bengal made a gift of lands to this college and hospital.⁵³

Shaikh Qutb 'Alam developed the *Silsilah* organisation. He established two centres for dissemination of mystic ideas—one at Karamanikpur and the other at Pandua. Under Qutb 'Alam and his immediate disciples like Husam al-Din Manikpuri the

50. Gholam Husain Selim, *Riyaz al-Salatin*. p. 108.

51. M. Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims* (London; George Allen & Unwin, 1967), p. 291.

52. Shaikh Qutb 'Alam was simple and abstemious in temperament, for he refused the offer of his brother Azam Khan of a service in the royal court and preferred the austere life of a dervish.—*Akhbar al-Akhyar*, p. 52.

53. *Tarikh-i-Firishta*, II, p. 302.

Silsilah struck its roots in the soil.⁵⁴ The *Khanqahs* became the nucleus of the great movement for cultural synthesis which the Chishtis had started.⁵⁵

Shaikh 'Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavi pays high tribute to Shaikh Qutb 'Alam, thus:

شیخ نورالحق والدین رحمۃ اللہ علیہ المشہور بہ شیخ نورقطب عالم فرزند و مرید
و خلیفہ علامہ نورالحق است، از مشاہیر اولیای ہندوستان و صاحب عشق و
محبت و ذوق و شوق و تصرف و کرامت۔

“Shaikh Nur al-Haq wa al-Deen (Light of Truth and Religion), mercy of God be on him, popularly known as Shaikh Nur Qutb 'Alam is the son and disciple and *Khalifa* of 'Ala al-Haq. He is one of the renowned saints of India and possessed of love and spirit and devotion and miracles.”⁵⁶

One thing remarkable that distinguished the Chishti Sufis of Bengal from their predecessor Chishti saints of northern India is their co-operation with Muslim rulers of Bengal in respect of administration of justice and promotion of the welfare of people. Shaikh Qutb 'Alam, in order to save Islam and Muslims of Bengal from the tortures of the usurper Raja Ganesh, requested sultan Ibrahim Sharqi of Jaunpur to come to Bengal with his force and oust Ganesh from the throne of Bengal. Ganesh inaugurated a reign of terror by assassinating sultan Saif al-Din Hamza Shah, the son of sultan Ghiyas al-Din Azam Shah, and also saints like Shaikh Anwar, the son of Shaikh Qutb 'Alam and the son of Shaikh Husain Dhukkarposh and some others. This killing of Muslims and creating chaos in the society would not have stopped unless Shaikh Qutb 'Alam rendered a valuable service by inviting sultan Ibrahim of

54. A. Rashid, 'Some Chishti Saints of Bengal', *Proceedings of Pakistan History Conference* (Lahore: Pakistan History Conference, 1952), p. 210.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 210; A. Rahim, *Social and Cultural History of Bengal* (Karachi: Pakistan Historical Society, 1967), Vol. II, p. 289.

56. *Akhbar al-Akhyar*, cited, S.M. Ikram, *Ab-i-Kauthar* (Lahore, 1971 Rep.), p. 307.

Jaunpur to put a stop to this menace that threatened the solidarity of the then Muslim society and state. Thus, Shaikh Qutb 'Alam was not only a renowned religious figure, he was also a great saviour of Muslim society and polity of the time. The defeat and death of Raja Ganesh resulted in the restoration of Muslim rule in Bengal. Secondly, Jadu, son of Raja Ganesh, embraced Islam and with the name of Jalal al-Din assumed royal power and he promoted the religious and cultural life of the Muslims of Bengal.

Shaikh Qutb 'Alam was respectful towards the sultans.⁵⁷ Once sultan Ghiyas al-Din of Bengal (793—815 A.H.) sent a tray of dishes to *Hadrat* Qutb 'Alam. The latter respectfully received it and remarked that the Prophet had said, 'whoever respected his chief respected him.'⁵⁸ In this respect the Chishtis of Bengal differed from their Chishti predecessors of north India.

The very same ideal was upheld by Syed Ashraf Jahangir Simnani, a renowned *khalifa*, of Shaikh Ala al-Haq and an eminent saint of this order. He was born at Simnan in northern Persia and a ruler of Noor Bakhshi kingdom of Simnan. He was the son of Ibrahim, the ruler of this kingdom. Voluntarily he abdicated the throne in favour of his younger brother, Muhammad Shah to seek the spiritual kingdom of God. He left his motherland for India and ultimately came to Bengal towards the beginning of the fourteenth century and became the disciple of Shaikh Ala al-Haq of Pandua (in the district of Malda), the father of Shaikh Nur al-Haq, about whom mention has already been made. Syed Ashraf Simnani's *Lataif-i-Ashrafi* and *Maktubat-i-Ashrafi* are the two of his outstanding works, which may be treated as historical and cultural records of his time. Like Shaikh Nur Qutb 'Alam, he took keen interest in the reform of his contemporary rulers, as it is evident from his

57. Shaikh Qutb 'Alam said: "We respect the nobles and kings, so that our sons should follow our examples in evincing respect that is due to them". Shaikh Husam al-Din, *Rafiq al-'Arefin*, Hasan Askari, *op. cit.*, 'Hadrat Husam al-Din of Manikpur', *The Proceedings of Pakistan History Conference*, (Karachi: Pak. Historical Society, 1953), p. 112.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 122.

letters written to Ibrahim Shah Sharqi, the then ruler of Jaunpur, requesting him to send military aid in response to Shaikh Nur's letter to the Shah to save the throne of Bengal from the clutches of Raja Ganesh, who had usurped it and put an end to Muslim rule. He wrote also *Risala-i-Ghausia* about Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani and Ibn Arabi's *Fusus al-Hikam*. *Lataif-i-Ashrafi* is a great source book on mysticism.⁵⁹ Syed Ashraf Jahangir settled at Rasulpur and here he breathed his last at the age of 120 (808/1405). His *dargah* is associated with the town of Kachanuchha, situated near Rasulpur.

Syed Ashraf Jahangir was succeeded by Syed 'Abdur Razzaq, the son of Syed 'Abdul Ghafur, whom Syed Jahangir had adopted during the wanderings in Iraq. The descendants of 'Abdur Razzaq obtained rent-free lands from the Delhi sultans.⁶⁰

Syed Ashraf Jahangir, a reputed *khalifa* of Shaikh 'Ala al-Haq of Pandua (Malda), was one of the distinguished saints of his time, according to reliable hagiological literature.⁶¹ He left a good number of notable *khalifas* among whom some are mentioned here; they are Qazi Shihab al-Din Daulatabadi, Shaikh Safi al-Din, Maulana Alim al-Din, Shaikh al-Islam Gujarati, Shaikh Mubarak Gujarati, Shaikh Sayyed 'Abdul Wahhab, Shaikh Kabir and others. He made an extensive tour of the Islamic world and met numerous venerable saints of his time and visited the shrines of many eminent saints. He was one of the illustrious saints of the Chishti order of Bengal, and like Shaikh Husam al-Din Manikpuri, a distinguished *khalifa* of Shaikh Nur Qutb 'Alam of Bengal, spread the Chishti order outside Bengal.

59. S.A.W. Bukhari, review of *Muqaddama-i-Lataif-i-Ashrafi* by Dr. Wahid Ashraf, *Islamic Culture* (Hyderabad—India: Islamic Culture Board, April, 1979), Vol. LIII, No. 2, pp. 141-143.

60. *Lataif-i-Ashrafi*, II, pp. 379-80; *Medieval India*, A Miscellaneous (Asia Publishing House, 1972), II, p. 299.

61. 'Abdul Haq Dehlavi *Akhbar al-Akhyar*, p. 166; 'Abdur Rahman Chishti, *Mirat al-Asarms*; Sabah al-Din 'Abdur Rahman, *Bazm-i-Sufia*, p. 463; Ghausi Shattari, *Gulzar-i-Abrar*, Urdu Tr., p. 145; *Khazinat al-Asfia*, I, p. 371.

Not only in the social and political life the Chishti mystics played a significant role in the cultural realm too. They believed in cultivating the spoken language, and were the first to make the peoples' speech the means of expressing lofty spiritual ideas. Khusrau took over from folk poetry the form of depicting the woman as the lover and nothing that has come down to us from that period is more delightful than the mixed Persian and Hindi lyrics of Amir Khusrau.⁶² The genius of Khusrau represents this quality of Muslim culture at its best. Khusrau has become a legend.⁶³

His teacher Shaikh Nizam al-Din too had special fascination for Hindi *Ghazals*—which moved him more than the Persian *Ghazals*.⁶⁴ Hindi *Ghazals* featured most as devotional songs in Chishti *Sama*' gatherings.

Shaikh Nur Qutb 'Alam of the Chishti-Nizami order of Bengal composed poems on mysticism after the manner of Amir Khusrau, which was known as '*Rekhta*,' it was written by Shaikh Nur with one line in Bengali and the other line in Hindi or Persian, as Khusrau used to combine Persian with Hindi verses.⁶⁵

Shaikh Nur also rendered into Persian a collection of forty traditions of the Prophet, which he named *Anis al-Ghuraba*.⁶⁶

Nur Qutb 'Alam's disciple Husam al-Din Manikpuri wrote *Rafiq al-'Arefin* (his *malfuzat*) and *Anis al-'Asheqin*, the two notable works, well known, for elucidation of mystic lore.⁶⁷

62. M. Mujeeb, *Islamic Influence on Indian Society* (Meerut: Minakshi Prakasan, 1972), p. 140.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 141.

64. M. Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1967), pp. 166-167.

65. Cited Dr. Shahidullah, *Islam Prasanga*, (a Bengali Book), (Renaissance Printers, Dacca, 1968).

66. S.M. Ikram & Percival Spear (editors), *The Cultural Heritage of Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1955), p. 112; A. Rahim, *Social and Cultural History of Bengal* (University of Karachi, 1968), p. 170.

67. 'Abdul Haq Muhaddith, *Akhbar al-Akhyar*, p. 177; S.M. Ekram, *Ab-i-Kauthar*, Lahore, 1971.

Chishti Prayers, Practices and their Social and Religious Services

Sufis belonging to all orders, besides performing five times obligatory (*fard*) prayers, used to say supererogatory (*nafl*) prayers every day, and especially during the night they used to say *Tahajjud* prayers apart from reciting the Holy Qur'an, remembering the names of Allah (*dhikr*) and reciting *darud* (seeking divine mercy and wishing Divine benedictions upon the soul of the Prophet). Sufis have emphasized the importance of *dhikr* more than anything among the supererogatory works. *Dhikr* was practised in two ways: *dhikr-i-jali* (or *dhikr-i-jahr*) and *dhikr-i-khafi*. The former is practised loudly and the latter is done silently. Regarding *dhikr* the Qur'an says:

إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ

'Verily prayer keeps one aloof from ugly and evil deeds, and the remembrance (of the names) of Allah is the work of the greatest merit.'¹ The Qur'an further says:

وَإِذْ كَرَّمْنَا رَبِّيكَ وَتَبَتَّلْ إِلَيْهِ تَبْتِيلًا

1. al-Qur'an, XXIX: 45.

‘Therefore, you remember the names of Allah and absorb yourself in this.’² Besides these verses, there are plenty of verses in the Qur’an exhorting the Muslims to remember Allah, such as in Sura Jum’a, Sura Munafiqun, Sura Dahr, Sura A’ala, Sura Ahzab.

There are numerous traditions also recommending the remembrance of Allah. For instance—

عن ابى موسى قال قال النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم مثل الذى
يذكر ربه والذى لا يذكر ربه مثل الحى والميت

‘From Abu Musa (may Allah be pleased with him) said: ‘The analogy of one who remembers Allah and who does not remember Allah is that of a living man and a dead one’.³ There are many other traditions related by Abu Darda, Abu Hurarira, Sa’yed and other companions of the Prophet.

Thirdly, Sufis also practised ‘*Muraqiba*’ (absorption in mystic meditation). The Qur’an says:

وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ رَّقِيبًا

‘Allah is vigilant over every thing.’

Muraqiba is a word derived from the word ‘*Raqbun*’ (watch).

According to Shaikh Abul Qasim Qushairi, ‘*Muraqiba*’ is a mental state in which a servant of God feels that he is in constant presence of God, and that God always watches over him. *Muraqiba* is not possible without previous ‘*muhāsiba*’⁴ (self-criticism).

Fourthly, they practised *chilla* (solitary meditation in a cell or lonely corner for 40 days).

2. al-Qur’an, LXXIII: 8.

3. Bukhari, Muslim, Baihaqi and Mishkat. And again—“Keep your tongue always engaged with the remembrance of Allah”—(Tirmidhi).

4. Qushairi, *Risala-i-Qushairiya*, Tr. from Arabic into Urdu by Dr. Pir Muhammad Hasan (Idara-i Tahqiqat-i Islami, Islamabad, 1970), p. 305.

Fifthly, some of them practised *chilla-i-m'akus* (or *salat-i-m'akus*). This may be explained by fastening one end of a rope to the feet of a person and the other to a branch of a tree over the well and then lowering the person into it head downwards. In this position the person passes the whole night in reciting the Holy Qur'an and the names of Allah.

Shaikh Abu Sa'id b. Abu'l Khair used to say this prayer.⁵ It is said that the Shaikh imitated the Prophet's practice. But Nizami contradicts it by saying that he has not been able to find any reference to *Salat-i-M'akus* in standard collections of *Ahadith*.⁶ Shaikh Nasir al-Din Chiragh-i-Delhi said:

رکتب عالم ظاہر ندیدم

'I have not found it in books of *'ilm-i-zahir* (Shari'at).'⁷

The Chishti saint Khwaja Abu Muhammad Chishti is said to have performed *Namaz-i-M'akus*.⁸

Shaikh Qutb al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki ordered Shaikh Farid to perform *Chilla-i-M'akus*.⁹ The Shaikh, therefore, performed this *chilla* for forty nights.¹⁰

The later Chishti Shaikhs, besides Shaikh Nasir al-Din and Shaikh Gesudaraz, did not support the *Chilla-i-M'akus*.

Shah Wali-Allah of Delhi writes in a manner which doubts the authenticity of any *Hadith* declaring it permissible. He writes thus:

5. Amir Hasan Sijzi, *Fawaid al-Fu'ad*, p. 7.

6. K.A. Nizami, *The Life and Times of Farid-U'd-Din Ganj-i-Shakar* (Muslim University, Aligarh, 1955), p. 25.

7. *Ibid.*, cited, p. 25.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 25; Amir Khurd, *Siyar al-Auliya*, p. 40.

9. *Fawaid al-Fu'ad*, p. 7.

10. *Siyar al-Auliya*, p. 70; Nizami, p. 26. Among the Hindus there is a class of sages known as *Urdhamukhi* about whom it is said that they hang their heads downwards suspended from the bough of a tree or a suitable framework and pray.—J.C. Oman, *The Mystics, Ascetics and Saints of India*, p. 46; *op. cit.*, Nizami, p. 25.

للاجشيتيه صلوة تسمى صلوة المعكوس لم نجد من السنة ولا
 11 اقوال الفقهاء ما تشدها به فلذلك حذفناها والعلم عند الله -

‘And there is a namaz among the Chishtis, known as *Salat-i-M’akus*. We could not find any authority for it in the traditions of the Prophet or in the sayings of the jurists. We, therefore, did not discuss it here. Its legality or otherwise is known to God alone.’

Lastly, an observance which all the eminent early Chishti Sufis practised was fasting. The Chishtis were particularly rigorous more than the Sufis of other orders in respect of fasting. Shaikh Farid in his earlier years used to keep *Rozah-i-Da’udi* (it means keeping fasts on alternate days.¹² But later he abandoned this kind of fasting and observed it every day.¹³ Chishti Sufis in particular attached great importance to fasting.

In striking contrast, the Suhrawardy saints hardly observed fasting besides the month of Ramzan. Of course, they performed supererogatory prayers and other devotional exercises.¹⁴

Chishti Sufis again regarded *Sama’* (spiritual music) and *Raqs* (spiritual dance) as essential, either individually or collectively, to induce states of spiritual ecstasy. *Raqs* was not, however, an invariable practice of the Chishtis; it was an essential practice with the Maulvi order of Jalal al-Din Rumi.

Regarding love of God Khwaja Mu’in al-Din Chishti compared a lover’s heart with the murmuring brook, which continues to bewail till it is merged into the ocean; likewise a loving heart never finds repose and tranquillity unless it is united with his beloved God.

11. *Qaulal-Jamil*, p. 53.

12. *Siyar al-Auliya*, p. 401.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 64. “Fasting,” says Imam Ghazzali, “is one-half of self-control and self-control is one-half of faith,”—*Kimiya-i-Sa’adat* (Lucknow, 1907), also *Ihya al-’Ulum; Fawaid al-Fuad*, p. 75.

14. Shaikh ‘Abdul Haq Muhaddith, *Akhbar al-Akhyar*, Urdu Tr. Subhan Mahmud and Muhammad Fazil (Karachi: Madina Publishing Co., 1968), p. 64.

Regarding Sufism the Khwaja said: 'Sufism is neither knowledge nor a form; it is a particular ethical discipline (*akhlaq*) of the Sufis, This first stage of this discipline is strict conformity to the Shari'ah, leading to the second stage, that of the mystic path (*tariqa*), which in turn leads to a third stage, that of gnosis (*m'arifa*), leading finally to the fourth stage (*Haqiqa*).¹⁵

Regarding renunciation, the Shaikh, quoting the tradition of the Prophet, said: 'Renunciation of the world, which means abstaining from pleasures and riches of the world, is the foundation of all services to God and the love of the world is the root of all sins.'¹⁶

According to the Shaikh, no sin is more heinous than the sin committed by mortifying the heart of a Muslim.¹⁷ He enjoined upon his followers the qualities of charity like that of the river, kindness like that of the sun and humility like that of the earth.¹⁸

Regarding annihilation of self Khwaja Mu'in al-Din says:

19

شہود حق طلبی از وجود خود بگذر کہ جز وجود تو اورا حجاب دیگر نیست

(If thou seekest God, get rid of thyself since except thyself there is no other veil hiding Him).

Regarding the all-embracing existence and effulgence of God, the Khwaja Gharibnawaz Ajmeri says:

15. Qutb al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki, *Dalil al-'Arefin* (Delhi Edn), 47 ff; Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966, Rep.), pp. 132-133.

16. Khwaja Mu'in al-Din Chishti, cited, *Diwan*, p. 18.

17. Amir Khurd, *Siyar al-Auliya*, p. 46; Noor Nabi, *Development of Muslim Religious Thought in India* (Aligarh Muslim University, 1962); K.A. Nizami, *Religion and Politics in India During the Thirteenth Century* (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, Rep. 1974), pp. 184-85.

18. *Diwan*, V. 97, p. 9 (Munshi Nawal Kishore Press, Cawnpur, 1910).

19. *Ibid.*, V. 110, p. 10.

20

چشم بکشای که آفاق پر از نور خداست خالی از نور خدا این همه آفاق کجا است

(Open thy eyes and see that the universe is full of Divine effulgence, where wilt thou find a place in the universe devoid of Divine effulgence).

Again, the Khwaja says:

21

صفات و ذات چو از هم جدا نمی بینم بهر چه می نگرم جز خدا نمی بینم

(I do not find attributes and essence separate, whatever I look upon, I do not behold anything besides Allah).

Khwaja Qutb al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki, the eminent *khalifa* of Khwaja Gharibnawaz, advised sultan Iltutmish of Delhi thus:

O ruler of Delhi! It is incumbent on thee to be good to all poor people, mendicants, dervishes and helpless folk. Treat all men kindly and strive for their welfare. Everyone who thus behaves towards his subjects is looked after by the Almighty and all his enemies turn into friends.”²²

Regarding mystic views of the Khwaja the following verses are quite clear. For example—

23

آعکس روی یار در افتد بجام ما ساقی بیار جام می لعل قام ما

“So long as the face of the Beloved is not reflected in our cup.

O cup bearer, continue to bring the cup of Ruby—douboured wine.”

20. *Khwaja Gharibnawaz* (Shaikh Gholam Ali, Lahore), p. 109.

21. *Ibid.*

22. K.A. Nizami, *The Life and Times of Shaikh Farid-U'd-Din Ganj-i-Shakar* (Muslim University, Aligarh, 1955), p. 20.

23. *Diwan* (Majidi Press, Cawnpur, n.d.), p. 6.

Again, another verse runs thus:

24

ماہم نشین یار و نادار گشتہ ایم اے بے خبر لذت وصل دوام ما

“We, the associates of the friend, have become faithful,
O the ignorant, who is unfamiliar with
the eternal union (of our friend).”

Regarding a true pilgrim (to Makkah) the Khwaja says:

25

حاجی بسوے مکہ رود من بکوے دست راہست راہ کعبہ و این راہ دیگر است

“The pilgrim proceeds towards Makkah,
and we proceed to the friend’s lane,
There is a way leading to the K’aba, but
this is a different way.”

Shaikh Farid al-Din Shakarganj, the renowned *khalifa* of Shaikh Qutb al-Din, remarks about a Sufi thus: “A Sufi is he who conceals the blemishes of other Muslims and gives away in charity whatever he comes to possess.”²⁶

The Shaikh again said that a man should not wear the garb of a dervish if he takes forbidden food and does not keep himself aloof from the society of the kings and the well-to-do. Quoting the view of his *murshid* Khwaja Qutb al-Din he preferred to remain away from kings and nobles, as did Khwaja Mu’in al-Din Chishti and other Chishti Shaikhs previously.²⁷

24. *Ibid.*, cf. *Diwan-i-Hafiz*—

مادر پیالہ عکس رخ یار دیدہ ایم اے بے خبر لذت شرب مدام ما

“We have seen in the cup (heart) the reflection of the Beloved’s face,
O, the ignorant of the taste of our eternal wine,”
(Majidi Press, Cawnpur, n.d.), V. 35, p. 6.

25. *Ibid.*

26. *Rahat al-Qulub* (*Malfuzat* of Shaikh Farid), p. 134.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 141.

Living upto the highest ideal of devotion in Islam, he felt as if he was always in His presence, and while offering his prayer he seemed to be communicating with the Infinite and the Eternal.²⁸ The *summum bonum* of his life is epitomised in the verse which he very often recited:

مقصود من بنده ز کونین تویی از بهر تو میسرم او برای تو زیم

(In both the worlds Thou alone art the object that I cherish, I die for Thee and I live for Thee).

In love, faith and toleration and sympathy, which included even the enemy, he found the supreme *talisman* of human happiness. "Do not give me scissors," he told a visitor who had presented him a pair of scissors, "Give me a needle, I sew. I do not cut."²⁹ The entire mission of his life was to remove the pain and misery of the suffering humanity.³⁰

Shaikh Farid advised his disciples thus—

31 تا دل نکنی ز غصه و کین خالی صد خرمن گل بر سر یک خار کنی

(So long you can not make the heart empty of anger and pride,

You throw hundreds of harvests of roses upon thorns).

Khwaja Nizam al-Din Auliya, the illustrious *khalifa* and successor of Shaikh Farid, upheld the glorious tradition of Chishti *Silsilah* for long fifty years by his piety and teachings. Shaikh Farid, his *murshid*, settled at Ajodhan (Pak Patan) in the Punjab, but he himself settled in Delhi.

28. Amir Hasan Sijzi, *Fawaid al-Fu'ad*, p. 121.

29. K.A. Nizami, *The Life and Times of Shaikh Farid*, p. 2, Introduction.

30. Noor Nabi, 'Baba Farid Ganj-i-Shakar and His Mystical Philosophy,' *Islamic Culture* (Hyderabad—Deccan, October, 1974), Vol. XLVIII, p. 242.

31. *Fawaid al-Fu'ad*, p. 132.

Prof. Habib writes about him thus: "He never flew in the air or walked on water...His greatness was the greatness of a loving heart; his miracles were the miracles of a deeply sympathetic soul. He could read a man's inner heart by a glance at his face and spoke the words that brought consolation to a tortured heart."³²

Shaikh Nizam al-Din is reported to have said that God holds dear those who love Him for the sake of human beings, and also those who love human beings for the sake of God.³³

Though he fasted daily, yet he took little food, and when requested by his personal attendant Iqbal to take more food, so that his health might not breakdown, he shed tears and said that he could never take more, thinking of many starving beggars and dervishes in the city of Delhi.³⁴

The Shaikh with his disciples even ran to extinguish the fire in a burning house to rescue the inmates, and when fire was put out, he sent trays of food and cold water and two silver tankas to provide solace and comfort to the distressed.³⁵ He is also reported to have said that it must be a strange heart, indeed, which is not affected by the sorrows of a brother Muslim.³⁶

The Shaikh's admonition to those who want to attain spiritual perfection, is remarkable. He said:

کمال در چہاں چیز پیدا می شود

37

قلّة الطعام وقلّة الكلام وقلّة المنام وقلّة الصحبة مع الانام

32. Muhammad Habib, *Hazrat Amir Khusrau of Delhi*, p. 34.

33. R.N. Das, *op. cit.*, 'Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya,' *Islamic Culture* (Hyderabad—India, April, 1974), p. 103.

34. Amir Khurd, *Siyar al-Auliya*, p. 128.

35. M. Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1967), p. 142; also *Jawami al-Kalim*, p. 123.

36. Hamid Qalander, *Khair al-Majalis*, p. 105.

37. *Fawaid al-Fu'ad*, p. 4.

“The perfection of man consists in four things: small quantity of food, little speech, little sleep and renunciation of the society of the people of animal (sordid) nature.”

Regarding *Tawakkul* or trust in God the Shaikh said:

38

ایمان کسی تمام نشود تا ہمہ خلق نزدیک او همچنان نہ نماید کہ لشک شتر

“The faith of a man does not attain perfection unless and until the whole creation does not become as trifling to him as a camel’s hair.”

While discoursing on love of God the Shaikh said:

39

ہر کہ دعوی دوستی خدا کند و محبت دنیا در دل او باشد او دران کذاب باشد

“One who loves God and at the same time covets this world, is a liar so far as his claim to God’s love is concerned.”

Regarding the paramount necessity of Shari’ah the Shaikh observed:

40

اگر یکے از مقامی بیفتد باری در شرع افتد، مبادا از شرع بیرون افتد پس چه ماند

“If one falls down from a spiritual stage (*maqam*) he falls within the Law (Shari’ah), but one who falls outside the pale of Law, where does he remain?”

Lust for worldly goods and glory, *shughul* (government service) and *shahwat* (appetites) were considered to be the real

barricades or veils (حجابات) between God and man.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 174.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 144.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 165. It is wrong to think that the Chishtis of Delhi did not emphasize the Supremacy of Shari’ah as alleged by M. Eaton in *Sufis of Bijapur*, p. 52. Shaikh Nizam al-Din’s conversations, *Fawa’id al-Fu’ad*, categorically contradict such a statement. The above remark of the Shaikh (footnote No. 40), quoted above, confirms it. The Shaikh’s disagreement with the ‘Ulama was mainly on the practice of Sama.’

Renunciation (*tark-i-dunya*), according to Shaikh Nizam al-Din, is not to be regarded as other-worldly attitude, which should never mean stripping oneself of one's clothes and sitting idle. In fact, renunciation means rejecting the allurements of the world.⁴¹

Shaikh Farid al-Din Shakargunj (Baba Farid, popularly called) advised his disciples thus:

⁴² با حضرت عزت عهد کردی کہ دست و پای و چشم نگاہ داری و برہنج شرع باشی

“Thou hast taken a vow with the glorious Lord that thou wouldst protect thine hands, legs and eyes (from committing sin) and guard against the violation of Shari'ah.”

His another admonition was this:

⁴³ وَ لِبَاسِ التَّقْوَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ۝

“And the garment of *Taqwa* (righteousness) is better and the hereafter is for the righteous.”

As regards intention (نیت ۵۳ ارادہ) and oath of

allegiance (بیعت) Shaikh Nur Qutb 'Alam observes:

41. cf. Jalal al-Din Rumi—

چیت دنیا از خدا غافل بدن نے قماش و نقسره و فرزندوزن

“What is the world? It is oblivion of God,
And not drumpets, and not wife and children” (*Mathnawi*).

Shaikh 'Ali Hujwiri says—

الفقیر لا یستغنی بتی من دون اللہ.

“The faqir does not rest content with anything except God”—Tr. R.A. Nicholson, *Kashfal-Mahjub*, p. 25.

42. Amir Khurd, *Siyar al-Auliya*, p. 323.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 217.

برای اراده - الحمد لله جعل البيعة والارادة من سنن نبیه علیه السلام حيث قال الله تعالى اذ يبايعونك تحت الشجرة و جعل المشايخ لوصول قرب قاضى الحاجات وليلى السعادات والمرضيات. قال الله تعالى يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَابْتَغُوا إِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ - قيل لرسول الله - ما وسيلة يا رسول الله صلعم فقال التقرب والدنو بالارادة لانه من شرط الارادة، ان لا يفارق المرید شيخه بقلبه ساعتہ -

44

In the above observation the Shaikh has referred to the oath of allegiance that the companions took at the hands of the Prophet under a tree to lay down their lives for the cause of Islam on the eve of the Treaty of Hudaibiya (that pledge is known as *Bai'at al-Rizwan* in the annals of Islam) to remind us of the necessity of pledge taught by the Prophet. This pledge, the Shaikh says, which was incumbent upon the Muslims to win the grace and mercy of Allah has not outlived its necessity but it continues to be a living force in the *bai'at* or oath of allegiance at the hands of the Sufi Shaikhs, which serves as a means of attaining Allah's pleasure and proximity.

As regards intercession (وسيله) the Shaikh also

refers to the verse of the Qur'an which enjoins upon Muslims the belief and fear in Allah and the necessity of intercession, of which Allah is the highest object of the devotees and the Prophet comes next to Him, and after them the saints, to whom obedience is due for the pleasure of Allah and His Prophet. Then the Shaikh emphasizes the necessity of keeping very close connection with the *murshid* (the spiritual guide) and the importance of remembering him and never forgetting him for a single moment.

44. Cited from letter No. 10 from the manuscript of 13 letters of Shaikh Nur Qutb 'Alam (Dacca: Asiatic Society of Bangladesh), p. 39.

Again, the Shaikh continues to write about the dignity and position of the Sufi Shaikhs thus:

قال النبي صلعم علماء امتي كانوا بنى اسرائيل وقال عليه السلام
الشيخ في قومه كالنبي في امته - فارادة من موجبات السعادات
وامادات السادة وقد وفقكم الله بذلك.

45

“The Prophet (peace be on him) said, ‘the pious among my followers (*’Umma*) will be respectable like the apostles of Israelites, and he further said, ‘the Shaikh to his community is like the Prophet to his followers (i.e. a nation)! Lastly, the intention or *bai’at*, the Shaikh remarks, is the means of good fortune and supremacy. May Allah grant (us) His favour!’

Shaikh Qutb ‘Alam speaks of the prayer and concentration of the Sufi Shaikh thus:

قال المشائخ عبادة الفقير نفي الخواطر يعني كلما يخطر بباله
سوى الله تعالى ينفي وثبت خاطر الحق قال الله تعالى واذكرا اسم
رَبِّكَ وَتَبَتَّلْ إِلَيْهِ تَبْتِيلًا - اى القطع الى الله انقطاع لا ترجع
الى غيره ابدا.

46

“The Sufi saints said that the prayers of a faqir consists in the rejection from the heart of useless things, i.e. repudiation of everything besides Allah and cleansing the heart from it and concentration of heart in the truth, and the Shaikh reminds us of the command of Allah to remember His names and seek His grace, and he explain that concentration in Allah means never turning to things other than Allah for good.”

The Shaikh refers to the Prophet’s saying that who fully turns towards Allah, He becomes sufficient to safeguard him from all calamities and he gets his plentiful nourishment and he who is engaged in the world it dominates him. The faqir, the Shaikh says, turns back from the world, nor is he attracted to the other world, rather he fully relies on his Lord.

45. *Ibid* (Asiatic Society, Dacca), p. 39.

46. *Ibid*.

The above views may be expressed in the Shaikh's words—
 وقال عليه صلعم من لتقطع الى الله كفا لا الله كل مؤفته و
 رزقه من حيث لا يحتسب ومن القطع الى الدنيا ولا يرضى بالعقبى
 ولا يكتفى الا بالمولى.⁴⁷

The Shaikh has compared love of God of a lover with any fascinating thing which attracts a child, which he does not forget even after he wakes up from his sleep, meaning thereby that the love of God is irresistible and unforgettable.⁴⁸

Shaikh Husam al-Din Manikpuri, a *khalifa* of Shaikh Qutb 'Alam, says that the earth is a shadow and the life after death is like the sun and one who runs after the shadow cannot catch it, but one who goes towards the sun, the shadow follows him.⁴⁹ In other words, the real goal of a servant of God is not his life of this world, but of the other world, and if he pursues the latter, the former would automatically be attained, but if he pursues this life alone, he will be surely ruined.

This idea has been thus elucidated in the Holy Quran:

وَمَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي
 الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ نَصِيبٍ

“And to any that desireth the tilth of this world, we grant somewhat thereof, but he has no share or lot in the hereafter.”⁵⁰

The nature of the life of this world has been thus explained in the Quran:

اعْمُرُوا أَنْبَاءَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا الْعِبْ وَ لَهُمْ زِينَةٌ وَ تَفَاخُرُ بَيْنَكُمْ
 وَ تَنكَّسُ فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ

47. *Ibid.*

48. Ejazul Haq Qaddusi, *Tadhkira-i-Sufiya-i-Bangal* (Lahore: Markaze Urdu Board, 1965), p. 415.

49. Abdul Haq Dehlavi, *Akhbar al-Akhyar*, p. 384.

50. al-Qur'an, XLII: 20.

“Know ye that the life of this world is but play and amusement, pomp and mutual boasting and multiplying (in rivalry) among yourselves, riches and children.”⁵¹

Indeed, those who have forsaken God and the life hereafter and is occupied only with the worldly life may have plenty to eat and enjoy in this life, but they will be cut off from the eternal fountain of spiritual life, which is meant only for the righteous.

51. al-Qur'an, LVII: 20.

Sufi Sama'—Chishti Stand Point

Music called '*Sama*', (سماع) 'listening' to music in

the spiritual sense by Sufis) is spontaneous overflow of man's feelings and emotions. Music or melody attracts men of diverse nationalities and professions. From time immemorial music has been in vogue in all activities of human life, whether in marriage festivities or in any kind of ceremonial rejoicings. Any kind of feeling, joy or sadness, or any pent-up feeling finds expression through music. Birds also pour forth their full-throated melodies morning and evening.

Labourers, peasants, shepherds, boatmen and any kind of manual workers forget the boredom of their toil while they sing or listen to music. Babies are lulled to sleep by lullaby songs. Even snakes are captivated by the snake charmer's melody. Animals, such as camels, heavily laden with loads, become unconscious, so to say, of their heavy burdens, when they listen to music. When music exercises such a profound influence on human beings as well as birds and animals, and when it stirs up emotions and feelings in the hearts of almost all listeners, why should it fail to arouse feeling of devotion and ecstasy in the hearts inebriated with love of God. Undoubtedly music awakens feelings too deep for tears. Apart from the

sanctions of religious books and scriptures and of Sufis and saints, a man of heart, whose feelings have not been benumbed cannot but admit of the irresistible attraction for music.

To Schopenhauer, the eminent philosopher, 'music is the eternal will itself and through it one can pierce the veil, witness the watcher and behold the unseen'.¹ Again, the same philosopher says, 'the inner meaning of life, the eternal truth of things is felt and understood immediately when we listen to Great Music.'² To Plato, the eminent philosopher and mystic, 'music is a moral law. It gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to imagination, a charm to sadness, gaiety and life to everything'.³ In spite of this appreciation of music, Plato has also warned us against the evil effects of excessive indulgence in music; one who indulges in music at the cost of other important engagements of life has been compared with a gymnast or a sportsman, who utterly neglects intellectual pursuits.⁴ The Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said: 'one who is endowed with a sweet voice is possessed of a gift of God.'⁵

It is believed that 'Allah has not sent any Prophet without sweet voice'.⁶ Again the Ruran says:

1. H.G. Farmer, *op. cit.*, *A History of Arabian Music* (London: Luzac & Co., 1929), p. 36.
2. Schopenhauer, Will Durant, *op. cit.*, *Outline of Philosophy* (London: Ernest Benn Ltd., 1962), p. 295.
3. *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, p. 43.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 43; Plato, *The Republic*, Bengali Tr. Maqsud Ali (Dacca: Bengali Academy, 1973), p. 121, pp. 131-32.
5. *Op. cit.*, *Qushairi*, p. 520.

6. مَا بَدِئَ اللَّهُ نَبِيًّا إِلَّا حَسَنَ الصَّوْتِ

—cited; Abu Nasr Sarraj,

Kitab al-Luma'. All apostles were endowed with sweet voice. The apostle David's sweet voice and his recitation of Zabur (Psalms) attracted birds and animals, which thronged around him.

إِنَّ أُنْكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ الْحَمِيرِ

‘The worst of all voices is the of a donkey’.⁷

The necessity of melodious voice was emphasized by the Prophet when he said:

حسنوا القرآن بأصواتكم فإن الصوت الحسن يزيد القرآن حسنا

“Recite the Quran beautifully with your voice, because the beauty of the Quran is enhanced by sweet voice”.⁸

On the report of *Hazrat* Zaid bin Aslam, *Hazrat* Ubay bin K’ab recited some verses of the Holy Quran, which made the Prophet and the companions present at the time, beside themselves with ecstasy. There upon the Prophet is said to have suggested to his companions to pray to Allah in their ecstatic mood, for the time of ecstasy, he said, was the time for the mercy of Allah.⁹ Besides, he said that when a servant fears Allah and his hairs stand on their ends on that account, his sins fall off from him as dry leaves fall off from a tree, and then the hell-fire cannot touch him.¹⁰

But a verse of the Quran has given rise to conflicting interpretations with regard to a particular term and that is regarding ‘idle and frivolous talk’, which in the Quranic terms is called

Lahwa’l-hadith (لَهُوَ الْحَدِيثُ) The exact verse runs

thus:

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْتَرِي لَهْوَ الْحَدِيثِ لِيُضِلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَتَتَّخِذَهَا هُزُوًا

7. al-Quran, XXXI: 19.

8. *Hadith*, cited, *Risala-i-Qushairiyya*, p. 519.

9. Shaikh Shihabal-Din Suhrawardy, ‘*Awarifal-M’aarif*, Urdu Tr. Hafiz Syed Rashid Ahmad Arshad (Lahore: Shaikh Gholam Ali & Sons, 1962, 2nd ed. 1965), p. 224.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 224.

“Some men in order to divert the ignorant people from the path of Allah fabricated idle and frivolous talks and cut jokes with the path of Allah”.¹¹

This verse particularly refers to a man called Nazr bin al-Harith, who brought female slaves from Syria for singing light and frivolous songs and telling immoral stories to divert the attention of people from listening to the verses of the Quran and the preaching of Islam by the Prophet and his companions.¹²

In the well-known book of *Fiqh* called *Tafsir al-Nasafi*¹³

(تفسير النسفي) *Lahwa'l-hadith*, mentioned in the

above verse of the Quran, has been explained as some activity, story or song which is done in some nocturnal gathering or in any assembly of persons with a design to dissuade the listeners from doing good deeds. The words of the commentator may be quoted:

وَاللَّهُوَكُلُّ بَاطِلٍ إِلهَى عَنِ الْخَيْرِ

“All evil things which prevent one from doing good deeds (or following what is right) are to be characterized as ‘idle and frivolous.’¹⁴

According to Ibn Mas'ud and Ibn 'Abbas whatever demoralises the heart, leads to waste of money and produces the wrath of God, should be treated as *Lahwa'l-hadith*.¹⁵

11. al-Quran, XXXI: 6.

12. *Sirat-i-Ibn Hisham*, Vol. 1, pp. 320-21.

13. The author of the commentary is Abul Barakat 'Abdullah b. Ahmad b. Muhmud al-Nasafi, *Madarik al-Manzil* (known as 'Zafar al-Nasafi), Daru Ajya'u al-Kutubu al-'Arabiyyah 'isa al-Bab al-Halabi, n. d.

14. *Ibid.*

15. *Mishkat al-Masabih*, II, 425.

Hafiz Abu Muhammad bin Hazm said that interpretation of the verse about *Lahwa'l-hadith* as meaning singing does not come from the Prophet and his companions.¹⁶

In the opinion of Abu Bakr bin al-'Arabi the most correct view is that of those who say it means worthless talk, and he is of the opinion that the explanation that it means singing is weak and as for the tradition which has forbidden music, it is not sound, since al-Tirmidhi and others declared it weak.¹⁷

Ibn Masud is reported to have said that music causes hypocrisy to grow in the heart as water makes corn grow.¹⁸ But as the tradition is related from a Shaikh, whose name is not mentioned or whose identity is not known, Hafiz Abu Muhammad bin Hazm and Imam Abu Hamid have declared it unsound.¹⁹

According to Ibn al-Athir, asked by the poet Hasan bin Thabit if it were unlawful to sing, the Prophet Muhammad replied: 'certainly not.'²⁰ The Prophet could not have condemned music wholesale, since he himself listened to music and allowed his wife Ayesha to listen to it on a festive occasion, and when Abu Bakr raised objection to it, he silenced Abu Bakr by saying that there was no harm in listening to it occasionally in some festivals. The Prophet also listened to songs sung by some girls in accompaniment of daff, as a mark of jubilation for some victory won by the Muslims in the battle of Badr against the idolators.²¹

While erecting the mosque of Madina and digging a trench on the eve of the battle of Khandaq, the Prophet and his companions recited poetry. The Prophet said, 'surely there is

16. James Robson, *op. cit.*, 'A Maghribi Ms. on Listening to Music,' *Islamic Culture* (Hyderabad, India, 1952), Vol. XXVI, Nos. 1-4, p. 118.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 118. The Prophet listened to music on the 'Id days—*Tajrid al-Bukhari*, p. 210; Al-Ghazzali, *Kimiya-i-S'aadat*, p. 219.

18. Ibn al Athir, *Usd al-Ghaba*, V, 496; *Mishkat al-Masabih*, II, 425.

19. H.G. Farmer, *A History of Arabian Music* (London: Luzac & Co., 1929), p. 26.

20. James Robson, 'A Maghribi Ms. on Listening to Music,' *Islamic Culture*, p. 121.

21. *Sahih Bukhari and Muslim*.

wisdom in poetry.²² Imam Shafei said that poetry is speech of which good ideas are good and bad ideas are bad.²³

That the Prophet tolerated instrumental music has been borne out by reliable writers.²⁴ He had suggested also to announce the celebration of marriages by beating ghirbal or daff.²⁵ His own marriage with Khadija and his daughter Fatima's marriage were celebrated with music.

The injunction of the Quran against poetry and music is not against good poetry or music; poets of the Days of Ignorance have been denounced in Sura Shu'ara as aimless wanderers.²⁶ Righteous or good poetry or music therefore, does not fall in the category of condemned poetry and music. The Quran bears out: "And they (the Poets) do not practise what they preach."²⁷

22. *Ibid*; *Kashfal-Mahjub*, *op. cit.*, p. 397; That the Prophet approved of good poetry and listened to it is borne out by *Sahih Muslim*, II, p. 240; on the other hand, he has forbidden to listen to obscene and frivolous poetry.—*Ibid.*, p. 240.

23. *Ibid.*, Shafei says that music (*Sama'*) is not forbidden; it is only *wak-ruh* (not so agreeable) for the common folk. Of course, he says, the testimony of professional singers and of those who indulge in frivolous music is not acceptable—*op. cit.*, Q'ushairi, *Rasail* (Urdu Tr.), Bahawalpur 1970, p. 517.

24. *Ibn Hajar*, iii, 20; *Ibn S'ad*, *Tabaqat*, iv, I, 720.

25. Ghazzali, *op. cit.*, *Ihya al-ulum* (Cairo: 1326/1908), p. 743.

26. أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّهُمْ فِي كُلِّ وَادٍ يَهِيمُونَ ۚ

(al-Quran, XXVI: 225).

"Do you not see that these poets, the aimless poets, roam about in the different valleys of life."

The Quran also says:

وَالشُّعْرَاءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْغَاوُونَ ۚ

—XXVI: 224.

"Those who follow the poets are misguided."

27. وَأَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ مَا لَا يَفْعَلُونَ ۚ

—al-Quran, XXVI: 226.

In the light of this verse of the Quran all poets, good and bad, do not fall in one category.

A good number of the Prophet's companions viz., Abdur Rahman bin Auf, S'ad bin Abi Waqqas, Abu Ayyub Ansari, Bilal, 'Abdullah bin Jafar, 'Abdullah bin Zubair, Mughira bin Shuba, Mu'awiya bin Abu Sufian and many others liked music.²⁸

Imam Shafei' has permitted same for the elect, i.e. spiritually elevated persons and not for all and sundry because, as he says, if anybody adopts music as profession and indulges in it inordinately, he may be negligent of his important duties and hence his witness in any affair should not be treated as trustworthy.²⁹

Shaikh Abu Ali Daqqaq was of the opinion that for the common folk *Sama'* was unlawful, for they could not control their evil propensity (*nafs*), for the devotees it was permitted, because of their control of evil proclivity and for the *murids* or trainees on the Sufi path (*Tariqa*) it was good, so that their hearts might be alive by it.³⁰

Hujwiri declares that audition is neither good, nor bad, and must be judged by its results and motives. In fact, one whose heart is absorbed in the thought of God cannot be corrupted by hearing musical instruments. So with dancing, Hujwiri says: "When the heart throbs and rapture grows intense, and the agitation of ecstasy is manifested and conventional forms are gone, this is not dancing nor bodily indulgence, but a dissolution of the soul."³¹

Shaikh Junaid, Hujwiri, and other Sufi Shaikhs have stressed the necessity of keeping in view the suitability of the essembly where *Sama'* will be held, as well as of the time of its holding and of the persons participating in it. In other words, time, place and persons connected with *Sama'* must be good and

28. Quduri, cited, *Mishat al-Masabih*.

29. Shafei, *Kitab al-Qaza*; *Shihab al-Din Suhrawardy*, p. 240; Abul Qasim Qushairi, *Risala*, p. 517.

30. Qushairi; *op. cit.*, p. 522.

31. *Kashf al-Mahjub*, p. 416.

agreeable. Lawfulness of music depends upon the nature of effect it produces on the mind of the listeners; if the effect is good, it is good, otherwise it is bad.³²

According to Shaikh Junaid, the mercy of God descends upon Sufis on three occasions: while they take their meal only in times of hunger, and while they talk on the states of Prophets and the stages of the truthful and in the time of *Sama'* when they listen to it in ecstasy and behold the Reality.³³

Shaikh Shibli said: '*Sama'* is apparently harmful, but inwardly it is a great lesson.'³⁴ He further said that *Sama'* was permitted for one whose plus/minus lower self (*nafs*) is dead and the heart is alive.³⁵

Qushairi says, '*Sama'* is permissible for one who is not conscious of his self and is free from the impurities of the lower self.'³⁶

Dhu'l-Nun the Egyptian said: "Music is a divine influence which stirs the heart to seek God: those who listen to it spiritu-

32. Qushairi, *Risala*, pp. 523-24.

33. Hujwiri, *Kashf al-Mahjub*, Tr. R.A. Nicholson, p. 402; cited, Abu Talib Makki, *Qutal-Qulub*, Egypt, 1961, p. 122—The original is quoted:

تتنزل الرحمة على هذه الطائفة في ثلاثة مواطن عند
الطعام، لانهم لا ياكلون الا عن فاقةٍ وعند المزاكرة
لانهم يتذكرون احوال النبيين ومقامة الصديقين، وعند
وعند السماع لانهم يسمعون بوجد وشهدون حقا.

34. *Risala-i-Qushariyya*, *op. cit.*, p. 524.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 524; Shaikh Nizam al-Din said:

السمع مباح لمن كان قلبه حي ونفسه ميت

The latter Shaikh's remark convey the same meaning as that of the former—quoted in Amir Hasan Sijzi's *Fawa'id al-fuad*, Lahore, 1966 (R. ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 419.

36. *Risala*, 524.

ally attain unto God, and those who listen to it sensually fall into unbelief.”³⁷

The Sufi theory regarding the attractiveness of *Sama*’ is very interesting to note; like Pythagoras and Plato, the Greek philosophers, Sufis believed that music awakens in the soul a memory of celestial harmonies heard in a state of pre-existence, before the soul was separated from God. Jalal al-Din Rumi has referred to this idea—“The song of the spheres in their revolutions’ in his immortal poem *Mathnawi*, which, he argues, man, shrouded by gross earthly veils, have forgotten, only retaining faint reminiscences of those heavenly songs.”³⁸

Qushairi in his ‘Rasail’ says:

السمع يؤدى اليك رسائل الغيب

“*Sama*’ brings a letter of invitation to you from the Unseen.”

Ghazzali’s penetrating observation with regard to *Sama*’ is noteworthy: “Hearts and innermost thoughts are mines of secrets and treasures of precious stones. Within their confines are jewels which are as sparks contained in iron and steel... And there is no other way of extracting their secrets except by the flint of ‘listening to music’ (*al-Sama*’), because there is no means of reaching the hearts except through the portals of ears ...verily ‘listening to music is a factual touch stone...for as soon as the sound reaches the heart, it brings out whatever predominates in it.”³⁹

37. R.A. Nicholson, *op. cit.*, *The Mystics of Islam* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), p. 64.

38. E.H. Whinfield, abridged translation of the *Mathnawi*, p. 182, Rumi begins his *Mathnawi* with the lines:

بشنواز نے چوں حکایت میکند وز جدائیں شکایت میکند

‘Hearken to the story of the reed regarding its pangs of separation from its bed, symbolising thereby the agony of the soul’s separation from its source—the Infinite.

39. Al-Ghazzali, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 88, 182; *History of Muslim Philosophy*, II, ed. M.M. Sharif, p. 1127.

Sarri Saqati, the spiritual preceptor of Junaid of Baghdad, says: "A person in the state of ecstasy will be so much forgetful of self that he will not feel the blow of a sword on his face."⁴⁰

In India Khwaja Mu'in al-Din Chishti Ajmeri introduced *Sama'* and the practice of holding *Sama'* assemblies became regular. Khwaja Qutb al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki, Khwaja Farid al-Din Shakargunj, Khwaja Nizam al-Din Auliya, Khwaja Nasir al-Din (Chiragh-i-Delhi), Khwaja Gesudaraz and others practised it.

Khwaja Nizam al-Din said:

سماء تحریک قلب است اگر آن تحریک بیاد حق باشد مستحب است
و اگر میل بفساد باشد حرام است۔

"*Sama'* moves the heart and if the movement is in remembrance of God, it is right, but if it is for any bad motive, it is prohibited."⁴¹

The Shaikh listened to *Sama'* without instruments in his old age.⁴² Shaikh Nasir al-Din was against *Sama'* in accompaniment of instruments.⁴³

Shaikh Gesudaraz justified even the ecstatic dance,⁴⁴ a practice commonly to be found among the Sufis of the Maulvi order, founded by Maulana Jalal al-Din Rumi (1207-1273 A.D.). The ecstatic dance was believed to be justified in imitation of the revolution of Heavenly bodies. One thing which is

40. Abu Nasr Sarraj, *op. cit.*, *Kitab al-Cuma' Fil-Tasawwuf*, p. 120, *Shihab al-Din Suhrawardy*, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

41. Amir Hasan Sijzi, *Fawaid al-Fuad*, p. 419.

42. Sh. 'Abdul Haq, *Akhbar al-Akhyar*, Urdu Tr. Subhan Mahmud and Fazil, p. 179.

43. Hamid Qalandar, *Khair al-Majalis*, pp. 42, 157. Khwaja Qutb al-Din fell in an ecstatic swoon in a *Sama'* assembly and died three days later.

44. Gesudaraz, *Jawami al-Kalam*, cited, 'Aziz Ahmad, *An Intellectual History of Islam in India* (Edinburgh, 1969), p. 145.

to be noticed is the aversion of the Naqshbandi Sufis in general for *Sama*'. Many Qaderi Sufis too were not interested in it.

Ikhwan al-Safa (Brethren of purity) praised the different types of music and melody that softens hearts, produces soothing effect upon our troubled nerves, comforts the afflicted hearts, relieves the toil of hard work and provides mirth and joy at weddings and banquets.⁴⁵

Even *Sama*' has been supported and practised by innumerable Sufis and was in vogue throughout the Muslim world, yet the 'ulama of India, particularly of Delhi, of the time of Sultan Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq objected to the holding of *Sama*' assembly at the *Jam'aat-Khana* of Khwaja Nizam al-Din Auliya. The Sultan had to summon the saint and other contemporary 253 saints and 'ulama in a conference which was held in his court to ascertain the legality of *Sama*'. When the 'ulama asked Nizam al-Din to prove the legality of *Sama*', he quoted some sayings of the Prophet. Thereupon the ulama urged upon him to quote the view of Imam Abu Hanifa, whose opinion on law or juristic decision was respected by the saint. This attitude of the ulama surprised him beyond measure; he expressed his bewilderment when the ulama demanded the opinion of Abu Hanifa, although the Prophet's opinion was given.⁴⁶ The Shaikh

45. *Kitab Ikhwan al-Safa*, ed., Ahmad ibn 'Abdullah, Bombay, pp. 85-87; H.G. Farmer, cited, *History of Muslim Philosophy*, II, ed. M.M. Sharif (Germany, 1966).

46. Firishta in his 'Tarikh' has cited the exact words that were exchanged between the Shaikh and the ulama, particularly Qazi Rukunuddin:

قاضی رکن الدین رو. شیخ کردہ گفت: اے درویش! در بابت سرود و سماع
چہ حجت داری؟ شیخ بحدیث نبوی متمسک گشت. گفت: ترا بحدیث چہ کار؟
نو کہ مشرب ابو حنیفہ می داری قول ابو حنیفہ بیار. سبحان اللہ من کہ قول رسول
می آرم تو می گوئی کہ قول امتی بیار. ابو حنیفہ کہ بودے کہ من قول او
بمقابلہ قول رسول اللہ می آرم۔

(Firishta, Vol. II, p. 365)—

carried the day and the 'ulama failed to convince the sultan of their view-point. Moreover, Maulana 'Alim al-Din, who had made a tour of many territories of the Muslim world, bore witness to the fact that *Sama'* assemblies were regularly being held in those countries, he visited, without any objection from any quarters. The Shaikh was permitted to continue his *Sama'*.

Imam Nabavi in his commentaries on Sahih Muslim says:

ما ذهب الامام ابن حزم اباحة الغناء والملاهى . وقال لهم يصح
فى تحريمها حديث -

'Imam Ibn Hazm has declared music as innocent or harmless and he is of the opinion that not a single *Hadith* is to be found declaring music as unlawful'.⁴⁷

Muhaddith Majd al-Din Firuzabadi says:

در باب ذم سماع حدیثه صحیح وارد نشده -

'Not a single *hadith* against music is to be found.'⁴⁸

Shah Ismail Shahid said:

باید دانست که استماع غنا از
شریعت نیست -

See also Amir Khurd, *Siyar al-Auliya*, pp. 525-32; Haji Dabir, *Arabic History of Gujrat* (London, 1928), Vol. III, pp. 855-56.

Even Ibn Taimiya, who, not favourably disposed towards Sufis, excepting a few among them, supported the view of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Nawab Siddiqal Hasan thus, writes in his book *Manaqib al-Asfiya*—

شیخ الاسلام ابن تیمیہ رحمۃ اللہ علیہ درین باب موافق نظام الدین اولیا است

—Maulana Akram Khan, *op. cit.*, *Samasya O Samadhan* (a Bengali book), p. 100, foot note.

47. Nabavi, pp. 1-12; Maulana Akram Khan, *Shamashya O Shamadhan* (written in Bengali), Calcutta, n. d., p. 77.

48. *Sharh-i-Sifral-S'aadat*, p. 561; Akram Khan, p. 78.

'It is to be noted that listening to music is not forbidden by Shariat.'⁴⁹

Maulana 'Abdul Haq Muhaddith of Delhi so clearly says:

جاہل کیست؟ آنکہ مطلق سماع بہر حال در ہر وقت از ہر کس اندک و بیش
حرام داند، و فاسق آنکہ مطلق آنرا حلال داند۔

'Who is an ignorant man? One who regards all music sung in every circumstance, at every time and by every person, little or much, as prohibited and the sinner is he who regards all music as permitted.'⁵⁰

'Abdul Haq elsewhere says:

تحقیق تصریح کرده اند بعضی از متاخرین محدثین کہ حدیثی در
حرمت غنا صحیح نشدہ۔

'The later traditionists have clearly ascertained that any *hadith* declaring music as prohibited is not sound.'⁵¹

As a matter of fact, Chishti, Suhrawardy and Shattari mystics allowed *Sama*' in their devotional gatherings as a means of inspiring spiritual ecstasy, and the *Khanqahs* of Multan, Ajodhan (Pak Patan), Delhi, Gour (where Chishti-Nizami Sufis flourished) and elsewhere did a useful service in spreading a taste for music.⁵²

Khwaja Nizam al-Din Auliya of Delhi patronised music. He had special affection for his disciple Amir Khusrau, who

49. *Sirat-i-Mustaquim*, pp. 107-110; Akram Khan, p. 78.

50. *Nikat al-Haq*, Shah Muhammad Qadari Jaunpuri, cited, *Tuhfat al-Faqir fi Abahat al-Sama' wa'l-Mazamir*, p. 36; Akram Khan, p. 82.

51. 'Abdul Haq, *Ash'at al-Lam'aat* (Lucknow edition), Vol. I, No. 1; p. 600.

52. 'Abdus Sayeed, 'Fourteenth Century Legal Pronouncement on Sama', *Itihasa Samiti Patrika* (Dacca: Bangladesh Itihasa Samiti, 1973), Vol. II, p. 81. In this connection one thing is noteworthy. Although all Suhrawardy Sufis were not against *Sama*', Shaikh Shihab al-Din Suhrawardy had no taste for it, for in the words of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Kubra we know:

was renowned both as poet and musician. The latter and his disciples Samad and Niaz attended regularly the *Sama'* gatherings held in the *Jam'aat-Khana* of Khwaja Nizam al-Din of Delhi.⁵³ Amir Khusrau was, so to say, the life and soul of such assemblies, as he had been the poet-laureate and musician of the imperial darbar of not less than seven sultans of Delhi. Thus, Khusrau largely contributed to the art and culture in both the realms.

The Chishti tradition of *Sama'* was continued by the Chishti-Nizami order of Pandua (Bengal), of which Shaikh Akhi Siraj al-Din 'Uthman, Shaikh 'Alaul Haq and Shaikh Nur Qutb 'Alam were the most renowned. This tradition was extended to Jaunpur by another illustrious saint of the order, named Syed Ashraf Jahangir Simnani, and by the celebrated Saint Husam al-Din to Manikpur.

Shah 'Abdul Latif of Bhit (Sind) is reported to have said: 'In my heart there is a tree of Divine Love which dries up unless I sing or listen to music. I am restless without it, but with it I commune with the Creator.'⁵⁴ Exactly so, Music really

شیخ نجم الدین کبریٰ علیہ الرحمۃ والرضوان گفتی کہ ہر نعمتی کہ در شہر ممکن است
شیخ شہاب الدین رادادند، الاذوق سمع!

"Shaikh Najm al-Din Kubra (mercy and pleasure of God be on him) said that every bounty that may be possessed by a human being was bestowed upon Shaikh Shihab al-Din except the taste for Sama".
—Amir Khurd, *op. cit.*, *Fawaid al-Fuad*, p. 56.

53. Fakhr al-Din Zarradi, a distinguished disciple of Khwaja Nizam al-Din Auliya, wrote a book on permissibility of *Sama'*—Yusuf Husain, *Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture* (London: Asia Publishing House, 2nd ed., 1959), Bengali Tr. Faruq Mahmud (Bengali Academy, Dacca, 1967), p. 44.

54. M.M. Gidvani, *op. cit.*, *Shah 'Abdul Latif* (Dacca: Society for Pakistan Studies, 1970), p. 17. Shah 'Abdul Latif continued his liking for the *sama'* even in his ripe and mature days.—Motilal Jotwani, *Shah Abdul Latif: His Life and Work* (University of Delhi, 1975), pp. 113-14. Besides 'Abdul Latif, Shah Muhammad Ghaus Shattari of Gwalior was devoted to music, and it is believed that Tansen, the renowned musician, was his disciple in the field of music, Baba Haridas being Tansen's first teacher of music.

serves as a communion between the creator and the acting heart of a lover. The infatuation of Majnu for Laila is surely symbolic of the passionate love of a lover for his beloved God. The heart which intensely longs for another heart must know the secret of love. Such a heart cannot but melt with the melody of music and feel spiritually elevated.

Sufi Orders and Khanqahs— Their Social and Religious Role

The mystical movement in Islam arose out of asceticism and was represented in its earliest phase by the personalities of individual men and women who devoted themselves singly and exclusively to the service of God. This period was followed by an age in which theory went hand in hand with practice, and famous Shaikhs taught the doctrine of Sufism to disciples either solitary or in groups.¹ The relation of teacher and people, familiar in other disciplines, developed into the characteristic Sufi counterpart of Shaikh (or *pir* or *murshid*) and disciple or *murid*, and convents (*ribat* or *khanqah*) were founded, where a celebrated saint would reside with a group of his followers, who studied and were trained under him.

The foundation of the orders is the system and relationship of master and disciple. It was natural to accept the authority and guidance of those who had traversed the stages of the Sufi Path. Every man has inherent possibility for release from self and union with God, but this latent and dormant faculty cannot be brought into play or made effective without guidance

1. A.J. Arberry, *Sufism—An Account of the Mystics of Islam* (London: George Allen & Unwin, latest ed., 1969), p. 84.

from a leader. Sufi teaching and practice were diffused throughout the Islamic world through the medium of religious orders. The early masters sought to guide rather than teach, directing the neophyte or the aspirant in ways of meditation whereby he himself acquired insight into the spiritual truth. Sufism in practice consists of feeling and unveiling, since *m'arifa* (gnosis) is reached by passage through ecstatic states; for what is peculiar to Sufis cannot be learned but only attained by direct experience, ecstasy and inward transformation.² A *tariqa* or an order (or the Sufi Path) was a practical method to guide a seeker by tracing a way of thought, feeling and action, leading through a succession of 'stages' (*maqamat*) and 'states' (*ahwal*) to experience of divine Reality (*haqiqat*).³

With the 6th A.H./12th century comes the foundation of the Sufi orders under the guidance of adepts, using common discipline and ritual.⁴ Emphasis was laid upon strict adherence to the Qur'an and the Traditions. A determining factor in the success of the great Sufi orders was their faithful adherence to the religious laws and orthodox practices.

The *tariqas* which became the most significant for the development of Sufism were the Suhrawardiya attributed to Diya al-Din Abu Najib Suhrawardy (d. 1168 A.D.); but developed by his nephew Shihab al-Din Abu Hafs Umar Suhrawardy (d. 1234 A.D.); the Qaderiya attributed to Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani (d. 1166 A.D.); Rifaiya deriving from Ahmad Ibn Rifa'i (d. 1182 A.D.), Yasaviya of Ahmad al-Yasavi (d. 1166 A.D.), the Kubrawiya of Najm al-Din Kubra (d. 1221 A.D.); the Chishtiya of Mu'in al-Din Chishti (d. 1236 A.D.); the Shadhiliya deriving from Abu Madyan Shu'aib (d. 1197 A.D.); the Badawiya of Ahmad al-Badawi (d. 1276 A.D.); centred in Egypt; the Maulwiya of Maulana Jalal al-Din Rumi (d. 1273 A.D.), centred mainly in Anatolia; the central Asian Naqshbandiya of Yusuf al-Hamadani, but eventually associated with Muham-

2. W.M. Watt, *The Faith And Practice of Al-Ghazzali* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1953), pp. 54-55; S. Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 3.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

4. A.J. Arberry, *Sufism*, p. 85.

mad Baha al-Din Naqshbandi (d. 1389 A.D.). Branches or sub-orders of almost all the orders came into existence in course of time. Mention may also be made of the other two orders, viz., Madari, named after Badiu'd-Din Shah Madar (d. 1433) and N'imatullah, named after Shah N'imatullah⁵ (d. 1430 A. D.), the only Persian order.

The Encyclopaedia of Islam gives a list of one hundred and seventy five major orders with many branch orders.⁶

To the above mentioned orders some more orders may be added, such as, Adhami, named after Ibrahim bin Adham (d. 777 A.D.); Bistami, named after Bayazid Bistami (about 9th century A.D.); Saqati, named after Sirri Saqati (died about 9th century A.D.); Junaidi, named after Junaid; Khilwati, named after Umar Khilwati⁷ (about 1400 A.D.).

D'ohsson enumerates thirty two principal religious orders, including the aforesaid orders.⁸

Shaikh Rujviri enumerates eleven mystic orders till his time (about eleventh century A.D.). These orders are: (1) Muhasibi, named after Abu 'Abdullah Harith b. Asad al-Muhasibi, (2) Qassari, named after Abu Salih Hamdun b. 'Ahmad b. 'Umara al-Qassar, (3) Taifuri (also called Bistami), named after Abu Taiud Taifur b. 'Isa b. Surushan al-Bistami, (4) Junaidi, named after Abu'l-Qasim al-Junaid b. Muhammad, (5) Nuri, named after Abu'l-Hasan Ahmad b. Muhammad Nuri, (6) Sahli, named after Sahl b. 'Abdullah Tustari, (7) Hakimi, named after Abu 'Abdullah Muhammad b. 'Ali al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi, (8) Kharrazi, named after Abu Sa'id Kharraz, (9) Khafifi, named after Abu 'Abdullah Muhammad b. Khafif Shirazi, (10) Sayyari, named after Abu'l-'Abbas Sayyari, (11) Mululi, named after Abu Hulman of Damascus.⁹

5. A.S. Triton, *Islam—Beliefs And Practices* (London: Hutchinson House, 1951), p. 100.

6. See also *Ibid.*, p. 99.

7. T.P. Hughese, *Notes on Muhammadanism* (Allen & Co., Waterloo Place, 1877), p. 237.

8. See *Ibid.*, p. 237.

9. Ali b. 'Uthman Al-Hujwiri, *Kashf al-Mahjub*, Tr. R.A. Nicholson (London: G.M. Series, 1959), pp. 176-266.

The Sufi convents, variously termed as *Zawiyah*, *Khanqah*, *Tekke*, *Rabita*, *Ribat* and *Jam'aat Khana* served as great centres of spiritual upliftment as well as social development; they consequently facilitated the much-needed integration of the Muslim society.

The term *Zawiyah* properly means the corner of a building. Some scholars giving it a pre-Islamic origin, think that the term was first applied to the cell of a Christian monk, then to a small mosque or prayer-room.¹⁰ The term has acquired a great sanctity from the fact that Ghazzali occupied a corner of the mosque of Damascus for several years for his meditations, from which the term *Zawiyah-i-Ghazzali* has acquired immortal fame. The term was also used for the Sufi convent, as we have, come to know from the pages of Ibn Battuta's account of his journey.¹¹ In the eastern countries *Zawiyah* was applied to small places where Sufis lived and prayed, as in India.¹² The word has been derived from the root '*Zawa*,' which means 'to conceal a secret.' Secondly, it means 'to retire in a corner.'¹³

The *Zawiyah* is a complex building surrounded by a wall. The centre of the building is a domed tomb and his successors might be buried there or in separate tombs. There is a small mosque, a Qur'an school and a room for indoor recitals. One or more teachers teach the children to recite the Qur'an and may teach *fiqh* or the legal sciences or *hadith*, as well as the principles of mysticism, to disciples in the *Zawiyah*. There are other rooms to where the present Shaikh and other members of his line with their wives, children and servants, and some other rooms for pilgrims and travellers. The whole is a self-sufficient establishment having cultivation and animals.¹⁴

10. *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1934), p. 1220.

11. H.A.R. Gibb, ed., *The Travels of Ibn Battuta* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 3rd Imp., 1953), pp. 43 ff.

12. K.A. Nizami, 'Some Aspects of Khanqah Life in Medieval India,' *Studies, Islamica*, 1957, VIII, p. 53; *Islamic Culture* (Hyderabad, India, January, 1977), Vol. LI, No. 1.

13. J.G. Hava, *Al-Faraid Arabic—English Dictionary* (Beirut Catholic Press, 1964).

14. *Ibid.*, p. 176.

In the east the term *Zawiyah* is given to more humble places of prayer and dervish cells. Corresponding terms for the convent and the tomb-centred institution are *khanqah* in central Asia and *tekke* or *dargah* in the Ottoman Turkish sphere. In India *Jam'atkhana* and *dargah* were also used.¹⁵

The term *khanqah*, meaning Sufi convent, is more popular in India. The Persian words *khan* and *gah* mean table and place respectively. The *khanqah* was a special building which provided separate accommodation for each visitor and intimate. The *jama'atkhana* was a large room where all the disciples slept, prayed and studied on the floor. The Chishti saints built *jama'atkhana*s; the Suhrawardi saints constructed *khanqah*s. Popularly both the terms are used as synonymous. In contrast the *Zawiyah*s were smaller places where mystics lived and prayed, but unlike inmates of *khanqah*s and *jama'atkhana*s, did not aim at establishing any vital contact with the world outside. In the 17th and 18th centuries another type of *khanqah*s

daeras (دايره) came into vogue. The primary aim of these *daeras* was to provide place for religious mediations. They were smaller than *Zawiyah*s.¹⁶

Tekke is supposed to have been derived from the Arabic word *ittika*.¹⁷ *Tekke* accommodated some twenty to forty dervishes, who were provided with food and lodging. The married had the right to have their own children, but were obliged to sleep in the *tekke* once or twice a week. An exception was the convent of the Maulvis, where no married dervishes were allowed to pass the night.¹⁸

15. Spencer Trimingham, *Sufi Order in Islam* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971); S. Babsmala, 'The Sufi Convent in the Medieval Period of Islam', *Islamic Culture*, Vol. LI, p. 35.

16. K.A. Nizami, *Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century*, 1961, p. 175; The same author's 'Khanqah Life in Medieval India' *Studies, Islamica*, VIII, 1957, pp. 51-69.

17. Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, p. 178.

18. *D'olsson*, IV, 2, 662-663; *Trimingham*, p. 178.

Rabit like *Rabita* is derived from the root *rabata*, to bind, to attach. The Qur'an has also used the term, *min ribat al-khaili*.¹⁹ *Ribat* was probably an institution which originated in Persia and was primarily of a military character.²⁰

While appraising the role of Sufi orders Gibb is of the opinion that the influence and activity of Sufism in the Islamic world considerably advanced from the 13th century onward—spiritually, morally, intellectually and even politically.²¹

In Syria, Persia and Iraq some *ribats* like *Khawaniq* (*Sing-khanqah*) were well-endowed with *Awqaf* or endowments.²² These came into vogue among the Sufis imitating the convent system of *Karramiyah* (a sect, called after Abu Abdullah Muhammad b. Karram (d. 871 A.D.)).²³ Earlier than this, a *ribat* was found on Abadan island, on the Persian gulf, which grew up around an ascetic named Abd al-Wahid Ibn Zaid (d. 177/793). It survived his death.²⁴ According to al-Maqdisi a convent where Sufi exercises took place was at Dabil, the capital of Armenia.²⁵ The other centres are known to have existed on the marches with Byzantium and North Africa. The other centres were at Damascus around 150/767, at Ramlah, capital of Palestine, founded by a Christian Amir before 800 A.D., in Khurasan about the sametime, while in Alexandria there appeared an organization (*taifa*) calling itself as Sufiya in the year A.H. 200.²⁶

According to Ibn Taimiyyah, the first house for mystics was built in Basra, but the popularity of the *khanqahs* and *ribats*

19. al-Qur'an, 8: 62.

20. S. Babsmala, 'The Sufi Convent in the Medieval Period of Islam, *Islamic Culture*, LI, p. 35.

21. H.A.R. Gibb, *Studies on the Civilization of Islam* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), p. 32.

22. S. Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, p. 32.

23. S. Babsmala, *Islamic Culture*, 1977, p. 35.

24. Abu Nasr Sarraj, *Kitab al-Luma' fi'l Tasawwuf*, p. 429.

25. S. Trimingham, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

26. Jami, *Nafahat al-Uns* (Calcutta, 1859), p. 34; S. Trimingham, p. 5.

started with the Saljuq period.²⁷ According to Jami, the first convent was erected by a Christian prince of Syria.²⁸ Henri Masse is of the view that from the 7th century onwards mystics gathered together in convents and there were convents even for women in Syria and Egypt in the 13th and 14th centuries.²⁹ Even earlier there were seven convents for women in Aleppo alone, all established between 1150 and 1250 A.D. Cairo and Baghdad also had a number of convents, of which the ribat of Fatima Raziya (d. 521/1127) was the best known.³⁰ According to Massignon, the first group of Sufis organised in Kufa in the 7th and 8th centuries and in Basra in the 8th century. Baghdad became the centre of the movement in the second half of the 9th century.³¹

Some convents existed in Khurasan in the last decade of the 10th century. Every such convent centred around a master and his circle of disciples. First convents might have comprised of rooms for the assembly and for prayer.³² Other features of this initial period were a record of rules credited to Abu Sai'd bin Abi'l Khair, a Persian mystic (967—1049 A.D.).³³ Another *khanqah* was founded in Nishapur by Abu Ali Daqqaq (d. 1016 A.D.), the master of Abu Sai'd and al-Qushairi. Another in the same city belonged to Abu Ali Tarsusi (d. 364/974), which continued until 548/1154 when it was destroyed by the Ghuzz Turks.³⁴

In the second stage, it may be presumed that the tombs of early Shaikhs were preserved probably near the convents, so that the followers and admirers might pay their respects to the tombs of their masters.

27. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, 'Aspects of Khanqah Life in Medieval India,' *Studies Islamica*, 1957, VIII, p. 51.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

29. Henri Masse, *Islam*, Tr. from French, Halide Edib (New York: G.P. Putnam's sons, 1938), p. 212.

30. *S. Trimingham*, p.

31. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Ch. Tasawwuf, Vol. V.

32. *S. Trimingham*, p. 166.

33. R.A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism* (Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 46.

34. *S. Trimingham*, p. 166.

In the final stage, the presence of the tomb led to the association of a convent (*khanqah*) with it. These *khanqahs* provided accommodation and shelter to those mystics who had no house of their own. Secondly, it gave the Sufis an opportunity of mixing with each other and regulating their life and conduct. Thirdly, they got an opportunity of mutual criticism and rectification. *Ahl-i-khanqah* (the people of the *khanqah*) were divided into three categories—permanent (*muqim*) and travellers (*musa-firin*). The travellers were allowed to stay for three days in a *khanqah*. If they over-stayed, they had to help the inmates in day to day work. The inmates of the *khanqah* were divided into three classes, viz., *Ahl-i-khidmat*; *Ahl-i-suhbat* and *Ahl-i-khilwat*, according to their standing and the nature of the duties assigned to them.³⁵

Nizam ul-Mulk, the wazir of Malik Shah was said to have erected convents and endowed pensions for the pious and the indigent.³⁶ In the time of Salah al-Din to convents were founded and endowed. The foundation of convents continued under the *Mambaks* also.³⁷

Convents also existed in Bukhara, Anatolia, Iran, Turkey, India and other parts of the Muslim world, *Sama'* and fasting were the special features of the Chishti *khanqahs*, called *Jama'atkhanas*, which differentiated them from the Suhrawardia *khanqahs*. Secondly, the Chishtis unlike the Suhrawardis eschewed politics and refused royal grants and endowments³⁸

35. K.A. Nizami, 'Some Aspects of Khanqah Life,' *Studies Islamica*, pp. 54-55; also Nizami, *Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India in the Thirteenth Century* (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 1974), pp. 59-61; S. Babsmala, 'Sufi Convent and Its Social Significance', *Islamic Quarterly* (Hyderabad, India, 1977); Shaikh Shihab al-Din Suhrawardy, '*Awarif al-Ma'arif*, Urdu Tr.; *Misbah al-Hidayah* (Lucknow ed., 1322 A.H.), pp. 118-121.

36. *The Cambridge History of Iran* (Cambridge University Press, 1968), Vol. V, p. 263.

37. Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddima*, Vol. II, pp. 435-436.

38. K.A. Nizami, *Life and Times of Farid al-Din Ganj-i-Shakar* (Muslim University, Aligarh, 1955), p. 54; See also his 'Early Indo-Muslim Mystic Attitude Towards the State,' *Islamic Cultures* (Hyderabad, India, 1949), Vol. XXIII.

and depended on their irregular and uncertain income, which was called '*futuh*.' Thirdly, the Suhrawardi convents provided well-furnished, separate accommodation both for the inmates and the visitors, whereas the Chishti convents equally consisted of a big hall, called *jama'atkhana*, which obviously could not afford such a luxury. Lastly, unlike the Suhrawardis the Chishtis kept their *langarkhana* (kitchen) open at all times, ready to provide food to the destitute and mendicants.³⁹ Moreover, the Chishti convents served as centres of mystic teachings. The *khanqahs* were in a special sense focal points of Islam—centres of holiness, fervour, ascetic exercises, and Sufi training.⁴⁰ There were two categories of Sufis, these associated with *khanqahs* and the wanderers.⁴¹ Khwaja Nizam al-Din's *jama'atkhanas* served for long 50 years as the great spiritual centre and acknowledged academy of Sufism.⁴²

In the *khanqahs* Sufis, general people and even non-Muslims attended. Specially to Chishti *jama'atkhanas* and few other *khanqahs*, particularly Shattari, non-Muslims had free access. The inmates of the *khanqahs* lived simple and austere life. The Shaikh, the head of the *khanqah*, was followed by all the inmates in respect of their piety and living. Shaikh Syed Gesudaraz (d. 1422 A.D.) and the later Chishtis did not strictly adhere to this ideal.

The Suhrawardy *khanqah* provided comforts to its inmates and their accommodation too was spacious. Shaikh Baha al-Din Suhrawardy of Multan lived in affluent circumstances. The meals provided in Suhrawardy *khanqah* were rich. Shaikh Baha al-Din is said to have accumulated seven lakhs of tankas which he bequeathed to his seven sons.⁴³ The *Chishti* ideal was just

39. The Chishtis acted upto the Hadith: "If some one visits a living man and gets nothing from him to eat, it is as if he had visited the dead."
—*Pawaid al-Fu'ad*, p. 136; See also *S. Trimingham*, p. 22.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 22;

41. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 343-344.

42. Muhammad Salim, *Jama'at-khana of Shaikh Nizam al-Din*, *The Proceedings of Pakistan History Conference*, Karachi, 1953, pp. 187-188.

43. Muhammad Salim, 'Shaikh Baha al-Din Zakaria of Multan', *Journal*

the opposite of this ideal. The Suhrawardy *khanqahs* (of Multan) were organized on a pattern basically different from that of the Chishtis. The difference arose mainly out of the fact that the Suhrawardis did not eschew politics. Shaikh Baha al-Din Zakaria, the real founder of the Suhrawardy *Silsilah* in India, mixed freely with the sultans, took part in political affairs, amassed wealth and accepted government honours. Enormous *futuh* (masked for charity) flowed into his *khanqahs*.⁴⁴ Contrary to the practice of the Chishti saints, it was not distributed immediately among the needy and the poor. He kept his wealth in a treasury (*khazanah*) containing boxes full of gold tankas. Once a box of 5000 gold tankas was founded missing,⁴⁵ but the loss was not considered a serious one.

Suhrawardy *khanqah* had large stocks of cereals in its graneries. Its treasuries were replete with gold and silver coins. The Chishti *jama'atkhana* had no such provision.⁴⁶ The Chishtis depended on the uncertain and irregular income through *Futuh*; the Suhrawardy *khanqahs* relied on the sure and regular jagir revenues. Besides, the Suhrawardy *khanqahs* were not open to people all and sundry. "People are of two kinds," Shaikh Baha al-Din used to say, "the general public and the select, I have nothing to do with the general public and no reliance can be

of the Pakistan Historical Society (Karachi: Pakistan Historical Society).

44. Jamali, *Siyar al-'Arefin*, p. 106.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 114; Nizami, p. 226.

46. Shaikh Farid did not allow his disciple Shaikh Nizam al-Din to borrow even a grain of salt to prepare his food. Shaikh Farid knew intuitively that his food was prepared with borrowed salt and he declined to take it. He remarked:

درویشان اگر بفاقمیروند از برای لذت نفس قرض نگیزند
زیرا که قرض و توکل بعدا المشرقین است بهم راست نیاید.

'The dervishes prefer dying of starvation to incurring any debt for the satisfaction of their (baser) desires. Debt and resignation are poles apart and can not subsist together.'—See Amir Khurd, '*Siyar al-Auliya*', p. 66.

placed upon them. As to the select, they receive spiritual blessings and benefits from me according to their capacities.⁴⁷ He had fixed hours for interview. He refused to be disturbed by visitors and odd hours.⁴⁸ The Chishti ideal was quite opposed to it. The doors of a Chishti *khanqahs* were always open to the poor and the indigent and it never discriminated between high and low.

The *khanqahs* were not strictly guidance-centres but associations of people prepared to live a common life under discipline. The *khanqah* and mausoleum of sultan Baibars in Cairo (built in the 8th/14th century) provided for 400 Sufis while that of Siryaqus had 100 cells for individual Sufis.⁴⁹ About *khanqahs* in Cairo in 1326 A.D. Ibn Battuta writes that each *khanqah* has a Shaikh and superintendent (*Haris*) who organises their affairs admirably, and these men are celibate, there being separate *khanqahs* for the married. Their duties include attendance at the five ritual prayers passing the night in the *khanqah*, and attendance at their *dhikr* gatherings held in its hall (*qubba*). It is also customary for each one to occupy his own special prayer-mat.⁵⁰ Sometimes some *khanqah* offered courses in all four schools of *Fiqh*, *Hadith* and seven readings of the Qur'an. This particular *khanqah* seems to have been more like a *madrassa*, but this was unusual, and normally the Sufi aspect was the dominant one.⁵¹

The *khanqahs*, called tomb-*khanqahs*, built around tombs of saints, great and small alike, extended hospitality to travellers as well as travelling Sufis. Community living used to be a winter custom and with the approach of spring the dervishes set off again on their travels.⁵² Ibn Battuta stayed in the *khanqah* in Bistam attached to the tombs of Abu Yazid al-

47. *Nizami*, p. 228.

48. *Ibid*, p. 228.

49. *S. Trimingham*, p. 171 and *Ibid.*, p. 171.

50. Ibn Battuta, *Rihla* (Paris, 1928), VI, p. 20.

51. *S. Trimingham*, p. 170, footnote.

52. *Ibid.*, p. 172.

Bistami, where he also visited that of Abu'l Hasan al-Kharaqani.⁵³

In Turkey in Istanbul in eighteen eighties Naqshbandiya khanqahs were 52, called tekke.⁵⁴

In the Balkans as well as Asia Minor Bektashi order prevail. A celebi, claiming descent from Haji Bektash himself was recognised the rightful head of the order by some Bektashis, and was especially the recognised leader of the Kizilbash tribes throughout the country. A representative of the celebi was sent at regular periods to visit the Kizilbash villages, to give instruction and to receive contributions. It is said that at one time there were 362 villages belonging to the tekke the revenue running as high as 60,000 pounds sterling a year.⁵⁵ This income was divided between the two rival heads, the Dede and the Celebi. The money left over as surplus above expenses in each tekke in Haji Bektash village. The money went into the general treasury from which funds were drawn for the needs of the *tekkes* where there had been deficit. Although suppressed in Turkey, the Bektashi order is still strong in Albania. Recognised by the government as one of the accepted religions of the country, numbering some 150,000 or 200,000 souls, the Bektashi order is continuing its activities in conformity to a printed set of regulations approved by the government.⁵⁶

The Sufi institutions, whether *khanqah*, Turkish *tekke*, or *magribi zawiyah*, in addition to keeping open house, welcoming the poor and the travellers, used to provide spiritual solace, and formed channels of power with the supernatural world.⁵⁷ The men of these institutions were in close touch with the people. They were organizations for mutual help, and a respected Shaikh could voice the peoples' grievances and denounce

53. *Ibn Battuta*, III, p. 82.

54. E. Chelebi, *Tra. Von Hammer*, I, II, p. 29; *S. Trimmingham*, p. 95.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 82.

56. J.K. Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes* (London: Luzac & Co., 1937), p. 85.

57. S. Trimmingham, *The Sufi Orders In Islam*, p. 230.

tyranny and oppression. They assisted the poor and ministered to the sick and travellers.⁵⁸

Evidently a *khanqah* should be headed by a Sufi leader—the Shaikh whoever might be the Shaikh at the head of the hierarchy at a particular time, he was possessed of special qualities and powers, which passed on to his successor or spiritual heir, if he proved himself competent by his virtues and religious observances as taught by his spiritual preceptor. The spiritual heir or successor was called *Sajjadahnashin* (Persian word). The highest rank in the spiritual hierarchy was that of Ghaus. Next to Ghaus was called Qutb.⁵⁹ Total submission to him was indispensable, a striking illustration of which had been given by Shaikh Badr al-Din Ishaq, who, when called in the midst of his prayer by his master Baba Farid Shakargunj, discontinued his prayer and replied, “I am present.”⁶⁰

The *khalifa*, who lived with the Shaikh, was the latter's deputy or right hand and Shaikh in absentia. There might be other *khalifas* in town, district or territorial leaders in the case of a widely spread organization like the Suhrawardiah.

The permanent members of the *khanqah* were the Shaikh and his assistants, the subordinate leaders who comprised various people—merchants, government officials, scholars etc.⁶¹ They had special duties assigned to them ranging from services to the Shaikhs to providing the service required for the smooth functioning of the *khanqah*.

Subordinates to the Shaikh were the *Muqaddims*, who acted under his orders and have certain functions allotted to them. They enjoyed the confidence of the chief of the order. An assistant to the *Muqaddim* was the *Wakil*, who had charge of the property and funds of the *Zawiyah*.⁶²

58. *Ibid.*, p. 234.

59. Qutb means a pole or a point.

60. Nizami, *Life and Times of Ganj-i-Shakar*, p. 43.

61. R.E. Sell, *Essays on Islam* (London: S.M. Hamilton, Kent & Co., 1901), p. 104.

62. *Ibid.*, p. 104.

Once or twice a year the *Muqaddims* met in conference and considered questions relating to the well-being of the order. This meeting is called *Hazrat*, a word meaning presence. On his return home each *muqaddim* used to hold a Synod of the brethren of his *Zawiyah*. This Synod is called *Jalal*, the Glorious.⁶³

The *Autad* (pl. of *watd*, a pole or pillar) is the name given to the devotees who are four in number. Then came the *Khayyar*, a word derived from *Khair* (good), which signifies an excellent man. They are seven in number. Another class is constituted by the *Abd al—*the changeable. They are seventy in number, of whom forty reside in Syria and thirty elsewhere. When one dies God appoints his successor. Then came the *Najib*, who is an assistant to the *Muqaddam*, and the *Naqib* or chief *walis* or saints are highly venerated.⁶⁴ The Holy Qur'an refers to the saints as those men who have no fear and anxiety.⁶⁵

The *Bektashis* believe that a man must be born twice. He must be born from his mother, and he must be born from his *murshid*. That which is born of the mother is flesh. It is a mere copy of something real. One is born into the world of reality through the influence of the *murshid*. That which is born of the mother is 'the light of darkness,' *Tulmatnurn*. That which is born of the spiritual leader is 'the light of right guidance', *Nurn Hidayet*.⁶⁶

He who has attained to the spiritual leaders has become that light and who has not attained to the *murshid* can not know God. If you have a *murshid* you may become a human

63. *Ibid.*, p. 104.

64. *Ibid.*, p. 108.

65. (X: 62)—

الآَاتِ أَوْلِيَاءِ اللَّهِ لِأَخْوَفٍ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ۝

66. J.K. Birge, *The Bektashi order of Dervishes* (London: Luzac & Co., 1937), pp. 96-97.

being, and if you have no *murshid*, you will remain an animal.⁶⁷

As Prof. Gibb says, "Sufism increasingly attracted the creative, social and intellectual energies within the community to become the bearer of or instrument of a social and cultural revolution."⁶⁸ Because of the rigid caste system prevalent in Hindu society which deprived it of that dynamic energy which could sustain it in times of crises and enable it to respond to new situations and new challenges, it was passing through one of its most critical phases of its history.⁶⁹ The unassuming ways of the mystics, their broad human sympathies and the classless atmosphere of their *khanqahs* attracted these despised sections of Indian society to its fold. Here they found a social order altogether different from their own.⁷⁰ All lived, slept and ate together. The sacred book, the Holy Qur'an, was open and accessible to all. Thus, demonstrating the Islamic idea of Tauhid as a working principle in social life, medieval *khanqahs* became the spear-heads of Muslim culture.⁷¹

Another significant contribution of the mystics to Indian society can hardly be ignored. The *khanqahs* acted as a counter balanced in maintaining the moral equilibrium of the medieval society, which was adversely affected by the moral laxities and social vices, a necessary concomitant of culture-growth.⁷² In other words, *khanqah* played a vitally important role in developing social and cultural life and elevating religious and moral life of people. Above all, the quintessence of mystic teachings in the 13th century was the unity of God head and the brotherhood of man.⁷³ The role of *khanqah* was no less conspicuous in the social sphere than in the religious and moral spheres.

67. *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

68. H.A.R. Gibb, *An Interpretation of Islamic History*, *op. cit.*; K. A. Nizami, *Religion and Politics In India*, etc., p. 261.

69. *Nizami*, p. 260.

70. *Ibid.*

71. *Ibid.*, p. 261.

72. *Nizami*, p. 264; *Fawa'id al-Fuad*, pp. 4, 40, 111, 112.

73. *Ibid.*

Besides *khanqahs*, *jama'atkhanas*, *tekkes* and similar other institutions, there were some other centres of religious activities, viz. the *masjid*, the *madrasah* and the *maqbarah*. As Shaikh Hamid al-Din Nagauri said, the purpose of constructing a *khanqah*, a *masjid* or a *hujrah* was to discipline the inner life of man. This is no doubt true, but these places had a social significance also and occupied a pivotal place in the community life of the Muslims.⁷⁴

The mosques were not used merely for congregational prayers; meetings for *tazkira* (discussions on religious topics) were also held there. Besides, *Siyyam* (so-called because they are held on the third day after death) ceremonies which comprised a recitation of the Qur'an and offering of blessings on the departed soul, were usually held in mosques. Educational institutions of different categories and standards were also attached with mosques.

The character of a mosque was determined by the locality in which it was situated. The principal mosque in the capital town was usually a great centre of learning. Mosques in *Qasbahs* and villages catered to the religious needs of Muslim population living around it. A *madrasah* attached to a village mosque confined its function to merely teaching the Qur'an to the children. Mosques situated in out of the way areas were sometimes used by the mystics for performing certain spiritual and devotional rites.⁷⁵ Since there were no restrictions on stay in the mosques, one who had no place to hide his head found shelter there.⁷⁶

The *madrasahs* maintained by the state had an atmosphere of affluence and plenty, but a very large number of institutions, established and maintained by individual scholars worked under extremely difficult circumstances. Probably these scholars did not charge any regular fees from their pupils and subsisted on casual *Futuh*. The *madrasahs* were meant for intellectual pursuits including the Qur'an, *Hadith*, *Tafsir*, etc.

74. *Nizami*, p. 303.

75. *Siyar al-Auliya*, p. 69.

76. *Ibid.*, p. 110.

The mausoleums were also centres of brisk activity. Besides, some grave-yards were chosen by mystics for performing spiritual practices which required a lonely corner. The solitary atmosphere of the graveyards suited their temperament and they preferred to spend their time there. In this connection, it may be recalled that Khwaja Mu'in al-Din Chishti, coming from Iran halted at Lahore on the way to India and stayed at the *maqberah* (tomb) for 40 days (which is called *chillah*) engaged in spiritual exercises. Again some tombs also had memorial mosques associated with them.⁷⁷

The *khanqahs*, as already mentioned, served as religious and spiritual centre. Books were no doubt taught in *khanqahs* but they were either on *tafsir* or *tasawwuf*. Emphasis was laid here on the discipline of inner life and emotional integration in the light of religious teachings rather than intellectual advancement through casuistry.⁷⁸

But opposition to the orders, to their Shaikhs, beliefs, and practices, was continual and vigorous. Official religious authority never reconciled itself, whatever compromises were made, to the existence of centres of religious authority outside their control. Hanbli hostility goes back to the attitude of the founder of the *madhab* to al-Muhasibi, Sarri al-Saqati, and their followers. The Hanbli, Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597/1200), devoted something like half his book *Tablis Iblis* to Sufis⁷⁹ denouncing their alleged divergencies from the Law. The Syrian jurist, Ibn Taimiya (d. 728/1328) was especially prominent in voicing his opposition and condemning eminent Sufis and their practices in seeking ecstasy through music and dancing as well as people's shrine—visiting with offerings, as all contrary to the Law. These men do not go so far as to condemn Sufism outright but to denouncing what they regarded as illegalities.⁸⁰

77. *Nizami*, p. 305.

78. *Ibid.*, p. 309.

79. *Tablis Iblis*, Cairo edn, 1921 and 1928; Sirajul Haq, 'Sama and Raqs of the Dervishes', *Islamic Culture*, 1944, pp. 111-30.

80. J.S. Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, p. 242.

Chishti Attitude to Government and Politics

The Chishti Sufis preferred to live in isolation from all political affairs and activities and avoided any contact with princes and nobles, regarding their association as harmful for their moral and spiritual upliftment. They never sought or solicited any favour from the kings and nobles, nor did they ever accept any offer of financial help or jagir from them. Khwaja Abu Muhammad Chishti declined to accept the presents of a prince with the remark:

از خواجگان ما از پنہاں کسی قبول نہ کردہ است۔

'None of our elder saints has accepted such things'.¹

Khwaja Qutb al-Din Bakhtiyar a renowned *khalifa* of Khwaja Mu'in al-Din, refused to accept the offer of a jagir from sultan Iltutmish.²

Shaikh Hamid al-Din Sufi, another reputed *Khalifa* of Khwaja Mu'in al-Din, adopted the same life of poverty and

1. K.A. Nizami, *Religion and Politics in India in the Thirteenth Century* (Delhi: Idarah-i Ababiyat-i Delli, 1974, Rep.), p. 244.

2. *Rahat al-Qulub*; Nizami, p. 244.

austerity. Touched by his penitence and poverty the *Muqta* of Nagour offered a plot of land and some cash to him. The Shaikh apologised and declined the offer. When sultan Iltutmish came to know about it, he sent 500 Tankas and a *farman* conferring a village on him. But even then the Shaikh and his wife refused the offer and preferred a life of poverty and contentment to a life of ease and comfort by means of royal favour.³

Shaikh Farid al-Din Shakargunj (also called Baba Farid) refused to accept a gift of some villages from sultan Ghiyas al-Din Balban⁴ (1246-1266 A.D.).

Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya did not accept the post of the Imam. The Shaikh is said to have politely declined the offer by saying: "Namaz is the only valuable asset I have, and the sultan wants to deprive me of that also by appointing me Imam".⁵ Even after this refusal Balban showed profound respect to the Shaikh by making him another offer of the post of *Qazi al-Quzat*. This offer too was declined.⁶

The Shaikh lived through reigning periods of six sultans, but he never cared for their favour or frown.⁷ Sultan Alauddin Khalji once sent his son Khidr Khan to the Shaikh for some advice in some political affair.⁸ The Shaikh expressed his annoyance at the sultan's attempt to drag him into politics. The Shaikh followed his spiritual preceptor Shaikh Farid al-Din, who advised that no faqir should keep any contact with

3. *A Comprehensive History of India*, Vol. V, editors: Muhammad Habib & K.A. Nizami (New Delhi: Peoples' Publishing House, 1970), p. 142.

4. Muhammad Salim, 'The Attitude of the Chishti Saints Towards Political Power,' *The Proceedings of the History Conference*, 1952, p. 227.

5. R.N. Das, 'Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya,' *Islamic Culture* (Hyderabad: The Islamic Culture Board, April, 1974), p. 95.

6. Zia al-Din Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, cited, *Ibid.*, p. 96.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 95.

8. Abdul Haq Muhaddith, *Akhbar al-Akhyar*, pp. 54-55.

kings and nobles. If any one does so, he will have a miserable fate.⁹

During his early years Shaikh Nizam al-Din lived an extremely poor and abstemious life. The Shaikh could not even purchase a melon at the rate of one jital and two seers of bread at the rate of one jital and he had to live without them.¹⁰

Sultan Jalal al-Din Khalji offered the Shaikh a few villages. His disciples, who had been undergoing long privations and sufferings tried to prevail upon the Shaikh to accept the royal offer, but to no effect. He told his disciples to leave the *Khanqah*, if they liked, yet the Shaikh would not yield to their persuasion or request. The Shaikh praised Amir Khurd's grand father who appreciated his view-point.¹¹

Sultan Alauddin Khalji too made an offer of some villages and gardens to the Shaikh, but again he declined.¹²

Shaikh Hamid al-Din Sufi, a disciple of Khwaja Mu'in al-Din Chishti Ajmeri, and Shaikh Hamid al-Din Nagauri too preferred to live in poverty than to accept anything from the sultan.¹³

9. Zia al-Din Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 209. In this connection Sidi Maula's fate (a disciple of Shaikh Farid al-Din) may be remembered, Sidi Maula was involved in a conspiracy case to oust or dethrone sultan Jalal al-Din and was trampled under the feet of an elephant for his crime.

10. Amir Khurd, *Siyar al-Auliya*, pp. 120-121.

11. Amir Hasan Sijzi, *Fawaid al-Fuad*, p. 99.

12. Shaikh Nizam al-Din declined Alauddin's offer with the following remark:

اگر من ازین بابت قبول کنم مردماں چه گویند، شیخ درباغ میسرود
شیخ بہ تماشائی زرع و زمین می رود، زہی کاری کہ من کردہ باشم۔

(*Siyar al-Auliya*, p. 295).

"If I accept this, what will people say? They will say that Shaikh goes to his garden and goes to witness the sight of his field and harvest. What a sordid work I shall be doing?"

13. *Nizami*, p. 244.

The clash between sultan Muhammad Tughlaq and some contemporary Sufis became unavoidable when the sultan said that he, as the head of the state, had a right to the allegiance of the Sufis and that he could issue to them orders superior even to those of their *Pir* or spiritual guide.¹⁴

Shaikh Nasir al-Din Chiragh-i-Dehli also maintained his independent spirit. Once, on hearing that a Man was being punished on account of the demands made to him by the government, Chiragh-i-Dehli remarked, "Government service bears such fruits, especially in these days".¹⁵

Though some Chishti Sufis like Burhan al-Din Gharib and others had already been working in the Deccan prior to the reign of sultan Muhammad b. Tughlaq, yet the number of Sufis there was less than that in the Punjab and the *Doab*. This was the reason that the sultan cherished a desire of sending more Sufis to the Deccan so that they might accelerate the progress propagation of Islam in that land.¹⁶

Apart from this reason, there was another important reason which prompted the sultan to develop hostile relation with the Sufis; the sultan was then influenced by the anti-mystic views of Ibn Taimiya, which was conveyed to him by his (Ibn Taimiya's) disciple Abdul Aziz Ardabili,¹⁷ who came to India and met the the sultan. This influence was reflected in sultan Muhammad b. Tughlaq's attitude towards religion and politics, particularly in his relations with the mystics.¹⁸

The two reasons, stated above, led to a protracted struggle between the sultan and the Sufis. He persuaded them to accept his service; Maulana Ibn al-Din and some descendants of

14. Muhammad Habib, 'Muhammad Tughlaq': *Journal of the Punjab University Historical Society*, January 1964.

15. *Khair al-Majalis*, XXIV.

16. Muhammad Habib, 'Muhammad Tughlaq': *Journal of the Punjab University Historical Society*, January, 1964.

17. *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden: E.J. Brill), Vol. III, p. 429; Ibn Battuta, *Rihla*, Tr. Agha Mahdi Husain (Baroda Oriental Institute, 1953), p. 40.

18. *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971), III, p. 429; K.A. Nizami,

Shaikh Farid al-Din were persuaded to yield ultimately. Shaikh Qutb al-Din Munawwar, a *khalifa* of Shaikh Nizam al-Din, was persuaded to come from Hansi to the sultan's court against his will. Two lakhs of tankas presented by the sultan were refused by the Shaikh, but he was at last prevailed upon to accept something like 2,000 tankas, which the Shaikh at once distributed among the poor and the indigent.¹⁹

Maulana Shams al-Din Yahya, a disciple of Shaikh Nizam al-Din, was ordered to proceed to Kashmir to preach Islam. The Shaikh returned home on the pretext of preparations for the journey. Later, the Shaikh is reported to have remarked that it was senseless for any one to talk of his leaving for Kashmir, for he had dreamt of Shaikh Nizam al-Din calling him to himself which indicated that his last day, the day of his death was very near. The next day he developed an ulcer in the chest which proved fatal. The Shaikh breathed his last a few days later.²⁰

Maulana Fakhr al-Din Zarradi, a well-known disciple of Shaikh Nizam al-Din, was forced to shift to Daulatabad from Delhi, but on the plea of joining a marriage party he left Daulatabad and fled to the Sea-coast. While returning from Arabia after pilgrimage he was drowned in the Sea.

Shaikh Nasir al-Din Chiragh-i-Dehli too had a clash with him.²¹ Amir Hasan Sijvi, the author of *Fawa'id al-Fuad*, was taken to Daulatabad, only to die.²² Maulana Sharaf al-Din

19. Habib, Muhammad Tughlaq (Lahore: *Journal Punjab Historical Society*, January, 1964, October, 1978, Ref. No. 43, p. 34.

20. Muhammad Habib, Muhammad Tughlaq, *Journal, Punjab Historical Society*, January, 1964, p. 24.

21. *Ibid*, p. 25. It is said that the duty of fastening the sultan's *dastar* fell upon the Shaikh, but Abdur Rahman Chishti, in his book *Mirat al-Asrar* contradicts it. His words may be quoted:

آنکہ بعضی می گویند کہ سلطان محمد شیخ نصیر الدین محمد را جامہ دار خود گردانیدہ
بود۔ محض غلط و گفتار عوام است در بیچ کتابے و تاریخی نظر نیامدہ۔

22. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

Firuzgarhi, another Chishti saint, died after reaching Daulatabad.²³

Khwaja Karim al-Din Samarqandi, consented to perform the duties of Shaikh al-Islam of Satgaon in Bengal and served him faithfully.²⁴

Although the acceptance of these appointments was not in conformity with Shaikh Farid al-Din's and Shaikh Nizam al-Din's advice.²⁵ Yet a few Chishti saints served the state in the capacity of a *Qazi* or Shaikh al-Islam.

It is, however, interesting to note that sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq was not hostile or unfriendly to all the Sufis of his time. He did never disrespect Khwaja Nizam al-Din Auliya, rather he maintained a respectful attitude towards him. Again, sultan Muhammad b. Tughlaq hearing of the fame of the saint Muzaffar Shams Balkhi, and illustrious disciple of Shams al-Din Yahya of Maner (Bihar), sent a Bulgarian prayer carpet for him and a *farman* was sent to Jain al-Din Majdul Mulk, the Muqti of Bihar, to built a *khanqah* and to assign a jagir for its maintenance. The jagir was refused but the carpet was accepted.²⁶

But the tension between Sufis and the sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq took place when the sultan ordered all Sufis to disperse from their *khanqahs* and migrate to the Deccan as part of his policy of shifting the inhabitants of Delhi to the new capital, Daulatabad in the Deccan. According to Nizami, "so complete was the destruction of *khanqah* life in Delhi that with the exception of the tombs of Shaikh Qutb al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki and Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya, no tomb or hospice in Delhi had even a candle lamp".²⁷

23. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

25. *Asrar al-Auliya* and *Fawaid al-Fuad*.

26. S.H. Askari, 'The correspondence of two 14th century Sufi saints of Bihar with the contemporary sovereigns of Delhi and Bengal, *Bengal Past and Present*, Calcutta, 1948.

27. K.A. Nizami, *Studies in Medieval Indian History and Culture* (Allahabad: Kitab Mahal, 1966), p. 96.

The sultan's Deccan policy combined with the stern, uncompromising attitude of the Chishti Sufis led to a bitter strife. The Chishti tradition of avoiding the court and courtly affairs was maintained by all the early Chishti Sufis of north India. This tradition was maintained by the Chishti Sufis of Bijapur.²⁸ But this tradition, was, however, broken by Sayyid Muhammad Gesudaraz²⁹ (d. 1422 A.D.), a *khalifa* of Shaikh Nasir al-Din Chiragh-i-Delhi, and the other Chishti Sufis of the Deccan. Gesudaraz received several villages (tax free land) as *in'am* (reward) from sultan Firuz Bahamani and sultan Ahmad of the Deccan.³⁰

The early Chishti ideal was so uncompromising that when sultan Ala al-Din Khalji desired to visit the *khanqah* of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya, the saint said, "If the sultan comes through one door, I will leave by the other."³¹ This sentiment reflected the uniform policy of the order, and the Chishti certificate of succession (*khilafat-nama*) strictly forbade its followers to accept grants in land from the court.³²

A corollary to this detachment from political affairs was the Chishti ideal of ascetic poverty, to which each *murid* pledged himself when initiated into the order.³³

But Nasir al-Din Chiragh-i-Delhi is said to have observed that a person who remembered God every moment and at the same performed the rituals of Islam, even if he were engaged in some service, should be treated as a Sufi. He is also reported

28. Muhammad Salim, 'The Attitude of the Chishti Saints towards political power,' *Proceedings, Pakistan Historical Conference*, II, 1952, pp. 225 f.

29. M. Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1967), p. 290.

30. Firishta, *Tarikh-i-Firishta*, p. 319; Sabah al-Din Abdur Rahman, *Bazm-i-Sufiya* (Daral Musannefin, Azamgarh, 1947).

31. Aziz Ahmad, *The Sufi and Sultan*, p. 143.

32. R.M. Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur* (Princeton University Press, 1978), p. 46.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

to have quoted a verse of Shaikh S'adi in this connection.³⁴ Chiragh-i-Delhi allowed sultan Firuz Shah Tughlaq to visit his *khanqah*.³⁵

The Chishti—Nizami Sufis of Bengal, Shaikh Akhi Siraj al-Din 'Uthman, Shaikh Ala al-Haq and Shaikh Nur Qutb 'Alam discarded the early Chishti policy of detachment from the sultan and the court. They maintained healthy and cordial relation with the sultans of their time. Shaikh 'Ala al-Haq and his son Shaikh Nur Qutb 'Alam maintained friendly attitude towards the sultans Sikander Shah and Ghiyas al-Din Azam Shah respectively. They exercised profound influence upon the sultans to the great benefit of the state and people. Shaikh Nur Qutb 'Alam enjoined upon his followers an attitude of respect to the kings and nobles.³⁶

It is a well-known historical fact that because of Qutb 'Alam's intervention that the throne and empire of Bengal were saved from the usurpation and encroachment of Raja Ganesh; Qutb 'Alam wrote a letter to the sultan of Jaunpur to send military help to Bengal to rescue the Muslims and the Muslim kingdom of Bengal from the persecution of Raja Ganesh, who had killed Saifuddin Hamzah Shah, the son and successor of Ghiyas al-Din Azam Shah, and usurped the throne of Bengal. Qutb 'Alam's letter of request as well as the requests of Shaikh

34. The verse runs thus:

مراد اہل طریقت لباس ظاہر نیست
مگر بخدمت سلطان بہ بند و صوفی باش

'The objective of the people of the Sufi path is not outward dress, Gird up your loins in the service of the sultan and be a Sufi.'

The above verse has been cited by Sabah al-Din Abdur Rahman in *Bazm-i-Sufiya*, p. 326.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 326.

36. *Maktubat-i-Qutb 'Alam*; S.A. Rashid, 'Some Chishti Saints of Bengal,' *Proceedings of Pakistan History Conference* (Lahore, 1952), p. 212; Husam al-Din, *Rafiq al-'Arefin*; Hasan Askari, 'Husam al-Din,' *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* (Karachi, 1953), Vol. I, Part IV, p. 384.

Ashraf. Jahangir Sumnani, *khalifa* of Shaikh Ala al-Haq and Shaikh Muzaffar Shams Balkhi persuaded Ibrahim Shah Sharqi of Jaunpur to come with his force and save the people and the kingdom of Bengal from the clutches of Raja Ganesh, who had been oppressing the pious Muslims including some Sufi saints. In this way, the Muslim rule was restored. Shaikh Qutb 'Alam and his father Shaikh Ala al-Haq rendered help and gave advice to sultan Ghiyas al-Din Azam Shah and sultan Sikander Shah in political matters to the great benefit of the society and state of Bengal. Sultan Jalal al-Din of Bengal (previously Jadu, son of Raja Ganesh and later a convert to Islam) revived the Muslim tradition and culture and was himself a pious ruler.

It is reported by Shaikh Husam al-Din of Manikpur that once sultan Ghiyas al-Din of Bengal sent a tray of dishes to Shaikh Qutb 'Alam. The latter respectfully received it with his own hands. When the disciple Shaikh Husam al-Din observed this, it struck him as a strange thing on the part of a king of faith towards the king this world. Shaikh Qutb 'Alam presumably studied his thought and opening the pages *Mishkat al-Masabih* he quoted from the Prophet, 'Who soever respected his chief respected him... ..' He then added, 'We also respect the kings and nobles, so that our sons should follow our examples in evincing respect that is due to them.'³⁷

Suhrawardy saints Shaikh Baha al-Din Zakaria of Multan and his grandson Shaikh Rukn al-Din³⁸ kept close touch with the court, although his contemporary Chishti saint Khwaja Nizam al-Din Auliya of Delhi (d. 1325 A.D.) desisted from any contact with the court. Syed Jalal al-Din Bukhari of the same order held defiance of royal authority as a sin and quoted the tradition of the Prophet, 'whoever obeys sultan obeys Allah'.³⁹ The only Suhrawardy Shaikh Sadr al-Din 'Arif (d. 1285 A.D.)

37. Hasan Askari, 'Hadrat Husam al-Din of Manikpur,' *The Proceedings of the History Conference* (Karachi: Pakistan Historical Society, 1953).

38. Ibn Battuta reports that Rukn al-Din Suhrawardy of Multan accepted a jagir of 100 villages from Muhammad bin Tughlaq for the upkeep of his khanqah.

39. Cited in Qutb 'Alam's *Maktubat*.

son of Shaikh Baha al-Din Zakaria, was an exception; he preferred like the Chishtis a life of ascetic poverty and detachment from the court.⁴⁰

But as a result of the frequent contact with the court, which Suhrawardy Sufis justified on the ground of improving the moral tone of the court and redressing the grievances of the distressed, the independent spirit of the order declined, and according to Nizami, the order fell considerably under the influence of the state owing to Muhammad bin Tughlaq's policy of using mystics for political ends.⁴¹

Though Sufis of strong personality and principle could keep contact with the court for the benefit of the distressed, with their principles and ideals unimpaired, this system did not work well in the case of weak personalities, who succeeded their able predecessors. In subsequent times a close alliance developed between the rulers and the leaders of the Sufi orders, most of whom tended to become hereditary. The alliance did not put the rulers on the right path and the Sufis were exploited by the secular powers. Sufism thus reduced to a vested interest, buttressed by pensions and land grants from the state, had no alternative but to dance to the tune of its masters.⁴²

The early Sufis of Bijapur developed close relations with the court and the sultans sought and solicited their support and co-operation because of their popularity with the masses in order to gain their confidence and thereby stabilize their own power. Thus, reciprocal cordial relation developed among the sultans and the early Sufis of Bijapur.⁴³ The first Sufi of the Deccan to have received land grant from sultan Muhammad

40. K.A. Nizami, 'Aspects of Muslim Political Thought in India During the 14th century, *Islamic Culture* (Hyderabad—India, October, 1978), Vol. LII.

41. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 514; Jamali, *Siyar al-Arefin*, Delhi, 1893; Aziz Ahmad, *Intellectual History of Islam in India* (Edinburgh, 1969), p. 39.

42. Mohd. Salim, 'The Attitude of the Chishti Saints Towards Political Power,' *The Proceeding of the Pakistan History Conference* (Karachi: Pakistan Historical Society, 1952), p. 229.

43. Sherwani and Jashi, *History of Medieval Deccan*, II, 182.

bin Tughlaq was Shaikh Siraj al-Din Junaidi (d. 1380), who had accompanied the aforesaid sultan to the Deccan and settled in the city of Bijapur in 1330 A.D.⁴⁴ 'Ala al-Din's successor Muhammad Shah Bahmani was able to obtain a declaration of allegiance from virtually all the Sufis of his kingdom.⁴⁵ This practice was in clear violation of the policy followed by the early Chishti Sufis of north India.

But the later Sufis of Bijapur in the 16th and 17th centuries maintained a safe physical distance from the seat of political power.⁴⁶ The three qualities—religious orthodoxy, urbanism and a distinct Arab identity characterized Bijapur's Sufis of the Qadari order.⁴⁷

To conclude, as we have seen in this chapter, that the early Chishti Sufis maintained a stern attitude of non-cooperation towards kings and courts. In other words, they never interfered in political matters. But even among the early Chishti Sufis, as it has been shown, Khwaja Nasir ul-Din was not so stern as others, since he did not oppose the practice of accepting government job on the part of his disciples, provided they sincerely adhered to the Sufi path and ideals. Khwaja Nizam al-Din Auliya did not accord this privilege to any of his *Khalifas* save and except Hazrat Amir Khurau, who was allowed to hold an employment in the court of Delhi, because he was only a *murid*, and not a *Khalifa*. The later Chishti saints, particularly of Bengal, reversed this policy, as already said, and participated, if necessary, for the good of the community, in political matter. *Hazrat Nur Qutb Alam* of Chishti-Nizami order of Bengal, and *Muzaffar Shams Balkhi* of Firdausi order exercised, for the good of the state, powerful influence on Sultan Ghiyas al-Din Azam Shah of Bengal and to a great extent moulded the government policy.

44. *Sufis of Bijapur*, p. 50.

45. *Tarikh-i-Firishta*, Vol. I, p. 294.

46. *Sufis of Bijapur*, p. 53.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 55.

The Interaction of Sufism and other Religions in India and Bengal

Sufism in India found an exceptionally congenial ground for its growth and spread, because Sufism, as a moral and spiritual way of life, and as a doctrine with universal appeal, found a responsive chord in the Indian mind, for the Indian mind, from the earliest phases of its history, had a strong tendency towards mysticism. The Vedic and Upanishadic literature of ancient India contains very clear exposition of almost all the mystical tenets that developed in other religions and philosophical schools. The Vedic and Upanishadic sages had realised the unity that underlies all the diversities of forms and expressions. The Rig Veda and the Chandogya Upanishad argue so forcefully that 'all variations are matters of mere words and names.'

This universal outlook is also one of the basic or salient features of Sufism and this factor paved the way for the mutual understanding between Hindu and Muslim minds. In fact, the monism of the *Advaita*—Vedanta and *Wahdat al-Wujud* of

1. Fathullah Mujtabai, *Aspects of Hindu Muslim Cultural Relations*. (New Delhi, 1978).

the Sufis are different expressions of the same doctrine, and that forms the basis of their conceptions of God, of man, and of the universe. For both of them the Divine Being is the sole ground or origin of all that exists, and diversities are nothing but various modes of His appearance. The most central idea of the Advaita-Vedanta has affinity with the pantheistic philosophy of Ibn al-'Arabi and others of his school, and this very idea later found expression in "*hama-ust*" (All is He) doctrine. The immanence of the Divine Essence in phenomenal forms, as conceived in the Upanishads, finds it a parallel in the Sufi conception of God as the soul of the world (*Jan-i-jahan*), and the Upanishadic and Sufi conceptions agree in identifying the Supreme soul with the soul in man.²

Both the mysticisms agree that *juan* or *m'arifat* is the outcome of the progress on the mystic path (*marga* or *tariqat*) and transformation of the Self takes place through successive stages or *maqamat*, as the Sufis call it. These are corresponding stages (*bhumikas*) in the Hindu mysticism. They lead to enlightenment or intuitive realisation of the Supreme, in other words, to the final liberation (*fanafi'llah* and *haqa billah*, called by the Hindu Mystics *Samadhi* and *Mukti*). One who gets the Self-knowledge (*atma-gnan*) gets the realisation of the Supreme Self (*Brahma-juan*). Similar is the saying of the Sufis, which means 'one who knows his Self knows his Lord.'

About the role of the Sufis in creating understanding between Hindus and Muslims in this country Atindra Nath Bose observes: "Islam knocked on the western gates of India, and the Sufis, inspired by the Islamic idea of equality, came as the torch-bearers of a liberal folk-philosophy..... Their spirit was free from those superstitious and rigidities which caused stagnation among the classical Indian and Islamic schools. Against the sterility of the orthodox systems, the new popular

2. The Qur'an says:

وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي

"I (Allah) have breathed of my spirit into him (man)"—XV: 29.

appeals awakened a fresh spiritual favour and let loose great creative power which so long lay dormant. A new philosophy grew up based on the material of human values. It trusted in the latent divinity of the human soul, in the universality of love, and in the dynamic power of emotion. It released powerful spiritual energy hitherto pent up by social barriers among the dumb millions of the soil..."³

Regarding the advent of the Muslim mystics in India and the impact their doctrine and teaching produced on Indian society and life, Rabindra Nath Tagore said: "The simple doctrine of Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of man the Mohammedans introduced in India appears to have stirred the people to its depths for we found in the fourteenth century in almost every part of Indian religious reformers rose in protest against the dry intellectualism of the Brahminic orthodoxy... and the poets of the age poured out emotions social and religious in language which is as simple as it is fervent."⁴

Free from lust and pride, humble, yet strong-minded, Sufis set up a high ethical standard by examples, rather than precept and by sincere sayings and righteous conduct. They spoke the language of the masses and gave impetus to a cultural synthesis.⁵ They exercised considerable influence on the people and moulded their attitude and activities. The work of proselytization and expansion of Islam which Sufis carried on was silent and peaceful, and never aggressive, excepting extreme cases of opposition or obstruction, when Sufis were compelled to overcome them by force, or jehad, as it is called.⁶ It is a recognised fact that in the days of Brahminical caste-tyranny throughout India more or less the humility, tolerance and humanism of the

3. *The Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. III, pp. 460-62.

4. *Manchester Guardian*, March, 1918.

5. A. Rashid, *Society and Culture in Medieval India*, p. 177.

6. K.S. Lal, *Growth of Muslim Population in Medieval India* (Delhi: Research Publications in Social Sciences, 1973), p. 176; I.H. Qureshi, cited, J.N. Sarkar, *History of Bengal* (Dacca University Publication), II.

Sufis and Islam's social values held out a powerful and irresistible appeal to the Hindu and other non-Muslim masses.⁷

There is no denying the fact that Islam found a congenial soil in India as well as in Bengal on account of the general Hindu resentment against the prevailing social structure. In Bengal the embers of departed Buddhism were still hot when the Muslims came. This is recorded in the ballads and legends of the period. The Muslim conquerors came as the champions of religion or dharma, in order to rescue from oppression the masses of the people. The ballads and legends prove that a large section of people were ready to accept or welcome the Pathan conquerors of Bengal.⁸ This fact also explains the large proportion of Muslims in the population of Bengal, even though it was far removed from the centre of Pathan or Mughal power.⁹

It is also undeniable that the mysticism of the Sufi furnished Islam's philosophical contact with Hinduism. It is through such contacts, fostered by the simplicity and broad humanism of the Sufi that Islam obtained its largest number of free converts.¹⁰

Let us bear in mind that some of the Sufis of northern India had developed certain mystic ideas quite akin to those obtaining in the Indian Yoga philosophy.¹¹ In fact, Sufism, both Indian and Iranian, is a syncretic movement which has assimilated a good deal of elements from various creeds and doctrines

7. Habibullah, *The Foundation of Muslim Rule in India*, p. 306; regarding Brahminical persecution on the Buddhists also, See D.C. Sen, *Brihata Banga* (Calcutta University, 1341 B.S.), pp. 332-333.
8. Ramai Pandit, *Sunya Purana*; Shahidullah, *Bangla Sahityer Katha*, (Dacca: Renaissance Printers, 1963, Rep.), p. 11.
9. Humayun Kabir, 'Islam In India,' *The Cultural Heritage of India* (Calcutta: Ram Krishna Mission Institute of Culture, 1956), Vol. IV, p. 385.
10. A.B.M. Habibullah, *The Foundation of Muslim Rule in India*, p. 305.
11. M.R. Tarafdar, *Husain Shahi Bengal* (Dacca: Asiatic Society of Pakistan, 1965), p. 214; J.S. Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford, 1971), p. 230.

such as Christianity, Neo-Platonism, Buddhism and Vedantism.¹²

In fact, Sufistic and Yogic ideas have been found mixed up in the thought and writings of some Sufis of northern and southern India, including Bengal. Yogis seem to have been attracted to the hospice (*Khanqah*) of Shaikh Farid al-Din Ganj-i-Shakar, where Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya met one of them and was impressed by his classification of human body into two parts, the upper seat of the spiritual and the lower that of profane aspect of human nature and one was required by the Yogic principle to develop truth, benevolence and kindness in the upper part and maintain chastity and purity in the lower.¹³

It is not known whether Shaikh Nizam al-Din studied the principles or was acquainted with the practice of Yoga or Hindu metaphysics. But Shaikh Nasir al-Din, his *khalifa*, refers to the Gurus or Yogis who take a fixed number of breaths and he approves of breath control for the purpose of concentration.¹⁴ Shaikh Gesudaraz, his successor, read the Hindu mythology, most probably the Mahabharat.¹⁵

In a Sufi treatise *Irshad al-Talebin*, written by Shaikh Jalal al-Din b. Qazi Muhammad Thaneswari (d. 983/1582), a disciple of Shaikh 'Abdul Quddus Gangohi (d. 945/1538), among the Sufi practices mention is made of breath control and *asan* (sitting erect), as practised by the Hindu Yogis with some of the invocation formulas.¹⁶

12. R.A. Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963). Introduction, pp. 10-19; E. Underhill, *Mysticism*, pp. 213-215; P.K. Hitti, *History of The Arabs*, 4th ed., p. 433.

13. Amir Hasan Sijzi, *Fawid al-Fu'ad*, p. 49; Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), p. 135.

14. M. Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1967). Like the Yogis Abu Said Ibu'l Khair kept his eyes fixed on the navel.—See Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, p. 49; Introduction to the *Khair al-Majalis*, p. 24.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 165.

16. *Habibullah*, p. 309; *Tarafdar*, p. 221; Akram Khan, *Muslim Banglar Samajik Itihash*, Dacca, 1965, pp. 159-160.

We know of one Sanskrit work on Yoga named *Amrita-kundu* written by a Hindu Yogi from Kamrup named Bhujar Brahmin, which was translated into Arabic under the title *Hauz al-Hayat* by Rukn al-Din Samarqandi, the imam and chief Qazi of Lakhnauti during the rule of Ali Mardan Khalji (1210-1213 A.D.) in Bengal. Its Persian version *Bahr al-Hayat* was written by Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus (of Shattari order) of Gawalior. It gives an account of the human body viewed as the microcosm, the nature and form of the heart, Yogic postures, the nature of the self, the protection of semen, the functions of breath, etc.¹⁷ It has been stated in both the Arabic and Persian versions that the total number of the Yogic postures is eightyfour.¹⁸ Indeed, contacts of the Muslim minds with Yogic and Tantric mysticisms might have taken place as early as the beginning of Muslim rule in Bengal.¹⁹ The Bengal Sufis lived in an atmosphere saturated with Yogic and Tantric culture, which were later incorporated into Nathism, and so they were naturally influenced by these ideas.²⁰

The writing of Syed Sultan, Syed Murtaza, probably the writer of *Yoga Kalander*, and of Ali Rida, the writer of *Jnan-Sagara*, and another work *Jnan-Pradip* bear traces of Yogic and Tantric philosophy.²¹

The *Jnan-Sagara* of Ali Rida contains several Natha or Yogi-Tantric ideas. Like the author of *Yoga Kalander*, Ali Rida also puts emphasis on the union of the *Jivatma* and the *Paramatma* which is also an Upanishadic conception.²² Ali Rida's *Jnan-Sagara* (an Islamic Yogic text in Bengali) has mixed up Sufistic ideas with the ideology of *Vishnava Sahajiyas* and the Nathists.²³ It also ascribes the creation of the universe

17. *Ibid.*, p. 221.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 222.

19. *Tarafdar*, pp. 220-221.

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 212-213.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 215.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 219.

23. S. Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults* (Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyaya, 1969), p. 177, footnote.

to the principle or doctrine of love, which God felt for His creation and that creation would never have been possible without love, in other words, the whole universe proceeds from the love of God, and, therefore, love is the underlying principle of the cosmic process as a whole.²⁴

Besides the Bengal Sufis, the Indian Shattari order of Sufis too borrowed elements directly from Yoga.²⁵ Even various formulae of *dhikr* itself could be repeated in Arabic, Persian or Hindi.²⁶ The followers of the Shattari order lived in forests like the Yogis on a frugal diet of herbs and fruits and subjected themselves to hard physical and spiritual exercises.²⁷ The physical exercises of the order included Yogic *asans* and the *samadhi*.²⁸ Hindi songs and refrains too brought a feeling of ecstasy. Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya was extremely in favour of Hindi songs of his time and Hindi songs moved him more than Persian *Ghazals*.²⁹

Some heterodox (*bi-shar'*) sects borrowed a number of Tantric practices and popular superstitions from the lower forms of Hinduism.³⁰ Heterodox Sufi qalandars from India introduced into other Muslim countries the use of coffee, opium and hashish among the heterodox Sufi orders abroad.³¹

Mystic Kalimullah (a late 17th century Chishti mystic) held that mystic training could be given to a Hindu even before his conversion, to attract him to Islam.³² Shaikh Nizam al-Din Auliya believed that conversion of Hindus was not possible unless they had the opportunity to be in the company of a

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 177-178.

25. Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment*, p. 137.

26. Baha al-Din Shattari, *Risala-i-Shattariya*, cited, Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment*, p. 137.

27. *Badauni*, Vol. II, p. 34.

28. Baha al-Din Shattari, *op. cit.*, Aziz Ahmad, p. 137.

29. M. Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims*.

30. Yusuf Husain, *Medieval Indian Culture*, London, 1959, p. 305.

31. Massignon, *Essai*, 86; Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment*, p. 136.

32. Shah Kalim-Ullah Dehlavi, *Maktubat-i-Kalimi*, Delhi, 1883, p. 74.

Muslim saint for some considerable time.³³ Shah Abdul Aziz Dehlavi regarded Krishna among the Auliya or saints, because of the impact Bhagavad Gita made on his mind.³⁴

Coming to the Bhakti movement which flourished from its early development in south India to the 13th century and from the 13th to the 17th centuries, when in north India it came in contact with Islam, was inspired by its monotheism and humanitarianism.

From the 13th century onwards Sufi missionaries who spread all over India met with considerable success among the lower caste Hindus, for whom conversion to Islam meant deliverance from the humiliating bondage to which they were subjected by Brahminical ascendancy. According to the *Bhagavad Gita* in the sight of God all devotees are equal whether they belonged to higher or lower caste.³⁵ Islam gave a fresh stimulus to this sense of equality, which found manifestation in social as well as religious aspects of Muslim life. The veneration of the Guru in the Bhakti movement had perhaps its counterpart in respect of the *Murshid* (spiritual preceptor) in Sufi circle. The repetition of the 'Name' of God in Bhakti liturgy may have been inspired directly by the Sufi practice.

Two poet-saints belonging to the Hindu Bhakti tradition, showing traces of Islamic influence, are Namdeva and Tukaram, who lived in the late 14th or early 15th century, used a number of Arabic and Persian words, suggesting that even at this early time the influence of Islam was felt by a man, in a remote area of the country.³⁷ The writings of Tukaram (1598—1649), the greatest of the Marathi poets, contain many obvious references to Islam, such as the following:

33. Amir Hasan Sijzi, *Fawaid al-Fuad*, p. 10.

34. *Aziz Ahmad*, p. 139.

35. *Bhagavad Gita*, IX, 32.

36. Aziz Ahmad, *Studies In Islamic Culture In The Indian Environments*, p. 142.

37. S.M. Ikram, *Muslim Civilization in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964).

First among the great names is Allah,
never forget to respect it.

Allah is verily one, the Prophet is verily one,

There thou art one, there thou art one,
there thou art one, O friend,

There is neither I nor Thou.³⁸

Ekanatha, another Marathi mystic (d. 1598), observed no distinction of caste and creed, and once gave to the Pariahs the food prepared as an offering to his forefathers. His sympathies knew no bound; he poured the holy waters of the Godavari into the throat of an ass that was dying of thirst.³⁹ These humanitarian feelings and abolition of all artificial barriers that divide humanity into various warring camps, which have always been the characteristic features of Sufism and of Islam, were not to be found in any non-Muslim society. Indeed, all the humane feelings and sentiments have been introduced by Muslim mystics and divines in India and elsewhere—a fact which explains the expansion and popularity of Islam among the distressed and the down-trodden.

Again, in recognizing the plurality of souls Ramanuja stands much closer to Islamic orthodoxy than earlier Hindu religious thinkers. His interpretation of Brahma as the sum total of individual souls has its parallel in the Sufi concepts and their later treatment by al-Ghazzali, with this difference that the Muslim divine believes in souls as created, even if they are not subject to space and time.⁴⁰ The Mahanubhaba, a non-idolatrous Krishna sect founded by Chakradharswami (d. 1272) shows the influence of Sufis who settled near Daulatabad about that time.⁴¹

38. Cited, Tarachand, *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture* (Allahabad, 1946), p. 228.

39. *The Cultural Heritage of India*, ed. Haridas Bhattacharyya (Calcutta: Ram Krishna Mission Institute of Culture, 1956, Rep.), p. 358.

40. Al-Ghazzali, *Kimya-i-S'adat*, Tehran, 1319. Edward Zaenar, *Hindu and Muslim Mysticism*, p. 16.

41. K.M. Munshi, *Struggle for Empire*, ed. R.C. Majumdar, Foreword, XVIII.

The most profound influence which was exerted in the field of religion and particularly in the creation of an atmosphere, which facilitated a rapprochement between Islam and Hinduism, came from three great personalities, viz., Kabir (1410-1518 A.D.), Dadu (1544-1600 A.D.) and Nanak (1469-1538 A.D.). All three equally attempted to purge faith of superstition and soulless ritualism. They strongly denounced outward show, caste distinctions and sectarianism and sought the Reality by direct mystical intuition. They laid as much emphasis on the oneness of God and fraternity of men, as on noble and righteous living.⁴²

Besides, the ideas of Sufism and Islam are found in the beliefs and practices of *Kartabhajas*,⁴³ a sect which held Friday as Sabbath day like the Muslims and wore caps and believed in monotheism like the Muslims.

Then again, the baul was a heterogenous fraternity of mystics of several creeds. Indeed, the bauls are a striking example of heterodox mysticism in Bengal.⁴⁴ The baul too believes like the Sufi that God is present in every man in the form of the soul; he calls God '*Maner Manash*' (man of the heart) and that He can be attained only through love. But finally under Sahajiya⁴⁵ influence adopted the doctrine and practices of Sexo-Yogic relations as a mode of adoration.⁴⁶ Yoga and Tantric mystics believed the *Kaya-Sadhana* or the Body-cult, according to which physical love is a mode of training for promotion into higher spiritual love (*Suddha parakiya*).⁴⁷

42. R.K. Mukerjee, *The Culture and Art of India* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1959), pp. 325-326.

43. A. Rahim, *Social and Cultural History of Bengal* (University of Karachi, 1967), Vol. II, p. 352.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 351.

45. Sahaja is not a cult or creed. It is a path which needs no formal conversion in faith. Literally, it is a return to what one is born with i.e. to the Divine in man. Love is the central theme of the Sahaja way.

46. A. Rahim, p. 355.

47. Atindra Nath Bose in *The Cultural Heritage of India* (Calcutta; Ram Krishna Mission Institute, 1953, pp. 462-463).

Satyapir cult too was a significant common cultural heritage of Muslim Bengal. It represented the stamp of monotheism and social equality of Muslims.

Apart from these characteristic features of Islam and other Indian creeds, in general, and their affinity of thought, there are certain strong differences too which may be said to be fundamental in character. The affirmation of the doctrine of *Karma* by the Bhagavad Gita and its anthropomorphic belief in the birth of God as man⁴⁸ are opposed to the main trend of Sufism in Islam.⁴⁹ Ramanuja's acceptance of the Hindu scriptural authority on the division of human society into castes and the doctrine of *Karma* which dominates the entire Hindu mysticism, are the very opposite of the Sufi world—view.⁵⁰ Again, Ramananda's and, in particular Ramanuja's conception of the invidious distinction between the Brahmins and the Sudras and their idea of the inferiority of the Muslims compared with the Hindus ran counter to the teachings of Islam.⁵¹ Bhattacharjee, however, suggest that though the exact extent of Christian or Muslim influence on Hinduism is difficult to assess, there is a 'theistic urge' in Hindu religion in the period of early Muslim settlements in the Decca which finds powerful expression in many Vedantic writers who came after Sankara.⁵² Majumdar, however, is of the opinion that no such influence whatsoever, if any, may be traced on any Hindu mystic before the 13th century.⁵³

So far as Bengal in particular is concerned, it has already been pointed out that Nathist and Yogic ideas were found mixed up with the Sufi ideas prevalent in Bengal, or in other words, Sufistic thought was found saturated with Nathist and

48. Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, II, 438, 520.

49. Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment*, p. 128.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 128.

51. Yusuf Husain, *Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture*, London, 1959.

52. U.N. Bhattacharjee, R.C. Majumdar, ed., *The Struggle for Power*, p. 459.

53. R.C. Majumdar, *The Delhi Sultanate*, p. 552.

Yogic ideas in Bengal.⁵⁴ Again, turning to Bengal at length, the *Adya Parichaya*,⁵⁵ a Sufi treatise, written by Shaikh Zahid, bearing traces of influence of Nathist and Yogic ideas deserves special mention.

Adya Parichaya deals with the mysteries of creation, and the creation of Adam in particular, who is the best of creation, and the epitome of the universe; in other words, man, the microcosm, embodies all the attributes of the universe, which is called the macrocosm. The book deals with the mysteries of creation, the birth of man, his body, his embryonic state, etc. divided into eight chapters. After Nur Qutb 'Alam, who wrote *Maktubat* (letters) dealing with mystic ideas, came Shaikh Zahid, the writer of *Adya Parichaya* (written in 1498). Next to him came Shaikh Faidullah, the writer of another work *Gorakshavijoya*, a similar mystic work bearing traces of Nathist and Yogic ideas.

This fact may not be the same as Shaikh Zahid, the grand son of Shaikh Nur, who breathed his last much earlier (d. 1455).⁵⁶ The opinion of Dr. Ahmad Hasan Dani that Shaikh Nur Qutb 'Alam died in 1459 does not appear to be correct, since the Shaikh could never have been alive after 1418, the date of Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah's (former Jadu, son of Raja Ganesh) accession, because after the demise of Shaikh Nur, Ganesh again ascended the throne and removed and reconverted his son Jalal al-Din into Hinduism. Moreover, he put to death Shaikh Anwar, son of Shaikh Nur, and banished Shaikh Zahid, his grand son to Sonargaon in Dacca. Just after this, Ganesh was slain and his son again embraced Islam and ascended the throne in 1418 A.D. Thereupon, Jalal al-Din, called back Shaikh Zahid to Gaur when he is believed to have been twenty or twenty-five years of age. Therefore, the supposition that this Shaikh Zahid was the writer of *Adya Parichaya*,

54. A. Rahim, *Social and Cultural History of Bengal* (Karachi, 1967), Vol. II, p. 344; M.R. Tarafdar, *Husain Shahi Bengal*.

55. *Adya Parichaya*, ed., Manindra Mohan Chowdhury (Rajshahi Varendra Research Museum, 1964).

56. A. Karim, *Social History of the Muslims of Bengal*, (Dacca: Asiatic Society of Pakistan, 1958) p. 110.

which was written in 1498, is a remote possibility, since in that case the writer would have been more than hundred years old, and hence it is doubtful that anyone might write any book at such a pretty old age. So, the writer of *Adya Parichaya* is possibly some other Shaikh Zahid, whose identity has not yet been disclosed, and not Shaikh Zahid, the grand son of Shaikh Qutb 'Alam (d. 1455 A.D.), and therefore, the question of his writing *Adya Parichaya* in 1498 A.D. does not arise at all.

However, the outcome of the reciprocal influence of Sufism and the non-Muslim creeds of Bengal has not been always good. According to Dr. Karim, many Sufis were so degenerated that they even accepted the system of Sexo-Yogic relations of Hindu and Buddhist Tantriks. The mystic works of Saiyid Sultan and others mentioned in his chapter bear traces of the degenerated Sufism or heterodox and heterogenous faqirism in Bengal in the 17th and 18th centuries.⁵⁷

In India as well as in Bengal, as in other regions, the religious and cultural influence has throughout been reciprocal. Men can change their religion, but it is not so easy to change their ways of life. The Indian Muslims were therefore subject, on the one hand, to Islam's insistence upon social homogeneity, and, on the other, to the Indian tradition of rigid stratification according to caste. They, thus, acquired some of the habits and prejudices of the caste system, but as early Islam insisted on equality of man, the Indian Muslims could not, therefore, accept a system of caste based on the fact of birth alone, but evolved a type of caste based on wealth and station.⁵⁸

Again, aversion to widow re-marriage, which was an important feature of Hindu society, later influenced the Indian Muslim mind, though it was against the teaching of original Islam. Thus, the new-Muslims gave to Indian Islam an indigenous temper which made rapprochement between the two

57. A. Rahim, *Social and Cultural History of Bengal* (Karachi: Pakistan Publishing House, 1967), Vol. II, p. 351.

58. Humayun Kabir, *Islam In India, The Cultural Heritage of India* (Calcutta: The Ram Krishna Mission Institute of Culture, 1956, Rep.), Vol. IV, p. 581.

religions easy and natural.⁵⁹ This affinity of Muslim and Hindu thought was the natural outcome of the conversion of the Hindus into Islam; the converted Muslims from the Hindus and the Buddhists retained their age-old non-Muslim habits and practices.⁶⁰ During a smallpox epidemic, for instance, Muslim women sometimes resorted to rituals prescribed by Hindus to seek the favour of Sitla, the goddess of smallpox. In Bengal it is the Faraizi movement which denounced the disposition of those muslims who participated in Hindu festivals like Dasahara, held in honour of the warrior-goddess Durga, and witnessed ceremonies like the Rath-Yatra, the festive procession of an idol on a car.⁶¹ Of course, these practices were in vogue among the illiterate muslims of some places.

So far as the muslim equality and brotherhood is concerned, it has not been in practice everywhere. The cleavage between different social groups has been practically unbridgeable. The superficial unity helped little to bridge the gap between the different social and sectarian groups. Generally, the muslims hailing from central Asia, Afghanistan, Persia, Arabia and other Muslim regions are regarded as superior to local converted Muslims. Intermarriages and dining together of all classes of Muslims have not been in vogue in many parts of the Muslim world, of course, rigidity in this respect is not to be found at present so much as it had been in the past.

59. *Ibid.*, p. 586.

60. *Ibid.*, p. 385.

61. Muslim who attend fairs on the occasion of any Hindu festival do not participate in any ceremony connected with worship, but take part in the fairs as buyers and sellers.

Conclusion

The principal objective of a Sufi is to develop his own higher nature and to attain a true relationship with God. Sufism emphasized intuitive religious perception as against mere theological aspect of Islam and its external rationalization. In the words of Gibb: "The effort of the earlier ascetics to attain to ethical perfection was not indeed given up, but was gradually refined and transformed. The ethical ideal proclaimed in the injunction '*takhallaqu bi akhtaqi*' Allah could no longer be satisfied by mere acceptance of a rule imposed from without, but demanded conformity with the content of a deep and real spiritual experience...."¹ Again, "Sufism served as the complement of orthodox *tawhid*. When the Sufis accepted the scholastic theology and law as defining the rational and moral imperatives of Islam in external terms and set themselves to seek out and to practice their inner content, they raised the whole level of religious thought and action in Islam to a higher plane of consciousness and purpose."²

Though Sufism was not all along an ideal system, and later degraded into a vicious one, having lost its earlier virtues, yet it cannot, however, be denied that it prepared the soil for the

1. H.A.R. Gibb, 'Sufism,' *The Muslim World* (The Hartford Seminary Foundation, October, 1948), Vol. XXXVIII, p. 280.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 281.

living seed of faith, so long it was a genuine movement. Undoubtedly, "The encouragement which the regular Sufi orders gave to charity, compassion, honesty and the other social virtues left an enduring impress on Muslim society."³ Besides the piety, the nobility of character and lofty idealism which the true Sufis possessed, set up a high standard of character and virtue in Muslim society, which obviously produced a good effect in elevating general Muslim life and morals. On the whole, the Sufi ethics and mode of life, simple and austere as it was, produced salutary effects upon Muslim minds and inclined them towards religion.

But the pure and genuine Sufi movement and its noble ideals decayed when various evils and corruptions crept into it. As early as tenth century A.D. Kalabadhi (d. 378/988), a well-known Sufi and writer of a Sufi treatise *Kitab al-Taaruf li Mudhhab Ahl al-Taswwuf*, complained about the deterioration of Sufism thus: "Finally the meaning departed and the name remained, the substance vanished and the shadow took its place... He who knew not (the truth) pretended to possess it, he who had never so much described it, adorned himself with it...."⁴

Again, Abul Qasim al-Qushairi, a renowned Sufi Shaikh of the eleventh century A.D. portrays the sorry situation into which Sufism had fallen: "Know that those of our community who know the truth, have mostly disappeared, only their trace has remained with us. A paralysis has entered our 'way'; one could even say that the 'way' has completely disappeared, for we have no Shaikhs as examples, and no successors could themselves be guided by such examples. Gone is renunciation, its carpet is folded up, in its place worldly desires have gained the upper hand. Hearts have lost respect for religious law...."⁵

3. *Ibid.*, p. 228.

4. Abu Bakr Al-Kalabadhi, *Kitab al-T'arruf*, tr. A.J. Arberry, *The Doctrine of the Sufis* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1935), p. 3.

5. G.W. Davis, *op. cit.*, 'Sufism: From Its Origins to Al-Ghazzali,' *The Muslim World* (October, 1948), p. 253. Rum (1207-1273) also complained in his *Mathnawi* thus:

The system of *piri-muridi*, which was a healthy system formerly and produced really pious and renowned Sufis, later deteriorated into a vice. A system which originally served to train the imaginative and intuitive powers of the neophyte and produced persons of marked spiritual character and insight, later failed to produce such souls, and the field was captured by the minor and irregular orders and by a host of charlatons. In the long run, it undermined the structure of Sufi ethics. As Gibb observes: "A system of this kind constitutes an open invitation to the instincts which predispose the ordinary man to attach himself to persons rather than to doctrines and ideas."⁶ This resulted in unduly exacting the authority of pirs so much so that the salvation of the disciples in the future life through the pir's intercession got more religious sanctity than the canonical prayers and other doctrines and practices of Islam.

Moreover, the system became purely hereditary, in as much as a son of a pir, whether competent or incompetent, was regarded as equally entitled to the respect and obedience of thousands of disciples. Henceforth piety and spirituality of the pirs was replaced by the juggleries and miracle-mongering of their unworthy successors, with the result the pseudo-Sufis and pretenders got the upperhead so that their moral lapses even were ignored or overlooked by the ignorant and superstitious followers. Hypocrites made their mystical creed a cloak for even gross sexual gratification.⁷ But the life of the spirit must not be degraded to the level of a mere instrumentality for

چوں بسی ابلیس آدم روی ہست پس بہر دستے نباید داد دست

'People should avoid such men who are apparently pious but inwardly 'Iblis' in charter'—(Qayyumi Press, Cawnpur, August, 1931).

6. H.A.R. Gibb, 'Sufism,' *The Muslim World* (October, 1948), pp. 286-287).

7. J.P. Hughes, *The Dictionary of Islam* (Lahore: Premier Book House, 1964); H.E.E. Hayes, 'The Real Tendency of Mysticism,' *The Muslim World*.

material welfare or worldly success.⁸ Indeed, "the neglect of religious Ordinance and moral order was serious enough; even more disastrous was the contempt for learning,⁹ which now masqueraded in the thread bare garb of piety. For whatever the Sufis of old may have been——they generally maintained a decent respect for study, and constantly had upon their lips the prophet's injunction to seek learning, even if it be from China: The new Sufis, however, made boast of ignorance, which they were indeed interested to applaud in the masses, for it secured them from rational attack and lent credence to their claims of miraculous power."¹⁰ Because of this dark side of Sufism in its last phase, modern Muslim thinkers have naturally become critical of it and condemning it as abuses and superstitious, responsible for the backwardness of Muslims, have desired to deliver them from the bondage of spiritual enslavement. But it is of prime importance to understand that no ideal is to be judged by its abuses, but rather by its inherent nature.¹¹ Yet it will not be correct to maintain that Sufism, even in the last stages of its decay, did not retain some noble and ennobling elements, or that its influence at its most degraded period was wholly evil.¹² Indeed, it is true to say that the movement never at anytime lacked for a few sincere men of high principles and true faith. As a matter of fact, Sufism has

8. W.T. Stace, *Mysticism and Philosophy* (London: Mac-Millan & Co. Ltd., 1961), p. 339.

9. Regarding learning ('Ilm) Shaikh S'adi says:

بنی آدم از علم یا بد کمال
نه از حشمت و جاه و مال و منال
چو شمع از پی علم باید گذاخت
که بی علم نتوان خدا را شناخت

—The progeny of Adam secures perfection on account of learning. And not for wealth and splendour, pelf and power. Like light learning should be sought. For illiterates cannot recognise God (Cal: Haji Md. Qamral-Din b. Haji and Yaqub, 1367 A.H.), pp. 5-6.

10. A.J. Arberry, *Sufism—An Account of the Mystics of Islam* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1950, Sixth Ed., 1972), pp. 120-121.

11. W.T. Stace, *Mysticism and Philosophy*, p. 339.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 122.

produced in every age, more or less, man of excellent character and profound learning.

But the present attitude of scepticism and antipathy, broadly speaking, so far as religion is concerned, and Sufism in particular may be attributed, most probably, to two principal factors; inability of many educated people to distinguish superstitions from religious values, which has led them to a wrong understanding of religion as cultural backwardness, and secondly, a dogmatic and narrow outlook about religion cherished by some reformers has engendered a lack of faith in Sufism as an integral part of Islam.¹³ In consequence, according to Gibb,¹⁴ this has resulted in the neglect both of the precious heritage of early orthodox Sufism and of the lessons of history, and thereby the expression of authentic religious experience has been utterly ignored, to the great detriment of welfare of not only the Muslims, but of the world at large. As Gibb has remarked: "Both in ploughing up good and bad together, have co-operated to clear the field for the seed of a secular culture which has only, also, produced a crop of new and deadlier superstitions. Herein lies the danger; for if, in uprooting the rituals and practices of Sufism, the reformers destroy on the one hand the Sufi vision of the Love of God and on the other dry up the springs of religion itself, what will it profit Islam and the religious life of mankind?"¹⁵

In the ultimate analysis, Sufism may have raised some problems, which at time turned into controversial issues, culminating in bitter conflicts with the orthodox class, and every time Sufi stand might not have been justified, yet Sufi contribution to ethical and religious upliftment of Muslims and humanity at large can hardly be over-emphasized. As it is well known even the literary excellence of their writings and poems enjoy world fame.

One thing which may perhaps be suggested as the likely cause of the present decadence in the Sufi movement or in the Sufi ideology is the change of time and circumstances; life has

13. H.A.R. Gibb, 'Sufism,' *The Muslim World* (October, p. 291.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 291.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 291.

become complex with the increasing economic crisis and political tension, which have naturally caused the uneasiness and hardship of common people, resulting in frittering away their time and energy in struggle for existence, leaving hardly any time for engaging in spiritual pursuit which is undoubtedly serious and arduous by nature. Moreover, people, in modern times, dazed and dazzled by the glamour of western scientific achievements have been led to attach importance to the immediate present, oblivious of the future days that lie ahead beyond this life. Besides, want of sincere, dedicated souls, capable of providing guidance on the Sufi path and absence of any genuine Sufi order, capable of inspiring zeal and fervour in the minds of the aspirants have obviously tended to discourage and drive away such people from the Sufi path. But sincere people will not be wanting in any age.

True it is, Sufism has run its course and it has indeed entered its decadent phase, and it will now certainly be illusory to imagine that there can ever be a return to the point of departure. Still after all, human spirit can never be altogether dead; mankind has felt hungry for the spiritual food many a time, and it may continue to do so in times to come. Above all, there is an enormous amount of common ground in the great religions, and particularly concerning the most fundamental matters. People of sincere faith and deep religious conviction, desiring to re-capture in their own hearts the ecstatic joy experienced by the Sufis, and aiming at re-discovering those vital truths which made the Sufi movement so powerful an influence, may try to retrace a pattern of thought and behaviour which will supply the needs of many seeking the re-establishment of moral and spiritual values in these dark and threatening times.¹⁶ Indeed, as we have seen, it is no preposterous claim that mysticism is ultimately the source and essence of all religion, and again it is mysticism that looks beyond earthly horizons to the Infinite and Eternal. And it is also true that 'in its essence mysticism contains the love which is the ultimate motivation of all good deeds...however much this ideal tendency may be smirched by the evils and weaknesses and follies of human nature.'¹⁷

16. A.J. Arberry, *Sufism*, pp. 134-35.

17. W.T. Stace, *Mysticism and Philosophy*, pp. 340-43.

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