

the teachings of the new religion who occupied a bench at the entrance of the mosque at Medina, where they spent a great part of their time in incessant prayer, benefitting from the Prophet's presence.¹²

The origins of Sufism are traced to the very person of Prophet Muhammad^{sa} (570-632 CE),¹³ who spent much of his time in meditation and contemplation in caves. It was on one of his meditative retreats in the cave of Hira that he first received the *wahi* (prophecy), from Angel Gabriel.¹⁴

Sufism is based on the esoteric interpretation of the Quran and the Sunnah. Accordingly, every verse of the Quran has an outside and an inside, the exoteric and the esoteric. The latter is the spiritual or mystical content and the former is the literal or the straightforward perception of the word of God. Both dimensions are to be found in the Quran and the Sunnah. *Tawhid* (Oneness of God), for example, can be understood in a literal sense or it can be deep and subterranean for mystically inclined people. The Sunnah contains directives for both the contemplative and the non-contemplative life.¹⁵

This leads to the conclusion that the Quran is really the first and foremost mystical text of Islam and that the Prophet is the first and the greatest of Sufi sages and saints, even though the term Sufi, in reality, is of later origin.¹⁶

Martin Lings, a Muslim convert and a practicing Sufi, in his book *What is Sufism?* writes, "Sufism is nothing other than Islamic mysticism, which means that it is the central and most powerful current of that tidal wave which constitutes the Revelation of Islam."¹⁷ He is of the view that the notion that Sufism is independent of any particular religion, is tantamount to taking it away from its original source: "by robbing it of its particularity and therefore of its originality, they also deprive it of all impetus. Needless to say, the waterways exist."¹⁸ Jalaluddin Rumi who is one of the chief exponents of Sufism notes,

I am the slave of the Koran
While I still have life.
I am dust on the path of Muhammad,
The Chosen One.
If anyone interprets my words
In any other way,
I deplore that person,
And I deplore his words.¹⁹

The spiritual path set by Muhammad^{sa} instilled the realization of the love and knowledge of Allah. The Prophet exhorted his people to adore "Allah as though thou didst see Him, and if thou dost not see Him He nonetheless seeth thee."²⁰

As an example for all in his community, Muhammad^{sa} balanced his contemplative and active life in such a way that those concerned more with the

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Abbr. of *salla Allahu alaihi wa-sallam*, meaning "May the blessings and the peace of Allah be upon him (Muhammad)."

¹⁴ "Read in the name of thy Sustainer, who has created man out of a germ-cell!

Read for thy Sustainer is the Most Bountiful One, who has taught [man] the use of the pen
Taught [man] what he did not know!" Surah al-'Alaq, verses 3-5.

formal structure of the faith and those engrossed in a deeper quest of life equally found the desired inspiration in his person.²¹

After the Prophet's death, the religion was transmitted to posterity through his "Companions".²² The first four Caliphs, who were closest to Prophet Muhammad^{sa}, ruled from 632 to 661CE. They were all mystically inclined. So were some of the women of the Prophet's household such as Khadija and Ayesha, his wives, and his daughter Fatima. The Companions played the central role of transmitters by passing the spirit of the new faith to the next generation. However, Ali, the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law, in spite of being well-known for his esoteric bent of mind, was also one of the chief exponents of the exoteric *shariah*.²³ Along with his wife Fatima and his two sons, Hasan and Hussain, they were the transmitters of the eso-exoteric message of Islam. Ali played a significant role in propagating both aspects of Islam when it spread to non-Arab lands. Many Sufi orders link themselves with Ali's legacy; he is considered as the central authority in Sufism after Prophet Muhammad^{sa}.²⁴

During the time of the Prophet, and even a couple of generations later, the name *tasawwuf* or Sufism did not exist, but its reality existed in spirit.²⁵ Those who detached themselves from materialism and dedicated themselves to the worship of God were called Sufis. The common usage of the word with its particular reference to Islamic mysticism came to be known around the end of the eighth century or the beginning of the ninth century. Gradually *sufiyya* became a term applied to the whole body of Muslim mystics, who by then had risen to a large number.

The eighth and the ninth centuries were a turning point in the history of Islam. From its origin in Mecca and Medina in Arabia in the seventh century, Islam, within a short span, spread to adjoining areas of Syria, Palestine, Iraq, Iran,

¹⁵ Victor Danner, "The Early Development of Sufism" in *Encyclopaedia of Islamic Spirituality*, ed., Syed Hossein Nasr (Lahore: Suhail Academy, 2000), I: 240.

¹⁶ Danner s.v. "Sufism" in *Encyclopaedia of Islamic Spirituality*, I: 242-243.

¹⁷ Martin Lings, *What is Sufism?*, 15-16.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Shems Friedlander, *Rumi and the Whirling Dervishers* (Cambridge: Archetype 2003), 23. However, based on the knowledge that Sufism absorbed mysticism from other beliefs as well, Jean Louis Michon is of the view that,

If, over the course of the centuries, Muslim mysticism showed itself capable of integrating the doctrinal perspectives and the elements of spiritual techniques belonging to other cultures – for example, to Neoplatonic Hellenism, to Byzantine Christianity, to Mazdeism of ancient Iran, indeed, to Hinduism and Buddhism – such a capacity for assimilation, far from showing a lack of originality or deficiency, proves rather the vitality of the way of the Sufis. Moreover it proves the universality of the mystical quest, that which Frithjof Schuon has so justly named 'the transcendent unity of religions. (Jean Louis Michon, "The Spiritual Practices of Sufism" in *Encyclopaedia of Islamic Spirituality* I: 268).

²⁰ Michon, s.v. "Spiritual Practices" in *Encyclopaedia of Islamic Spirituality*, 266.

²¹ Through his teachings, his tolerance and other virtues, He became the fountainhead of inspiration for his followers. [See Annemarie Schimmel, *And Muhammad Is His Messenger: The Veneration of the Prophet in Islamic Piety* (Lahore: Vanguard, 1987)].

²² Only those Muslims who saw, met or kept company with the Prophet, and attained to faith during his lifetime, are considered to be His Companions. (Danner, s.v. "Sufism" in *Encyclopaedia of Islamic Spirituality*, I: 244).

²³ The Divine Law, which is rooted in the Quran and Hadith.

²⁴ Danner s.v. "Sufism" in *Encyclopaedia of Islamic Spirituality*, I: 246-247.

²⁵ Martin Lings, *What is Sufism?* (Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 1993), 45.

Egypt and North Africa. By 711, Sindh in the Indo-Pak Subcontinent, and Spain had come under Muslim rule. This rapid expansion of Islam into totally diverse cultures created a need to preserve the integrity of the faith. Codification of the *shariah* thus took place, and the five well known schools of Jurisprudence – the Hanafi in the Indo-Pak Subcontinent, West Africa and Egypt; the Maliki in North and West Africa; the Jaferi in Iran and Iraq; the Hanbali in Arabia, and the Shafi in Malaysia and Indonesia, each named after the classical jurist who founded the school – came into being.²⁶ Islamic jurisprudence, which is an interpretation of the *shariah*, is known as *fiqh*. Although not intended by the Jurists themselves that their rulings should be accepted unequivocally, that is exactly what happened historically.

Much of what goes under the rubric of 'Islamic law' is in fact classical *fiqh*: time-and-space-bound opinion and rulings – or *fatwas* – of early jurists. What this actually means is that Islamic law has been frozen in history and has remained ossified for almost eight hundred years.²⁷

In his book, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, Iqbal (d.1938) explains the conditions which led to this stagnation,

On top of all this came the destruction of Baghdad – the centre of Muslim intellectual life – in the middle of the 13th century. This was indeed a great blow, and all the contemporary historians of the invasion of Tartars describe the havoc of Baghdad with a half-suppressed pessimism about the future of Islam. For fear of further disintegration, which is only natural in such a period of political decay, the conservative thinkers of Islam focused all their efforts on the one point of preserving a uniform social life for the people by a jealous exclusion of all innovations in the law of the *shariah* as expounded by the early doctors of Islam. Their leading idea was social order... but they did not see, and our modern ulema do not see, that the ultimate fate of a people does not depend so much on organization as on the worth and power of individual men. In an ever organized society the individual is all together crushed out of existence.²⁸

These schools of Jurisprudence basically expounded the *shariah* law and its exoteric interpretation, and the foregone conclusion by the general public was, and still is, that the Jurists were the true interpreters of the *shariah*. It is one of the many reasons for the stagnation of Islamic intellectual thought and social development. *Shariah* today is believed to be a fixed body of rules and considered the ultimate reference point, whereas Quranic teachings were meant to be evolved according to the changing needs of the time. The interpretation of the Quran presently seems to have frozen in history. Obscurantist views reign supreme, rejecting and resisting all forms of modernization as un-Islamic. However, this approach is restricted to minorities only, who, nonetheless, have a great sway

²⁶ Ziauddin Sardar & Zafar Abbas Malik, *Muhammad for Beginners* (London: Totem Books, 1994), 65.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, (Chicago: Kazi Publishers, 1999), 133.

over social politics. Historically some of the attempts by the clerics at defying modernity seem outrageously peculiar. For example, for three centuries they resisted the use of the printing press, claiming that proliferation of sacred and classical text would lead to misrepresentation and misunderstanding, instead of spreading knowledge.²⁹ They even opposed the use of the loud speaker in mosques when it was first introduced in the Indo-Pak Subcontinent in the 1930s. The rigid stance of the *mullahs* in Muslim society has often been the subject of disdain in the works of philosophers, poets and Sufis alike.

Bulleh Shah³⁰ disparagingly says:

Oh! friend now quit thy learning,
One Alif [meaning Allah] is all thou dost need.
By learning thou hast loaded thy mind,
With books thou hast filled up thy room.
But the true knowledge was lost by pursuing the false,
So quit now, oh friend, the pursuit of thy learning.³¹

Bulleh Shah's powerful Punjabi poetry, other than philosophizing about the eternal human quest and relationship with God, ridicules religious hypocrisy and draws attention to the ills of society. Although written in the eighteenth century, his verse is extremely popular in contemporary times and is part of musical genres of both the classical and folk songs. It echoes the liberal convictions of the common man and strikes a parallel with the present-day conflict of mullah hegemony and struggle for a less formalistic religious viewpoint.

The present moral decline has obviously led to being impoverished materially, ethically and politically,³² and has in turn been cited as one of the reasons in creating a sense of loss in Muslim society, in which situation, the reliance on the benevolence of the Sufi Saints serves as a means of hope and sustenance for the common man. Pakistani historian Mubarak Ali,³³ is of the opinion that it is poverty and deprivation of social justice that drives the common man to seeking solace at these Sufi shrines. Belief in the *karamat* (miracles) of saints gives them succour to face adversities. These are magical places which can cure their various maladies.

Historical analysis of *tasawwuf*, presents a persistent clash between the two exponents pertaining to the spiritual and the more formalistic viewpoint of the Islamic faith. Increased division in the early period of Islam (ninth and tenth centuries) between the esoteric and the exoteric Islam therefore led to the Sufis exerting their position on religion.

The *ulema* not only considered themselves the sole authorities on Islam, but also outcast the Sufis whom they thought were committing heresies. Some mystics

²⁹ Sardar & Malik, 130.

³⁰ Baba Bulleh Shah (d.1748), the popular Punjabi Sufi poet, disciple of the Sufi saint Shah Inayat, Qadiri, addressing the mullah.

³¹ Khan, H. I, "The Legend of Bullah Shah." <http://www.thefourprecepts.com/popublish/art.php?artid=77> (accessed on January 30, 2007).

³² Karen Armstrong, *The Battle for God* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000).

³³ Mubarak Ali, "Partition, Culture and Spirituality"; interviewed by researcher, audio tape recording, Lahore, March 30, 2005.

also deliberately provoked the *ulema* by their strange and shocking behavior. Sufis are known to be of two types: the ‘sober’ and the ‘drunk’, the drunk proclaiming ecstatic expressions shocked the *ulema*. For example, the Sufi Yazid al-Bastami (d. 874) once in a mystic trance proclaimed *subhani* (Glory be to me) instead of the commonly used expression *subhan Allah* (Glory be to God).³⁴ Such utterances appeared scandalous and sacrilegious to the *ulema*, for whom upholding the principle of *tawhid* was of paramount importance. No one, but only God was worthy of such Praise. A century later, a similarly famous ecstatic phrase of Mansur al-Hallaj (d. 922) *ana al-haqq*,³⁵ (I am the Truth; *al-haqq* referring to “God” or “the Real”) drew the wrath of the *ulema*. How could a human proclaim himself God was the disputation. This resulted in the final catalyst between the doctors of law and the practitioners of Sufism. Mansur was publicly hanged for heresy, for committing *shirk* by asserting himself as God. The public martyrdom of Hallaj clearly brought out the distinction between the religious formalism of the *ulema* and the mysticism of the Sufis. The name of Hallaj has become a legend and a metaphor for *ishq* (love) in Sufi poetry. It is a symbol of rebellion against religious hegemony. His story is popularly sung in poetry and *qawallis* (devotional songs) in the Indo-Pak Subcontinent.³⁶

This head-on collision between the proponents of dogma and the Sufi path brought forth the limitations of the dry rationalism of the exoterists. It proved as a final cathartic moment, and later manuals and treaties, such as *Qut al-qalub* (The Nourishment of the Hearts) written in the tenth century by Abu Talib al-Maki (d. 990), came forth to resolve the clash between the two exponents of Islamic thought, illuminating theories about both the Law and the Sufi Path. A kind of reconciliation was reached between the *ulema* and the Sufis.³⁷

By the tenth century the integration of Greek knowledge into the intellectual life of the community, as seen in the *Rasa'il Ikhwan al-Safa* (*Encyclopedia of the Brethren of Purity*), an ancient treatise written in the ninth century deeply influenced Islamic philosophy and thinking. The Brethren of Purity were a mystically inclined group who greatly influenced Sufi discourse.³⁸

Sufism “attracted and finally absorbed the best minds of Islam”.³⁹ Intellectual giants of the Muslim world, such as Al-Farabi (d. 950),⁴⁰ Al-Razi (d. 1209),⁴¹ Ibn Arabi (d. 1240), Al-Ghazali (d. 1111),⁴² Ibn Sina (d. 1037),⁴³ Ibn Rushd (d. 1198)⁴⁴ and Omar Khayyam (d. 1123),⁴⁵ some of whom were Sufis themselves whilst others inspired by Sufi thought, made breakthroughs, new discoveries, inventions in all fields of life, both spiritual and scientific. Sufi doctrine ranged from Cosmology, Eschatology, Psychology and Metaphysics to Philosophy:

³⁴ *Encyclopaedia of Islamic Spirituality*, I.

³⁵ Danner s.v. “Sufism” in *Encyclopaedia of Islamic Spirituality*, I: 258.

³⁶ “The verdict ‘no man has a right to utter such words’ has gradually come to be annulled in favour of the appeal ‘man was not in this case the speaker’” (Lings, *What is Sufism?*, p.110).

³⁷ Danner s.v. “Sufism” in *Encyclopaedia of Islamic Spirituality*, I: 260.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Muhammad Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Chicago: Kazi Publishers, 1999), 133.

⁴⁰ Al-Farabi, an authority on music, a mystic, master of Greek philosophy (and hence called “the Second Teacher”, Aristotle being the first) and author of *The Bezels of Philosophy* and *The Perfect State* (freely appropriated by St Thomas Aquinas), Sardar and Malik, 90.

Invoke until your invocation leads to meditation,
And meditation becomes the cause of a thousand virginal ideas.⁴⁶

Literature on Sufism became more scholastic. Al-Ghazali (d.1111), eminent theologian, Sufi sage and a religious authority, in his *Ihya 'ulum al-Din* (The Revival of the Religious Sciences), with the use of Quranic verses and hadith, brought forth the importance of both the *shariah* and the *tariqa* (the Sufi Path). Neither was complete without the other: “after his day, it would not be easy for any knowledgeable religious scholar to reject the *tariqa* without exposing his ignorance about the spiritual contents of the Islamic message.”⁴⁷

By the eleventh century, Sufism finally became an institutional part of the Islamic World, having its own hierarchies and its own structure.⁴⁸ Many Sufi Orders – *silsilahs* or *tariqas* – were established, each named after the Sufi shaykh who was the initiator of the *silsilah*. The well known Sufi Orders are the Chishtiya, the Soharwardiya, the Naqshbandiya, the Qalandriya and the Qadriya. The many Orders provided diverse spiritual possibilities of defining inner teachings of Islam. For example, some were more conscious of integrating doctrine while others had a more relaxed approach regarding the *shariah*. In practice, transmission of profound knowledge of the so-called “hidden sciences” to their disciples has been a continuous practice in the Sufi Order, but knowledge is transferred only to those disciples deemed worthy of it.

The Concept of *Wahdat al-Wajud* (Unity of Being)

In the twelfth century, the concept of existentialist monism was developed by the celebrated Andalusian Sufi genius Muhyuddin Ibn Arabi (d. 1240), who is also known as *shaykh al-akbar* (the greatest guide).⁴⁹ It was known as *wahdat al-wujud*

⁴¹ Al-Razi, Fakhr al-Din Razi, was a mathematician, physicist, physician, philosopher, master of *kalam* (oration), and author of an influential encyclopaedia of science, (Sardar and Malik, 91).

⁴² Al-Ghazali was a theologian, sceptic, believer, mystic, professor at Nizamiyyah College and the author of the monumental *Ihya Ulum ad-Din* (The Revival of the Religious Sciences in Islam). (Sardar and Malik, 90).

⁴³ Ibn Sina was a child prodigy, encyclopaedist, physician, psychologist, author of the standard text *Canons of Medicine*, master of and commentator on, Aristotle. “The most famous scientist of Islam and one of the most famous of all races, places and times” (George Sarton, quoted by Sardar and Malik, 91).

⁴⁴ Ibn Rushd was a physician, scientist, linguist and “the commentator” on Aristotle and Plato: “the greatest Muslim philosopher of the West.”

⁴⁵ Omar Khayyam was a Persian poet, mathematician and astronomer. Educated in the sciences and philosophy, he is known for his *rubayat* (“quatrains”) that were loosely translated into English by Edward FitzGerald and published in 1859.

⁴⁶ Seyyed Hossein Nasr, “Persian Sufi Literature: Its Spiritual and Cultural Significance” in *The Heritage of Sufism*, ed., Leonard Lewisohn (Oxford: OneWorld Publications, 1999), 2: 4.

⁴⁷ Danner s.v. “Sufism” in *Encyclopaedia of Islamic Spirituality*, I: 262.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 263.

⁴⁹ “Ibn ‘Arabi was unique because he was both an original thinker and synthesizer. Many of his ideas resonate with earlier intellectual developments in Sufism and in philosophical theology. His greatness, however, lies in his ability to systematize Sufi theory into a coherent whole with solid metaphysical underpinnings. Ibn ‘Arabi, therefore, should not be viewed as an eccentric outside of the mainstream, but rather as the genius who was able to gather together various strains of mystical philosophy and to mold them into an aesthetic whole.” [Awn, *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 14th ed., 115].



Figure 1. Sufi saint Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai's hand written Arabic/Quranic calligraphy. Photographed by the author at Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai's Shrine in Sindh, May, 2007, still image.

(unity of being)⁵⁰ where nothing exists but the One. “The existence of created things is nothing but the very essence of the existence of the Creator,”⁵¹ meaning, that man has a relationship of immanence and transcendence with God. It formed an important thread in Sufi consciousness and dominated Sufi philosophy for nearly four hundred years, opening up areas of tolerance and acceptance of others. If all emanated from God, then all were equal; this helped to eliminate class and creed barriers between people. Through this philosophy, tolerance was advocated in the society:

The divine essence in itself is completely transcendent... the plane of oneness (*wahidiyah*) is characterized by a unity in plurality, a unity in which the qualities of all possible existents reside... The divine is undifferentiated and totally transcendent; yet in the divine are discovered the qualities of all potential beings.⁵²

In the twentieth century, however, observing the degeneration of Sufi practices, this theory was disputed by Iqbal, who felt that the concept of negation of self in the philosophy of *Wahdat al-Wujud* was detrimental to human progress: “If the

⁵⁰ H. A. R. Gibb, and J.H. Kramer, “*tasawwuf*,” in *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, (London: E. J. Brill, 1974), 582.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Awn, *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 14th ed, 115-116.

self is nonexistent, why confront the problems of human existence?”⁵³

Influences on the Arts

Known for its qualities of humanism and tolerance, Sufism paved the way for the flourishing of the arts. Music, dance and contemplation of beauty were a means of reaching God. The arts represented beauty and God was considered as the essence of Beauty. Ibn Arabi maintained that God's beauty manifests itself in man, though never fully, because man would never be able to stand it and would be totally annihilated by His *noor* (light).⁵⁴ Ibn Arabi's theories attached great significance to man's imagination or fantasy, generating a supportive stance for the arts which otherwise were looked upon disparagingly. In that context, his role in liberating society was tremendous.

Because of the liberal teachings of the Sufi saints, a niche was carved out for the propagation of the arts. They welcomed all, the artisan and the craftsman included, who faced rejection at the hands of the *ulema*.⁵⁵ Had they not been so cultivated, the arts would have definitely dried up, as the conservative stance towards image-making hardened in Muslim society. Music, which like painting, did not find favour with the conservative, was used by the Sufis, as the very means to seek spiritual bliss. In Sufi belief, the three arts: music, poetry and painting, all allude to Divine origin. As Lewisohn notes:

Another by-product of the Sufis' receptiveness to direct experience, their tolerance and ecumenical vision ... was their practical patronage and support for the arts of music, painting, and poetry. In fact, without Sufism, iconoclastic tendencies in Muslim jurisprudence would have severely censored if not totally destroyed the imaginative arts.⁵⁶

Due to its closeness to God, mystical poetry was allowed to speak of Him in terms of anthropomorphic metaphors. Jalaluddin Rumi compares God's action to that of a musician and also shows him as a *musawwir* (painter). Rumi regarded music as the earthly echo of the music of the spheres; he believed that when earthly music is played in the perfect proportions, it evokes ecstasy and joy and helps man to purify his soul – just as an artist, when he creates a perfectly well-balanced work of art emulates the Creator, and thereby elevates his soul:

...according to these analogies and examples skillful artists shape their works, forms, statues, and paintings, all parts being well proportioned in their composition and arrangement and structure—all this in order to emulate the Creator and to imitate His wisdom, as has been said in a definition of philosophy that it is the imitation of God within the range of human faculty.⁵⁷

This according to Bürgel is actually the key to understanding the nature of

⁵³ Awn, *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 14th ed, 121.

⁵⁴ W. C. Chittick, "Ibn Arabi and His School" in *Encyclopaedia of Islamic Spirituality*, II: 49-79.

⁵⁵ Kamil Khan Mumtaz, *Spirituality, Tasawwuf and Art* interviewed by researcher, Lahore, September 17, 2007.

⁵⁶ Chittick quoted by Lewisohn in *The Heritage of Sufism*, II: 43.

⁵⁷ John Christopher Bürgel, *The Feather of the Simurgh: "Licit Magic" of the Arts in Medieval Islam* (New York: New York University Press), 1988, 20.

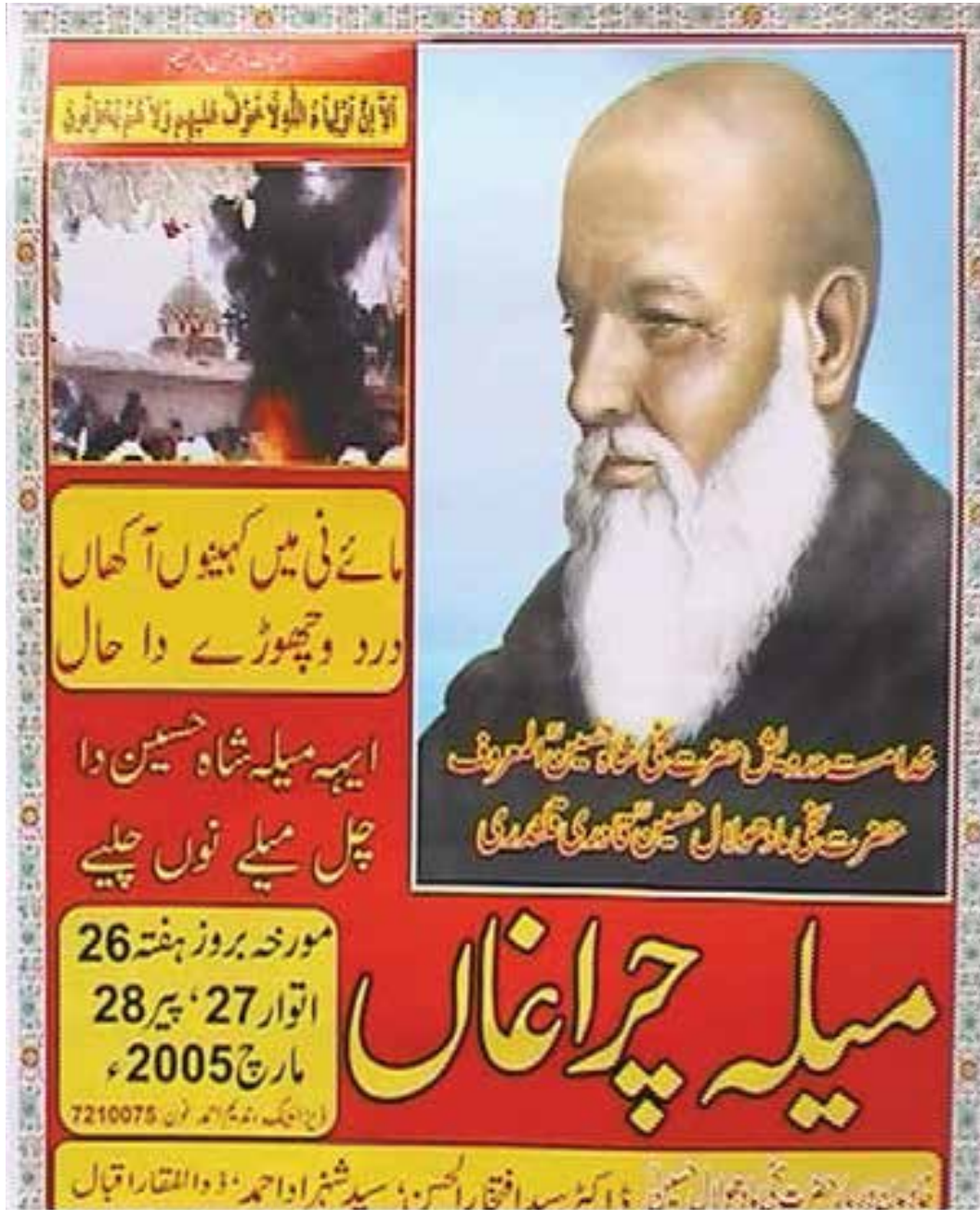


Figure 2. Poster of Sufi Saint Madho Lal Shah Hussain. Displayed at *Mela Chiragan* (Festival of Lights) at the shrine of Madho Lal Hussain, Lahore. April, 2005, still image.

Islamic arts, which are ruled by the laws of harmony above all. Sufi poetry and writings were able to transform the social, economic and political lives of the people. Although well versed in the Arabic [figure 1] and Persian languages, which at that time were the languages of scholarship, the Sufis wrote large volumes of poetry in the local dialect, thus reaching out to the common man. That is how their influence spread to the grass root level. Mystic poets such as Baba Farid (d. 1280) the first major Punjabi poet, Amir Khusrau (d. 1325), Shah Hussein (d. 1599), and Baba Bulleh Shah (d. 1748) and abundantly quoted and used in classical, folk and Sufi music to this day in India and Pakistan. It is an interesting observation that in Muslim society sayings by sages and Sufi poetry are still commonly recited even by people who are not literate; it is a way of life and explains the character of a society where the ephemeral is rejected and an inner-world concern with spirituality pervades. Though still in practice in certain households, to intersperse daily conversations with verses of poetry was once a very common cultural norm. Sometimes an answer to a question was given in the form of a poetic couplet.

Many contend that in the Quran, the idea of God being beautiful in its various derivations of the two roots *husna* and *jamala* (beauty) is used in an ethical sense rather than aesthetic.⁵⁸ However, in the Sufi code, the concept of *ihsan* applies to both aesthetics and ethics; it means doing everything with beauty. It encompasses all aspects of existence: behaviour and ethical codes as well as the physical things that surround man. That is why the “beautiful” permeates all aspects of life. According to the Quran, the practice of strong ethical codes reflects beauty and knowledge.

Belief in the Supernatural Powers of Sufis

Sufism has attracted all classes of society in its fold – the poor, the illiterate, the educated, and the affluent – all go to the shrines. The *ashraf* (the educated upper class), some of whom are spiritually inclined, acquire training through the traditional method of interaction between the *shaykh* (spiritual guide) and the *murid* (disciple).⁵⁹ They see the Sufi saints as sources of grace who have reached a higher spiritual plane and are hence in close proximity to God and able to deliver bounty to the less elevated.



Figure 3. Padlocks locked onto the wooden grill of the saint's tombs at the Shrine of Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai, Sindh. May, 2007, still image.

⁵⁸ Sarwat Okasha, *The Muslim Painter and the Divine* (Northampton: Park Lane, 1981).

⁵⁹ Mumtaz, “Spirituality”.

In the book *Dargahs: Abodes of the Saints* (2004), Bruce Lawrence writes that in some cases, followers of dogma and the Sufi *tariqa* are not opposed to each other; in fact they accommodate each other: "...Muslim elite participate in multiple activities without experiencing contradiction. Moreover, it is possible for the same individual to be a pious judge when presiding at court, and an ecstatic dervish at a Thursday evening recital."⁶⁰ At the time of the festivals these shrines are thronged by the millions, and one can witness very passionate scenes of devotion. Legends and stories related to the saints' *karamat* are aplenty.

Sufi saints were believed to be endowed with supernatural powers. Many rulers relied heavily on their guidance and had great reverence for their spiritual supremacy. In moments of political instability and other catastrophic events, Sufis were able to rejuvenate and provide moral support and spiritual sustenance to societies. Reference is made to this not only in the literature of those times but the subject has also been represented in pictorial form. For example, from the Mughal manuscripts one can see the Emperor paying homage to the shrine of a saint, or making offerings, or giving preference to a learned *shaykh* in comparison to other worldly figures. Even today, pictures of saints appear on posters (figure 2) It is a form of popular art, sold and displayed at the shrines at the time of festivals, in restaurants and hair-cutting salons. These posters reflect the aesthetics of folk art and the reverence attached to *auliya* (Sufi saints) by the common man. They are mainly printed by Lahore's bazaar industry. These mass produced consumer items are bought by a wide range of people as a mark of devotion to the saint and also to ward off the evil eye.⁶¹ Interestingly, where so many paradoxes co-exist, they also reflect a laissez-faire stance of the general public towards image-making. The acceptability, without any qualms, of these images presents the public's dual approach towards representation which has never had widespread approval.

Historically, in order to seek the saint's blessings, wealthy people started donating funds for the welfare of the shrine and the pilgrims.⁶² With time, these tombs or *dargahs* became sites of pilgrimage, initiating the shrine culture. In the Indo-Pak Subcontinent, there are thousands of *dargahs* in active worship.⁶³ The saint's intervention is sought in getting prayers answered. At the shrine of Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai at Bhitshah in the Sindh province,⁶⁴ one can even notice padlocks locked onto the *jaalis* (lattice-work) (figure 3). It is learnt that miraculous happenings take place; the padlocks open on their own when, presumably, the request is fulfilled.

⁶⁰ Currim, K. K. Mumtaz and George Michell, *Dargahs: Abodes of the Saints* (Mumbai: Marg Publications, 2004), p.19.

⁶¹ Wasim Jurgen Frembgen, *The Friends of God: Sufi Saints in Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

⁶² Christian W. Troll, ed. *Muslim Shrines in India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 9.

⁶³ Over six hundred shrines exist in Lahore alone. According to the *Auqaf* (religious affairs) Department, Government of the Punjab, people come here for spiritual fulfilment, some to seek benefits and to make vows. Often small rags or strings are tied to the lattice work surrounding the grave, as a symbol of the devotee's presence and reminding the saint of the visitor's request.

⁶⁴ Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai (1689–1752) was born in Sindh, present-day Pakistan. He was a revered Sufi scholar and a saint. His well known work *Risalo* is a commentary on the essence of the Quran in poetic form.

The moment of the saint's passing away is considered propitious and most open to petitioners, because that moment signifies the soul's union with its Maker. Festivals are held at the death anniversaries of saints which are celebrated as *Urs*, literally meaning "wedding with God" or "spiritual nuptials." Farid ad-Din Attar (d.1221), the Persian Sufi poet, writes in his celebrated work *Mantiq- al-Tayr* (Conference of the Birds):

To be consumed by the light of the presence
of the Simurgh [here meaning the Divine] is to realize that,
I know not whether I am Thou or Thou art I;
I have disappeared in Thee and duality hath perished.⁶⁵

The Significance of Love in Sufi Philosophy

The sayings of the Prophet in which God speaks directly (*Hadith-i Qudsi*) are often quoted by the Sufis: "I was a hidden treasure and longed to be known, so I created the Cosmos."⁶⁶ It reveals the widely held Sufi belief that Love was the source of all creation. "Through this Love, God turned His Will toward the things in the state of their nonexistence... and said to them 'Be!'"⁶⁷ God's longing for being seen and praised in His boundless beauty leads to the idea that all earthly beauty points to the Divine immanence.⁶⁸ The core Sufi belief is that God is beautiful and inspires love: *Inn Allah ha jamilun wa yu hibbul jamal* (For God is beautiful and loves beauty).⁶⁹ His beauty manifests itself in all earthly phenomena. Love becomes the most powerful emotion and the life-force behind all action.

Nothing is loved in the existents except God, since He is manifest within every beloved to the eye of every lover. And nothing exists but lovers. So all the cosmos is lover and beloved, and all is reducible to Him...⁷⁰

God is all three – Love, Lover and Beloved – and manifested in all creation. The greatest of all Sufi poets Jalaluddin Rumi writes,

Through Love the spheres are in harmony;
Without Love, the stars would be in eclipse...⁷¹

In Muslim literature, human love has been perceived as Divine love. Layered meanings in poetry and literature always allude to the eternal bond between man and God. The soul's longing to be with God is signified in another verse by the mystic poet Jalaluddin Rumi:

⁶⁵ S. H. Nasr and J. Matini. "Persian Literature" in *Encyclopaedia of Islamic Spirituality*, I: 337.

⁶⁶ Leonard Lewisohn, "Hadith-i-Qudsi, The Actual Words of God; in which God Speaks Directly," in *The Heritage of Sufism*, (London: Oneworld Publishers, 1999), II: 241.

⁶⁷ William C. Chittick, s.v. "Ibn 'Arabi" in *Encyclopaedia of Islamic Spirituality*, II: 65.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ A common and well known *Hadith*.

⁷⁰ Chittick, s.v. "Ibn 'Arabi" II: 65.

⁷¹ Leonard Lewisohn, ed., *The Legacy of Mediaeval Persian Sufism* (London: Khaniqahi Nimatullahi, 1992), 64.

Since the master cut the reed-pipe from the reeds,
Made nine holes in it and called it Adam,
Since then, oh reed-pipe, are you wailing.
Look at that lip, which gives breath to your lips!⁷²

God therefore becomes the Beloved (*Mahboob*). The innumerable representations of human love in pictorial art, in fact, are depictions of man's desire of a mystical union with God. God is seen as the beloved with all human qualities. Syed Vahiddun in his essay on "Some Recent Studies in Muslim Religious Thought" in Christian W. Troll's *Muslim Shrines in India*, elucidates this aspect. He writes that the love of man and woman serves as a model to express the intimacy between the lover and the beloved, that is, the relationship between man and God. Pure pristine love in the eyes of Sufis was *udri* love or neo-platonic love, which ultimately was love for the Divine. It was celebrated in the poetry of the day.⁷³ All the platonic love romances bear a close resemblance to Sufi love lines.⁷⁴ *Laila wa Majnu*, *Shirin wa Farhad* are brought in to illustrate the love of God for man and the love of man for God. "Unlike Spinoza's intellectual love for God, we find here that God is involved in this mutual relationship. Human love is taken as the starting point for Divine love."⁷⁵

Muhyuddin Ibn Arabi's great scholastic work on *irfan* (gnosis) *Fusus al-Hikam* (The Ringstone of Wisdom) reveals that contemplation of the "feminine" is one of the most important treatises in Sufi philosophy. The feminine also portrays the soul of man, which is female in gender. It was a model adopted by Sufi poets in which the writer assumes the position of the "female." The feminine thus became the intermediate. Her main characteristics of creativity, vulnerability, frailty and beauty made her traditionally the symbol of love and passion. The Sufi assumes the position of the female to evoke feelings of joyous union and pangs of separation in his poetry.

Another commonly used symbol in poetry and art which alludes to mystical annihilation is that of the moth and the candle: "The tales of Majnun and Layla, Yusuf and Zulaykha, the Moth and the Candle, the Nightingale and the Rose are shadow-pictures of the soul's passionate longing to be re-united with God."⁷⁶

When the moth hurls itself into the fire, it is totally consumed, becoming itself all fire... The fire of love gives both power and nutriment to the moth. The lover is the moth and the beloved is the candle which bestows such power and nutriment to it [the moth]. Seeking these things, the moth hurls itself upon the flame. The candle-flame that is the beloved, commences to burn the moth, until the entire candle becomes fire: neither love nor moth remains.⁷⁷

⁷² Johan Christoph Bürgel, *The Feather of the Simurgh*, 18.

⁷³ It was akin to the love of the mystic Rabi'at al-'Adawiyyah...; Safa Khulusi, "Arabic Literature" in *Encyclopaedia of Islamic Spirituality*, II: 320. Sufism rejects illicit relationship. The institution of marriage is held in great sanctity. "Marriage has been called as the "complete, all-comprehensive act of worship... just like the ritual prayer..." Sachiko Murata, "Mysteries of Marriage" in *The Legacy of Medieval Persian Sufism*, ed. Leonard Lewisohn (London: Khaniqahi Nimatullahi 1992), 346.

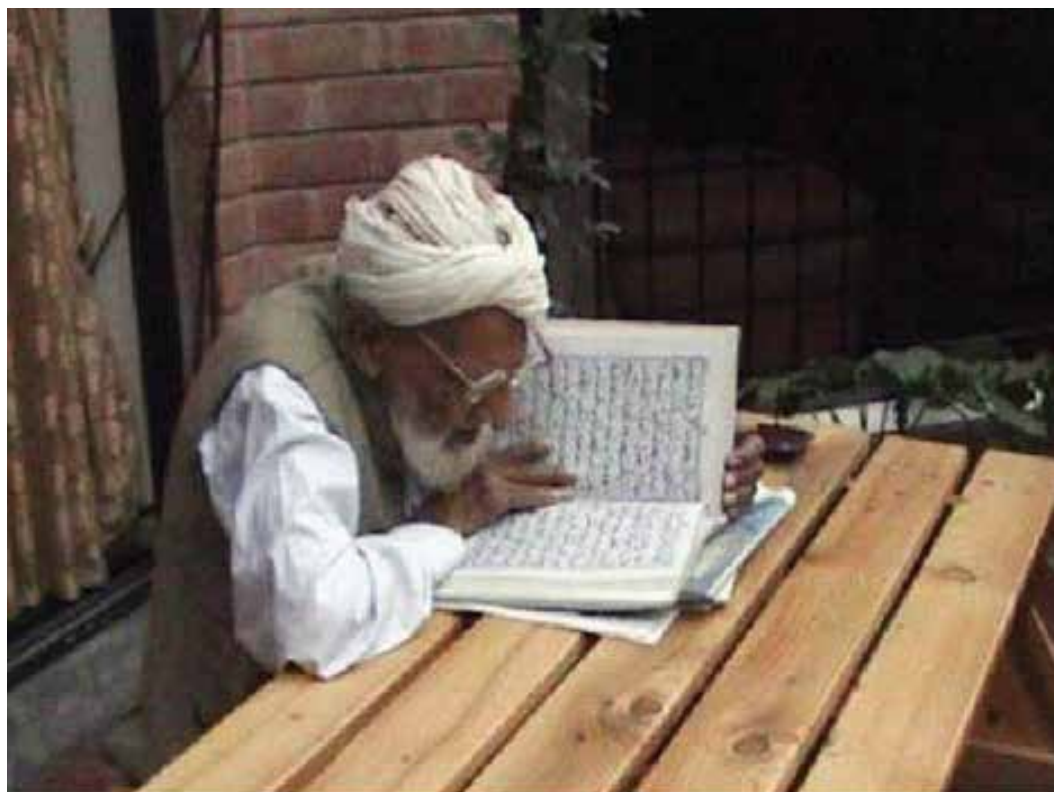


Fig. 4. Quran recitation is practiced by many Muslims, a form of *dhikr*), 2005.

Troll explains the finer elements of this process. The spiritual dissolution (*fana*) of both lover and beloved brings the soul to the pinnacle of mystical union. What remains is only *ishq* or Love itself.⁷⁸

Importance of Man in Sufism

Sufism also laid great stress on the important role given to man in the Quran. He is *ashraf ul-makhlooqat* (superior being) out of all God's creation. In Islam, man has been given the position of God's *khalifa* (vicegerent). "Behold, thy Lord said to the angels, "I will create a vicegerent on earth."⁷⁹ Man also aspired to reach the status of *insaan-i kamil* (perfect man) which was supposed to be an embodiment of Allah's qualities. The Quran describes God with ninety-nine names, all names having different qualities, which are then reflected in man. God is also known by the name of *al-musawwar* (painter/artist/creator). Ibn Arabi maintained that the most accomplished manifestation of God's beauty occurs in this "perfect man". Bürgel elucidates:

⁷⁴ *Encyclopaedia of Islamic Spirituality*, II: 321.

⁷⁵ Christian W. Troll, ed., *Muslim Shrines in India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 295.

⁷⁶ *Encyclopaedia of Islamic Spirituality*, II: 321.

⁷⁷ *The Heritage of Sufism*, I: 311.

⁷⁸ Troll, *Muslim Shrines in India*, 130.

⁷⁹ *Surah-al-Baqarah*, verse 30.



Figure 5. Spiritual Annihilation. A *malang* seeking *fana* or spiritual annihilation through smoking weed at Mian Mir's Shrine, Lahore), May, 2005, still image.

The model of the perfect man forms part of the Koranic revelation. Solomon and the other Koranic prophets are prefigurations, and Muhammad as represented in Muslim legend is its most perfect example. Mystic saints also usually reached this level and, by extension, the qualities of the perfect man were attributed to the ideal prince, as he appears in panegyrics, and, last but not least, to the poet, the artist.⁸⁰

The important outcome was that with the concept of the “perfect man,” “the idea of power became spiritualized in a new sense and man became capable of participating in God’s mightiness in the spiritual sphere...”⁸¹ This meant that space was created for the flourishing of the arts, and social acceptability of these human

⁸⁰ Bürgel, *The Feather of the Simurgh*, 17.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

expressions of aesthetics was made easy. Bürgel in his book, *The Feather of the Simurgh: "The Licit Magic" in the Arts in Medieval Islam*, says that the concept of man being *al-insaan al-kamil* (perfect man) was also influenced by the Greek Neoplatonic theory which was adopted by mystic scholars such as Dhun-nun in the ninth century, and was later fully elaborated in comprehensive systems by eminent Islamic Sufi philosophers such as Ibn Arabi and Suharwardy in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Sufism Touching All Levels of Existence

The *Rasa'il Ikhwan al-Safa* (Encyclopedia of the Brethren of Purity) discusses the relationship of man with the universe; it draws analogies between the stars and the human body and how celestial powers are interlinked with the terrestrial phenomenon. It talks about the all-pervading harmony of the cosmos which forms the basis of Sufi belief. These beliefs seeped into the daily life of the common man. Seeking harmony between human life and nature influenced the cultural life of the people. For example, the festival of *Basant*, until recently celebrated each year as the kite-flying festival in Lahore at the advent of spring, goes back a thousand years when it was initiated by both master and disciple, the Sufi Hazrat



Figure 6. *Qawwali* (devotional songs) being performed at the *Urs* (festival) of Mian Mir, Lahore. April, 2006, still image.

Nizamuddin Auliya (1238-1325) and Amir Khusrau (1253-1325).⁸² The devotees celebrated the season joyously, dressed in yellow, the colour of mustard flowers which symbolized the advent of spring. *Qawwalis* (devotional songs) became an important part of the celebrations which were sung at the shrines of saints; feelings of love were evoked thereby giving a boost to the development of poetry and different music genres (figure 6).⁸³

The manifestation of Sufism is evident in all aspects of Muslim culture – in the arts and social institutions more specifically.⁸⁴ Sharing and dining together removes all distinction between class and creed; distributing food is another feature established in the shrines. People from all walks of life contribute generously towards the *langar*. The *langar* at the shrines is an essential feature with huge cauldrons cooking daily for distributing food to devotees who come from far and wide. At one of the Sufi conferences held in Lahore – on the Sufi saint Ali Hajwari⁸⁵, – it was remarked by one speaker that it was because of the *faiz* (bounty) of *Data Sahib*, that nobody sleeps hungry on the streets of Lahore, for whosoever is hungry finds his way to the shrine.⁸⁶

Thus as Leonard notes:

Sufism was not, in other words, a tangential or exotic element in the Islamic world, as the term ‘mysticism’ in the pejorative meaning it has today, might lead us to believe. It was, instead, an all-pervasive reality that touched everyone, even the scoffer and critic of the Path.⁸⁷

The impression that Islam spread with the sword is a misconception. The love and piety that the Sufi saints preached led to the conversion of millions to Islam in the Indo-Pak Subcontinent. Harmony and peaceful co-existence was advocated. The spirit of humanism was inculcated amongst the people. This position had a tremendous impact on the cultural dimensions of Muslim society.

⁸² Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya (d.1325), known as *Mehboob-i-Elahi* (beloved of God) was born in India.

From his early life he was drawn towards mysticism. Hazrat Baba Farid, his spiritual guide, said to him on appointing him as his successor: “Be like a big tree, so that Allah’s creation, the human beings in their vast multitudes, may find rest and solace under your shadow.” Nizamuddin Aulia is also known to have had great love for *sama* or *qawwalis* (devotional songs). A Sufi mystic and a spiritual disciple of Nizamuddin Auliya of Delhi, Amir Khusrau (1253–1325) was a notable classical poet of Hindi and Persian, and a prolific musician. He is said to have invented the famed stringed instrument of the Indo-Pak subcontinent called *sitar*. He was also associated with the royal courts of the Delhi Sultanate, and is a popular name in India and Pakistan by virtue of the hundreds of riddles, songs and legends attributed to him.

⁸³ Intizar Hussain, “A tribute to the Blooming Mustard.” *Dawn Magazine*, March 4, 2007.

⁸⁴ *Encyclopaedia of Islamic Spirituality*, II: 206.

⁸⁵ Also known as Data Ganj Bakhsh or *Data Sahib* (d.1071); Afghan Sufi and scholar of the eleventh century.

His most famous work is *Kashf al-Mahjub* (Unveiling the Veiled); written in the Persian language, it is one of the most well-read books on Sufism.

⁸⁶ Syed Hajwari Seminar, held at Oriental College, Lahore, March 15, 2006.

⁸⁷ Leonard Lewisohn, “Overview: Iranian Islam and Persianate Sufism” in *The Legacy of Mediaeval Persian Sufism*, ed. Leonard Lewisohn (London: Khaniqahi Nimatullahi 1992), 12.

⁸⁸ Recital of the Quran has been the chief means of concentration upon God which is the essence of the spiritual path, whether dogma-oriented or other.

***Dhikr* (Invocation)**

Invocation of the Divine name, known as *dhikr-Allah*, and the spiritual retreat known as *itikaf* or *khalwa*, are central to Sufi practice and are in fact a continuity of Muhammad's⁸⁸ practice. *Dhikr-Allah* has many general meanings, from simple recitation of Quranic verses (figure 4) to the invocation of Divine names, especially Allah. It is a method of concentration and there are numerous ways of *dhikr* practised by different Orders of Sufism. *Dhikr* can be done alone or in groups, silently or loudly; the general aspiration is to feel His presence within and invoke His Blessings. By continuously repeating God's name in a rhythmic manner, the body and mind are so trained that *Allah hu* is inhaled and exhaled in a method in which it circulates the body in a regular cycle thereby enriching the senses and bestowing *barakat* (blessings).⁸⁹

This session is then followed by *muraqabah* (contemplation of any Quranic verse). The Prophet said "There is a way of polishing everything and removing rust and that which polishes the heart is the invocation of God."⁹⁰

The same method is also employed in *qawwalis* or *sama* (devotional songs sung by groups; figure 6). To heighten the emotions, certain verses extolling love for the Prophet or God, are repeatedly sung. The verses then synchronize with the spiritual state of the listener and guide him to the divine moment of ecstasy where the soul transcends all material bonds and experiences divine intimacy. These sessions are very common and are part of popular genre, revealing the fact that experiencing spirituality is a need totally engrained in the very essence of Muslim society, and finds expression in all the arts, ranging from architecture, to the art of the book, to the making of the perfect "Islamic object".

Decline of Sufism

The reasons cited for the decline and erosion of former standards of excellence established by Muslim society are many.⁹¹ Among them is the degeneration of the

⁸⁹ Islamic scholar Jean-Louis Michon describes the method of invocation practised by the *Qadiri* Order: "The rhythm increases in tempo little by little.... The name Allāh is soon no longer clear and only the last letter *hā'* remains, which all the chests exhale in an immense burst of air. Each of these exhalations symbolizes the last breath of man, the moment when the individual soul is reintegrated into cosmic breath, that is to say, into the divine spirit, which was blown into man at the time of creation and through which man always remains in communication with the absolute. Keeping with the movements of the chest, the body is alternatively lowered and raised as if at each instant it were being pulled toward the sky and then sent back toward the earth. All eyes are closed; the faces express a kind of painful rapture. One need not fear pointing out that, if breathing of this *dhikr* evokes that of a rapture of a more sensual order, it is not an accident. There are precise correspondences between the higher order and that here below. That is why, for example, earthly love is able to serve as the point of departure for the realization of divine love..." (*Encyclopaedia of Islamic Spirituality*, I: 282).

⁹⁰ *Encyclopaedia of Islamic Spirituality*, I: 276.

⁹¹ Modernist writer Ziauddin Sardar tackles the issue of Muslim regression in which he cites many causes for the decline. In his opinion, it is definitely not the religion Islam itself: "The most common stance is simply to blame Islam itself. There is something in the teachings of Islam, the argument goes, which does not allow science to take root in Muslim societies. This suggestion not only belies history but also the basic teachings of Islam which proclaims itself as an intrinsically rational worldview... The teachings of Islam are the same now as they were a thousand years ago... Islam was there parlous state. So what happened?" [See Ziauddin Sardar, "Islam and Science: lecture transcript." The Royal Society (n.d.) <http://www.royalsoc.ac.uk/page.asp?tip=1&id=5747> (accessed on February 17, 2008)].

Sufi movement. The movement which nourished the minds of so many and was responsible for the conversion of millions to the Islamic faith has degenerated to pure ritual practice. The very ideals that had led to the purification of the human soul and mind have become the cause of decay, not only within the movement, but to Muslim society in general.

There are several causes for the decline of Sufism. The common perception is that “the general secularization of world culture; colonialism, with its concomitant critique of Islamic religion and society; the response of Islamic modernism; and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism” have all been cited as possible reasons.⁹² Especially in the case of Sufism, the movement was seen as backward by powers trying to modernize their countries. For example, Kemal Attatürk, founder of modern Turkey,⁹³ banned Maulana Jalaluddin’s *Mevlavi* Sufi Order of the “Whirling Dervishes,” only to be established as a tourist attraction later. The ultra-orthodox sects such as the *Wahabiya*,⁹⁴ who promote the most puritanical form of Islam (the present Saudi government belongs to the *Wahabi* sect), saw in Sufism a deviation from *shariah*, and therefore rejected it completely.

Gradually, under *tasawwuf*, commitment to rational scientific knowledge was abandoned in seeking mystical experience. Worldly activity of social, political and economic nature was given up in place of ritualistic worship, which resulted in taking society away from pursuit of research and discovery. There was great reliance on *karamat* (miracles) which in Sufism could be attained through a state of communion with God. Hence, when people started believing that truth could be reached in a shorter way through the intervention of the Sufi shaykh, all the sciences suffered.⁹⁵ The pursuit of excellence and desire to discover the world through knowledge and scholarship was forsaken. The concept of *fana* lost its earlier meaning and the state of annihilation was now sought through smoking intoxicants like *charas* (figure 5). The belief that existence on this earth was merely ephemeral began to have harmful implications for the development of Muslim science and philosophy. For example, many mystics and Sufis denigrated the worldly existence to a great extent. This philosophy is still promoted even by the Muslim clerics who lay great stress on the temporality of this life, thereby instilling in the common man the worthlessness of this existence. It was for this reason that great minds of the twentieth century such as the poet/philosopher Muhammad Iqbal found fault in the philosophy of Sufism. He found it counter-productive to face the changes of the modern world.⁹⁶ For Iqbal, self discovery and search for spiritual and intellectual enlightenment through active pursuit of knowledge are key human goals. By the eighteenth century, with geo-political changes and colonization of India, further degeneration of Muslim society took place. People lost their focus and their confidence, only to resurface again in a struggle for freedom in the twentieth century.

Interestingly, the state and private cultural organizations in order to propagate a peaceful co-existence are now again trying to revive the Sufi tradition by lending

support to Sufi ideals. That goes to prove that the enduring concepts of peace and love which the Sufis propagated will resurface again, since they represent the inherent instincts of humanism, of man to love and be loved. Although the practitioners of *tasawwuf* in the contemporary Muslim world now no longer profess to perform *karamat*, which initially the Sufi saints were known to achieve, yet the high attendance at the Sufi shrines reveals the broad appeal of Sufism in Pakistan. For the wider populace, the miracles of healing are still performed at the Sufi shrines and the pleas of thousands are granted.

Even though the present world view of Pakistan is that of a country riddled with fanaticism, yet the ground reality is that the composite culture of Pakistan is still influenced by the liberal vein of *tasawwuf*. Site visits at the Sufi shrines reveal a degenerated version of the early Sufi ideals, yet the expression of spirituality becomes self-evident. Sufi inspired ideals still live on in Pakistani society where liberalism and openness is a prominent feature of the social milieu, and which finds expression in contemporary art, literature, dance and music.

⁹² Awn, *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 14th ed., 121.

⁹³ Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881-1938) was an army officer, revolutionary statesman, the founder of the Republic of Turkey and its first President.

⁹⁴ Supporters of a reform advocated in the eighteenth century by Mohammad ibn Wahab who called for a return to a purer Islam and a traditional view of the Quran. They rejected the personality cults surrounding the saints and the Prophet^{sa}. Returning to a simple and frugal life they banned even singing, games, music and tobacco. [Jean Mathe, *The Civilization of Islam*, trans. David Macrae (New York: Crescent Books, 1980), 164].

⁹⁵ See Awn, *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 14th ed.

⁹⁶ See Vahid, ed. *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*.