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Our Sufi Heritage

DURING MUSLIM RULE in India, by far the biggest development in the realm of thought was the Bhakti movement among Hindus and the Sufi movement among Muslims. Bhakti is as old as the Veda; but it had its finest flowering in Chaitanya and Dnyaneshwar, Tulsi and Mira, Sur and Kabir. Sufism had its birth in Iran, but it had its fulfilment in India in the works of Farid and Lailan Faqir, Shah Abdul Latif and Bulhe Shah. Not all Sufis were alike, and Sufism ranged all the way from sugar-coated Islam, to salted Vedanta. However, any abatement of fanaticism and ritualism was welcome; and all Sufis were humanist and liberal in varying degrees. They were interested in God; and their method was Love. Said Bulhe Shah of the Punjab :

*Bhatth Namazan chikad Roza,
Kalme de sir siyahi,*

*Bulle nun Shuh andron miliya.
Bhuli phire lokai.*

(Let prayers be consigned to the fire, fasting go to seed and the face of Kalma be blackened; Bulhe realised God from within himself, people are going hither and thither out of ignorance.)

January 1987 issue of 'Manthan' was a Bhakti special; January 1988 issue is a Sufi special. As Prof. Mozazz Ali Baig, Psychology Professor at AMU, pointed out in his article in the November 1987 issue of Manthan, the two related movements could provide a sound basis for national unity and integrity.

Most of the articles in this issue were papers presented at the Nov. 21, 1987 Sahitya Akademi Seminar on the influence of Sufism on Indian Literature. We are grateful to the Akademi, and to the distinguished participants, for their kind permission to reproduce them here.

Interaction of India & Sufism in Indian Literature

By : Prof. Attar Singh

Punjab University, Chandigarh

SUFISM even before it reached India had already evolved into such a rich and bewildering complex of spiritual phenomena of doctrines and dogmas, mystical and theosophical beliefs and practices, ascetic and ecstatic experience and didactic and creative poetic expression that it is a formidable, if not altogether impossible task to single out a particular strain as a typical sufistic exploration, structuring and manifestation of reality. It was but natural that the existential problem of reconciling the inner schisms even within the pristine Arabic Islamic faith of Arabia should have arisen amongst the followers of the Prophet soon after his death. But equally compelling was the urgency of diffusion and plurality calling forth the interaction between varied ancient civilizations and cultures with which Islam came into contact.

As a matter of fact notwithstanding a strong orthodoxy of belief and assertive orthopraxy of ritual, each one of the disparate civilizations and cultures in the process of yielding itself to the political supremacy of Islam, assimilated the new faith to its own religious and cultural heritage, evolving unique indigenous patterns of metaphysical, philosophical and aesthetic self-realization. If Neoplatonic abstract intellection quickened the fascinating interplay between a vibrant and intense faith and a sophisticated and abstruse logic, the luxuriant free-thinking of Persian humanistic culture devised a wide range of metaphysical tactics and stratagems, with a matching poetic symbology, to have, but appear not to have, their say, so as to escape

the wrath of the fanatic and the rigours of the authoritarian state led by a conformist clergy, especially in the wake of the tragic fate Mansur al Hallaj met. In its Indian career too Islam underwent a transformation, both visible and invisible, which has lost none of its drive and dynamism in spite of the creation of Pakistan, with Islam as the mark of its identity.

I have deliberately dilated upon this introduction to underline the fact that Indian Islam, much less the Islam as a world religion, is not a monolith with no inner life and contradictions of its own. On the contrary the very dynamism of the faith derives its motivation and elan from the theological, metaphysical, ideological, ethnical and social plurality and internal contradictions born of, and fostered by, them. Apart from the faith in the finality of the revelation and the prophet, the all-embracing collective memory of the followers of the faith by way of myth and legend, totems and taboos, fiction and history, vision and despair, triumph and tragedy, art and architecture have gone into shaping a distinctive Muslim ambience easy to recognise but hard to define. Within its overall hegemony, however, this ambience breeds and accommodates a vast variety of sensitivities, sensibilities and responses more often straining at, and conflicting with, each other than not.

No wonder, therefore, that even while being recognized as the mystical dimension of Islam, Sufism extends much beyond the experiential and existential

Prof. Habib is wrong to think that Indian Islam made no contribution to Sufism

concerns of pure mysticism: perception of an abiding unity behind the transient plurality of forms, and the all-too-human necessity and urge for transcending the anguish of existence into an experience of the eternal and the universal or to use a Sufi characteristic aphorism of being destroyed into survival. Except, perhaps, for the priest in the traditional mosque, the term Sufi coveted the whole gamut of Muslim scholasticism, theology, the orders of the saints, the conformists and non-conformists, the counsellors to the kings and the rebels, active crusaders and self-absorbed *derwishes* great metaphysical system-builders and synthesisers, visionary poets, lyricists, authors of intricately woven narratives of great magnitude with their multi-layered structures, martyrs, fanatics and preachers. To reduce this multi-central and polychromatic phenomena with quivering and pulsating expression of a kaleidoscopic range of charming variety and fascinating beauty into a single category, is to divest the term Sufi of all its mystique and powers. Suffice it to say that, in its geographical spread and evolution through history the term Sufi had gathered to itself a whole world of contrasting features and characteristics and contradictory attitudes and responses so that what is possible for a contemporary academician is to draw up a compendium on Sufism but not to resolve all its contradictions into an all-pervasive paradigm except by suggesting that it describes within the closed world of Muslim orthodoxy, the only possibilities of freedom in the matters of personal choice, individual faith and social action, compensating for departure from the outer

juridical and political norm by a reference to the intensity of inner conviction. The paradox of Sufism inheres as much in accommodating both, an all-inclusivist Ibn 'Arabi and an all-exclusivist Sheikh Ahmed Sirhandi Mutjadid Alif Thani, as in sanctifying in an equal measure both world renunciation and world affirmation as desirable pursuits for a purposeful life both here and hereafter.

By the time it reached India, Sufism had already evolved into a multi-layered socio-psychological movement of ideas and behaviour with a single strand running through and holding together all its varieties and diversities: that of its Islamic specificity both in its affirmation of Islamic identity and gallant attempts to reach beyond that. Basing himself primarily on Indian Islamic sources in Arabic and Persian, Professor Mohammad Habib has passed a rather harsh judgement on the entire gamut of Indian experience of Islam. In his words :

"The ideological History of Islam, including Islam in India, will never be scientifically apprehended unless it is clearly borne in mind that Muslim progress in almost every sphere of thought had reached its culmination by the first quarter of the thirteenth century. Thereafter within the socially prescribed limitation to thought and culture—limitations insisted upon by dogmatic theology, which was victorious over all rivals—no further progress was possible."

He goes on to add

"that India has added nothing to mystic thought, for no substantial addition to it was really possible."

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This however is rather difficult to accept without cancelling out the relevance of the entire Indian career of Islam in the sub-continent.

Such a total negation of the efflorescence of Islam in India may be acceptable if one confined oneself to writings mainly in Arabic and Persian inspired by the Indian environ which dealt with the doctrinal aspects of Islam and its institutionalisation in spite of a new sophistry and even casuistry such exercises acquired through contact with the Indian scholastic tradition. To this tremendous body of doctrinal literature which is attracting some critical attention may also be added the fantastic records, more imaginary than imaginative, relating to Indian Muslim saintology and hagiology revolving round the persons of the leading lights of various Sufi orders. Even in spite of the free rein given to imagination this class of writing throws a great deal of light on the Sufi saints, their personal lives, idiosyncrasies and teachings. But more importantly in such narratives is captured the general atmosphere of the *Khangahs* (hospices) maintained by the Sufi orders and sub-orders. Here one comes across the glimpses of inter-mingling of faiths, melting of the group boundaries and confluence of cultural strains in which Indian Sufism found its proper role and spiritual sanction.

The world of the Sufi *Khangahs* provides the anti-thesis of the Muslim Court. The latter was cold, formal, awe-inspiring and designed to alienate the common

masses, more particularly the non-Muslims who were otherwise in great majority. But the *Khangah* with its atmosphere of gay abandon, its own variety of Indian musical worship not much dissimilar from the *Kirtan*, and human warmth ensuing from freedom of creed and faith, presented a more humane face of Islam than the one presented by the king or the priest, the court or the mosque. It will not be far from right to insist that after its advent in India, Sufism evolved a new spirit of liberal humanism which forms an altogether new detail in its historical progress.

The pre-Indian Sufism did encounter and accommodate the clash between a personal identity of an enlightened, liberal or rebellious soul and the stringent demand of social conformism which suppressed uniqueness and creative quest. The creative spark, whether by way of vision or poetry, was charged by the friction between the two. This bi-polar tension within the faith could flourish only in a homogeneous society and polity. The experience of a heterogeneous social and political situation was by and large alien to the pre-Indian Islam. It had no group-memory of tackling with the clashes of group identity in which none could overwhelm the other. This was a third dimension of human relations with the group identity both mediating between the personal and the social identities as also negating both in an atmosphere of confrontation with the outsider, the alien. The Indian Sufi quest for transcendence of the apparent found a new substantiality and urgency in this situa-

*The Sufi Khangah provided the
antithesis to the Muslim Court*

The power of poetry to overwhelm the mystic's bondage to dogma

tion of clashes of faith and cultures, forms and expressions of values and goals.

As a by-product of the medieval Indian renaissance brought about by inter-action of the Indian and Muslim cultures at various levels, the Sufi poetry in Indian languages went far beyond the highest reaches of universal spirit which became manifest in other expressions of the medieval Indian culture not excluding even religion. Here it may be mentioned in parenthesis that the Sufi poetry in Indian languages, partook in an equal measure in a mutual endeavour with the streams of mystical poetry of Hindu origins in Indian languages to chart out a utopia if not a realm of reality of universal brotherhood based upon acceptance of man by reducing the reality of formal religion and expanding the reality of man. Professor Habib might have revised his verdict on cultural achievements of Indian Islam if he had also taken into account the specificity rather than the generality of the articulation of its spirit. In determining and defining this specificity, cognizance of the relevance of the vast store-house of Sufi poetry in Indian languages providing an authentic and reliable register of the passions and the questioning, joys and anguish through which Indian Islam found its identity will be the real point of departure. The singular success of the mystical medieval Indian poetry, whether Sufi, Bhakti, Sant or Sikh, in realising and enshrining the universal spirit in tangible yet most pliable of forms, is derived perhaps more from its medium than from its circumstance.

If mysticism is the highest reach of human freedom in a closed world ordered by religion, the mystical poetry in Indian languages describes the still higher reaches of mystical universalism because it seeks to break loose from the conventions not only of religious orthodoxy but also of mystical identities as well. In this precisely lies the source of the vitality and also the greatest paradox of mystical poetry, the potential and the power of poetry in overwhelming the mystic's bondage to his order. There are countless examples of such tension in mystical poetry between the name-form identity on the one hand and the universal spirit on the other. This tension had a greater relevance in the case of Sufi poets or for that matter of all Muslim poets of Indian languages because the Indian Muslim culture was animated by an anxiety complex widely shared by the community; the anxiety of a well defined and distinctly organised community of getting lost in the ocean of conflicting, clashing, and contradicting movements, ideas and ideologies, that was Ind. The case of Dr. Mohammad Iqbal whose contradictory attitude towards Hafiz Shirazi on the one hand and Jalaluddin Rumi or Mansur al Hallaj on the other, are too well known to demand an explanation in detail.

As a matter of fact this type of contradiction is inherent in case of all poets of consequence whose religious identity supervenes his other identities such as nationality or language. For such poets the very act of creative expression is transformed into a mystical experience. When a poet of the eminence of Ghalib

alludes to the problems of *Tasawuf*, the term becomes coterminous with poetic creation rather than any strict adherence to Sufistic thought or practice. To me it appears that to the extent to which a poet defined by his religious faith is successful as a poet, he is already a mystic even though he may not have pronounced his mystical inclinations. Reference from each Indian language in which Islamic streams of poetry have flourished can be offered in support of this conclusion.

Speaking for my own language, Punjabi, I find similar contradictions as much within the poetry of individual poets as between their doctrinal writings or the teachings of the orders to which they belonged and their poetry. There is a lively tension in the poetry of Sheikh Farid between the orthopraxy and liberalism. Similarly the prose writings of Sultan Bahu in Persian and Arabic are quite forbidding and exacting in the matter of pious living in strict conformity with the demand of *Shariah*, but his Punjabi poetry is suffused with ideas rebellious even for a sufi. While negating religious particularism, he demands denial even of the five pillars of the faith. Although Bullhe Shah belonged to a rather conservative Sufi order namely *Kadriya*, and his devotion to his master is quite loudly proclaimed, there is no bondage or restraint on his free thought which perceives no reality higher than, or before and after that, of man's awareness of himself.

Before I proceed with any further observations about Sufi poetry in Indian languages I must make a distinction bet-

ween the Sufi poetry in Urdu and other Indian languages such as Punjabi, Sindhi, Kashmiri, Hindi, Bengali and Gujrati. The Sufi poetry in Urdu language, whether in the form of poems or narratives, is closest in form and ethos to the classic Sufi poetry in Persian and Turkish languages, having adopted lock stock and barrel an elaborate system of symbols, imagery, allegorical allusions and metaphysical and mystical nuances. In its compulsion to retain a pronounced affinity with the classical tradition of pre-Indian origin, this poetry shuts out the native reality and installs a mock reality in its place. It represents the principle of continuity with cultural streams flowing in from distinct lands. But the Sufi poetry in other Indian languages presents a spectacle of break and change from the classical tradition.

The Urdu Sufi poetry is a part of a cultural structuring aimed at preserving the Muslim identity in an hostile environ. The commissioning of classical images drawn from alien lands and societies is directed to this major consideration. Dr. Wazir Agha commenting upon the Urdu poetry in Pakistan has drawn attention to the marvellous fact that it is only in Pakistani Urdu poetry that the local land and the life that it bears and sustains, has started yielding its mystique and inner rhythm to the Urdu muse. In a way Urdu Sufi poetry may be described as a part of a grand process, if not actually of Islamisation of India, atleast as that of defending the cultural boundaries of Islam against the charms and fascination of India.

*In Pakistan, for the first time,
Urdu is striking local roots*

Sindhi has been more fortunate than Punjabi in scholarly research

But in the Sufi poetry say in Punjabi or Sindhi, the process is totally reversed. For want of a better term, it may be described as indigenisation of Islam and localisation of its expression. In the hymns and lyrics of Sheikh Farid, Shah Abdul Latif, Sachal Sarmast, Gulam Farid, there is a strange sense of joy of discovering a new land with all its intimate sounds and smells. There is not only a total break from the classical Sufi images or symbolism but an elaborate system of symbols, images and even myth and legends of the native experience. The earth and the sky, the sun and the moon, the flora and the fauna, the daily chores and concerns and the labour and the skills of the common man are marshalled into the act of evolving a unique tradition of formal conventions and symbolic structuring of poetic expression. The common-place practice of spinning together by the rural women known as *Trinjan*, the rivers, the ferries and the boats, the changing hues of the turn of seasons have provided the basis for building up symbols of an eternal quest and the experience of separation from, and meeting with the lover. What Annemarie Schimmel describes as the feminine element in Sufism, especially the identification of the seeker with the female, remained external to the Urdu poetry, while in Sindhi, Punjabi or Hindi poetry this becomes the central core. Strictly in relation to Sufi poetry, the corpus of Urdu writing may be described as neo-classical while in other languages it is essentially romantic in its clan and sweep.

What is most remarkable about the Sufi

poetry in Indian languages is the fact that it has suffered till recently from both literary & academic neglect. It is only recently that the first intimations of the recognition of this sizable and significant segment of Indo-Muslim culture have started being registered. Otherwise it was enjoyed and ignored just as the folk songs or tales. Sindhi has been more fortunate in attracting critical attention not only of the Sindhi scholarship whether Muslim or non-Muslim but more importantly of the Western scholars of Islamic studies. Annemarie Schimmel one of the most important contemporary protagonists of Islamic culture, has highlighted the achievements and the significance of the Sindhi Sufi poetry quite extensively. But except for the Punjabi Sufi poetry in the *Sarai* dialect, which has been purposefully explored by Christopher Schackle, this longest tradition extending over eight centuries of Sufi poetry in Indian languages has remained still to be charted out and seriously examined. My reference is to Punjabi Sufi poetry emerging in the closing years of the twelfth century and actively pursued till the beginning of twentieth century. Punjabi Sufi poetry is still treated as casually as in earlier times. Even such a thorough-going scholar of Islamic culture as Annemarie Schimmel, depending upon perfunctory references, has chosen to observe that "the literary heritage of Punjabi was rarely continued by Muslims after 1800."

Fact remains that some of the most significant Punjabi Sufi poets flourished during the latter half of the nineteenth century. I have no hesitation in saying

that Mian Mohammad Bakhsh was perhaps the only Punjabi Sufi poet who adapted the classical *Masnavi* form to Punjabi tradition. Early Qissa poets did not have as strong a Sufistic motivation as Mian Mohammad Bakhsh who flourished in what not forms part of Pak-occupied Kashmir, and his main work, *Saiful Maluk*, enjoys the reverence and adoration amongst the people in that area accorded next only to the Holy Quran. Similarly Khwaja Gulam Farid a younger contemporary of Mian Mohammad Bakhsh revived the Kafi, a typical form of Punjabi Sufi poetry with matchless visions of the natural beauty and evocative expression of human pathos and passions of rare strength and sustained fervour. The introduction to his poetry by Christophe Schactle is a compelling document with a rare power to convert.

To conclude, I may say that the graph

of evolution of Sufi poetic tradition in Indian languages may or may not agree with each other. But there is no denying the relevance of the study of this valuable mass of writing to an understanding of the currents and cross-currents of cultural history of various regions in medieval India. To the extent to which this mass of writing projected a counter-point to the classical and conformist view-point, it is also important for its insights into the religious, mystical and aesthetic visions of medieval India. And above all, this poetry affords to us a glimpse into the inter-action between Hindu and Muslim cultural streams with their rich variety of experience, motifs, symbols and forms. The material cannot be brushed aside for the undertaking for re-construction of the triumphs and tragedies of the times in which are rooted some of the most powerful factors shaping our situations and responses in the present age as well.

□

What Wonder ! What Marvel !

Turfa Be-rangi ke darad,

Rang-he-e sad hazar !

Turfa-Be-shakli ke darad,

Shakl-ha-e be-shumar !

(What marvel ! that a Being Colourless,

Displays a hundred thousand hues, tints, shades !

What wonder ! that a Being Void of Form,

Enrobes in forms beyond all numbering !—

May we behold Him in all hues and forms !

The Influence of Sufism in the Growth of Punjabi Poetry

—Dr. S.S. Kohli

FARID-ADDIN MASUD, or Shaikh Farid, is the first Punjabi poet. He was a great scholar, but was very humble and modest. He had made a deep study of Quran. He had extensive knowledge of the mystic literature of Islam. It is said that he had prepared a commentary on "Awarif-ul-Maarif", a noted work written by Shaikh Shihab-ad-din Suhrawardi. It is also said that Shaikh Farid had a personal library of major works on religion and mysticism. Besides being a great scholar, Shaikh Farid was a poet also.

In Urdu poetry he has used "Shakar-ganj," and *Saeen Farid* as "nom-de-plumes" and in Punjabi poetry he has used "Farida" and "Shaikh Farid". One couplet in Lehndi (Western Punjabi) without nom-de-plume, occurring in *Siyar-ul-Auliya*, has been mentioned by professor Nizami :

*Kant na ho hathin
kar ri, nagan hath manahe
Vis gandalin madh nagar, horin ladh
lahae*

The words "Kant" and "Vis gandalin" occur in the Shlokas of Farid in the *Adi Granth*. Two other couplets of Farid in western Punjabi have been quoted from Shaikh Abdul Wahid Ibrahim's book "San Sanabil". They are :

1. Topi lainde bawre dende khare
nilajj
Chuha khud na mavai piche band-
hate chhajj
2. Mundan mund mundaia sir munde
kya hoe

Kitnan Bhadan munian surg na ladhe
koe.

San Sanabil was written in A.D. 1561. The first couplet occurs in a modified form in the name of Guru Nanak Dev and is included in *Malar ki Var* on page 1286 of the *Adi Granth*, which is as follows :

Mulhan dende bawale lainde wadde
nilajj
Chuha khud na mavai tikkal bannai
chhaj.

The thought contained in the second couplet is found in a couplet of Kabir in *Raga Gauri* on page 324 of the *Adi Granth*, which is as follows :

Moond Mondae je siddh pai,
Mukti bhed na gayee kai.

The *Adi Granth* contains 112 shloks of Baba Farid and four hymns. Two hymns are in Asa Ragini and two others in Suhi Ragini. One of the latter is also shadowed by Lalit Ragini. All these Raginis are to be sung early in the morning. In one of his shlokas Baba Farid has said that those who do not get up in the early hours of the morning may be considered as living corpses. Baba Farid was a mystic of a very high order. Because of the purity and sincerity of his mystic fervour, his poetry was included in the *Adi Granth*. He is famous for his exuberance of love for God, his austerity and self-mortification.

His mysticism may be called Quranic mysticism. The area of his special study

Madho Lal Hussain was the First Punjabi Sufi Poet

was Quran. Therefore in his poetry we find several elements of *Shariat*. The articles of Muslim faith depicted in the verses of Baba Farid are God, His Angels, His Decrees and the Day of Judgement.

It is recorded in the *Janamsakhis* (the biographies of Guru Nanak Dev) that the Guru met several noted Sufis of his time, not only in India, but also in the Middle East. According to Dr. S.A.A. Rizvi, "Guru Nanak as a *muwahhid*, travelled widely and his visit to shrines such as those of Shaikh Sharaf-al-Din Abu' Ali Qalandar of Panipat (died A.D. 1324), Farid-ad-din Ganj-i-Shakar of Pak Patan, Baha'-al-Din Zakariya' and his grandson Shaikh Rukn-al-Din at Multan, cannot be doubted. "In his verses in the *Adi Granth* Guru Nanak has talked about his contemporary Shaikhs, Pirs, Mullahs and Qazis.

A successful medium of propagation is poetry and that too set to music, so that it may be sung in holy congregations. Muslim law prohibits the use of music, but in India, the Chishti order of Sufis, to which Baba Farid belonged, adopted it. The spiritual teacher of Baba Farid Khwaja Qutb-ad-din had held musical festivals.

In a hymn of Guru Arjan Dev in Raga Maru, we find his interpretation of the spiritual states mentioned by the Sufis. The Guru says :

*Shara Shariat le kamavo,
Tariqat tark khoj tolavo,*

*Marifat man maro Abdaala,
Milo Haqiqat jit phir na maraa.*

The *Shariat* religious conduct is the practice (of the Name of the Lord). The *Tariqat* (the Path) is to become detached and to search for the Lord (within). *Marifat* (spiritual wisdom), O seer, is the conquest of the mind and then realise *Haqiqat* (Ultimate Reality), so that there is no death again.

Guru Arjan Dev is said to have had personal contacts with Sacen Mian Mir, the great Sufi saint of the Qadiri Order, who is also said to have laid the foundation of the Golden Temple. This shows that the divines of various sects and religions used to communicate with each other and hold discourses.

Following the example of Baba Farid, several Sufis of the Punjab had begun composing their poetry in their mother-tongue i.e. Punjabi. Shah Hussain was born in A.D. 1539 in Lahore. His ancestors had been Hindu weavers. He took to *Malamiya* practices, shaved his head and face completely, wore a red dress and had a fascination for a Hindu youth named Madho. He is therefore called Madho Lal Hussain. Inebriated and intoxicated, he used to sing and dance in the bazars. He belonged to an unorthodox (be-shar) Qadiri order of Sufis.

Shah Hussain was the first poet in Punjabi, who composed his *Kafis* in simple Punjabi, laden with folk-idiom. In the words of Lajwanti Ramakrishna, "Like his character, his poetry is a curious

mixture of Sufi, Indian and foreign thought. The essential feature of his poetry which strikes the reader is that it pierces the heart, creating a mystic feeling." Shah Hussain was a great Punjabi lyricist and composed *Kafis* in various musical modes.

According to Dr. S.R. Sharda, "Shah Hussain's verse stands as a clear proof of almost complete victory of Indian Bhakti thought over the Islamic Sufism. But for the one point that Shah Hussain does not believe in the doctrine of transmigration of soul, his verse presents him as a Hindu Bhakt. His verse indicates that the influence of Hindu thought was at the highest peak at his time.

After Shah Hussain, the most prominent Punjabi Sufi poet was Bulhe Shah. Besides writing *Kafis* like Shah Hussain, Bulhe Shah (1680-1758) wrote *Dohiras*, *Siharis*, *Baramaha* and *Athvara*. Like Shah Hussain the central theme of Bulhe Shah's poetry is *Ishq* (Love). According to Lajwanti Ramakrishna, "his verse is most simple, yet very beautiful in form. Its beauty lies in thought and in the felicity and simplicity with which that thought is expressed. He also did not follow the conventions regarding similes, verse-forms and *alankaric* beauties. Herein lies his poetic originality in which he excels most of the Indian and almost all of his Punjabi Sufi contemporaries, predecessors and successors". With Bulhe Shah, we come to the zenith of the Punjabi poetic contribution of the Sufis. Like Shah Hussain, he is a *be-shar* Sufi and does not care for the orthodox form of Islam.

While summing up the contribution of Bulhe Shah Dr. S.R. Sharda says: "Bulhe Shah is a liberal Sufi and in his works are assimilated various thoughts like Neo-Platonism, Nathism, Vedanta and Vaishnava Bhakti. As regards his borrowings from the literary tradition, he accepted many ideas from Kabir, Shah Hussain, Sultan Bahu and the Bhagavat-cult poets."

The main theme of the Punjabi Sufi poetry is the love of God. While singing the praises of the Lord the poets exhibit a keen desire to be one with him. Suffering the pangs of separation, they cry for Grace of the Lord like Heer. Absorbed in the love of the Lord, the poets have frequently used three words—*Ishq*, *Ashiq* and *Mashooq* in their poems. According to Bulhe Shah, *Ishq* is a tiger, who drinks blood and eats meat. Only the *murshid* (preceptor) can release us from such an agony. The path of Mullah and Qazi is the path of *Shariat*, but the path leading towards *Ranjha* (the Lord) is the path of *Ishq*. With continuous *Zikr* that stage is reached, when the lover and beloved become one. Heer and *Ranjha* are merged into one another. On the path of love, there is no need of worldly learning. Only one letter *Ali* is enough. Great emphasis is laid on the Grace of the Lord in Sufi poetry. The Sufi, as a *salik*, under the guidance of his preceptor, has to pass through several stages in order to be one with the Lord. He starts from *Shariat* and passing through *Tariqat* and *Marifat*, realises the state of *Haqiqat*. In Sufi poetry, the transitoriness of life inspires the human being towards spiritual life. Good qualities are the basis of good

*Bulle Shah has used Rama
& Krishna as symbols of God*

life, therefore emphasis is laid on adoption in life of virtues. If the ultimate end of human life is death, then why should a man blemish his life by indulging in bad deeds and evils? He should not waste his life like cranes in catching evils from the worldly ponds, but he should act like swans, and pick the gems of virtues from the world-lake.

Sufi poetry is generally lyrical. The *Kafis* of Shah Hussain and Bulhe Shah are melodious songs, which go deep into the hearts of seekers. Since the times of Baba Farid, the Punjabi Sufi poets have adopted the popular forms of versification and poetry. Baba Farid wrote shlokas and *padas* (hymns). His *padas* and the *Kafis* of Shah Hussain and Bulhe Shah had been composed in Ragas and Raginis.

The Sufi poetry is also rich in imagery and symbols. Whereas the images of *Surahi* and *Piala*, Tigris and Euphrates were popular in Persian Sufi poetry, the popular images in Punjabi Sufi Poetry are those of *Trinjan* (sisters of the spinning-wheel) and *Jhanan* (Chenab, the river of love). Whereas romance of Heer and Ranjha has attracted the Qissa poets, it has given

the symbols of Heer (Ashiq, lover) and Ranjha (Maashuq-Beloved) to the Sufi poets. The seeker is symbolised as Heer, who pines to meet her beloved Ranjha. The symbol for the world is *Peka Ghar* (the house of the parents) and that of the abode of the Lord is *Sahura Ghar* (the house of in-laws). There is *Trinjan* in *Peka Ghar*, where, in the company of her friends, the maiden has to prepare a suitable gift for the Lorn. She has to work on the *Charkha* (spinning-wheel) of her body and spin the yarn of virtues. In the Punjabi Sufi poetry, the man of the world has been symbolised as a *musafir* (a way-farer) and *Saudgar* (a trader). This world is a *sarai* (an inn) on the way, where the stay of the traveller or trader is short-lived. Bulhe Shah has used the symbols of Krishna and Rama for God.

The Sufi poets have greatly enriched Punjabi poetry. They have significantly exhibited Punjabi culture in their verses. They have contributed a great deal towards the betterment of Indian life in general like Indian saints and Gurus, because of their spiritual values.

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Sarmad's Retort to Aurangzeb

Sarmad addressed the following quatrain to Aurangzeb when the latter sentenced him to death, ostensibly for going about nude in the streets of Delhi, but actually for being suspected of heathenism and sympathy for Dara:

An Kas ke to-a taje-e jahan-bani dad,
Ma ra hama a-bub-e parishani dad.
Poshand libas hor ke ra a'ib d'd,
Be-a'iban ra libas-uryani dad.

(He who did place the dead weight of a crown
With kinship's worries on thy sinful head,
He gave to me the wealth of Poverty,
Self-chosen, free from all the cares of Wealth.
He told the sinful ones to hide their shame
In many folds of clothing; but to those
Who have not sinned, He gave the beauteous dress
Of babies—Innocence and Nakedness.)

The Influence of Bulhe Shah on Punjabi Poetry

—Prabhjot Kaur

BULHE SHAH was a Qadari Saint. He was born in 1680 in a small village near Lahore.

*my soul feared the mosque,
I ran to the temple
but realised that He lives within me."*

Towards the end of the seventeenth century, considerable change was visible in Sufism in India. The radical Sufis did not like violent and ruthless fanaticism and advocated religious tolerance and freedom of religious beliefs. They were no longer preachers of Islam. The spiritual minded amongst them were influenced to a great extent by Hindu Bhakti movement and vedantic thought. Even the doctrines of transmigration, reincarnation and Karma made their impact on them. Bulhe Shah belonged to this school of Sufis. He had seen Punjab suffering under the cruel Subedars. His Poetry holds a mirror to those eventful times.

He says :

*"The gate of utmost savagery is opened
Punjab is suffering miseries untold."*

*"I do not say anything about the past
nor I talk about the present.
If Guru Gobind Singh had not been there,
every one would have been converted to
Islam."*

The main theme of Bulhe Shah's poetry is Ishq. He sings again and again of Divine love. The poet considers God as eternal beauty which desires to be loved and is the real object of all love. Even worldly love leads to spiritual love. He says :

*"Ishq is ever new and fresh
when I learnt the lesson of love"*

Sufi Poetry is basically lyric poetry. The Kafis of Shah Hussain and Bulhe Shah are melodious songs. These songs express their philosophy.

This Poetry is also rich in imagery and symbols. Whereas the Surahi and Piali were popular in Persian Sufi Poetry, the popular images in Punjabi Sufi Poetry are Trinjan (spinning ladies) and Jhana (Chenab, river of love). The romance of Heer and Ranjha symbolises the lover and the beloved. Heer is the lover and Ranjha, the beloved. The world becomes Peka ghar (parents' house) and abode of God becomes Sahura (the house of in-laws). Charkha is the body and it has to prepare the cotton thread of virtues. The man of the world has also been symbolised as musafir (a wayfarer).

This world is sarai (an inn) where the stay of a traveller or trader is short-lived. Bulhe Shah has used symbols of Krishna and Ram for God.

Sufi poets have greatly enriched Punjabi Poetry. They have significantly painted Punjabi culture in their verses. These symbols became very popular later on and have influenced Punjabi Poetry a great deal. Punjabi modern and contemporary poets have used the same symbols, same words, same rhyme and rhythm. One can see the thread of the same thoughts running through the growth of Punjabi Poetry and it is as relevant today as it ever was.

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Bulhe Shah : But for Guru Gobind Singh, all Punjab would have gone Muslim

For example Bhai Vir Singh says in the same strain :

*"not possible to come swimming;
there is no strength in my arms;
the river in-between is flooded
and is making dangerous sounds;
there is no path leading to you;
how can I come walking,
my beloved."*

Dhani Ram Chatrik carries the same thought and symbols :

*"Salvation is the aim,
Religion only a way;
Hell is a threat,
and Heaven is only a dream;
Man is a traveller,
the other world is the destination."*

And Puran Singh says :

*"Girls sing in the trinjan
sitting together, same age group
same path
they share their secrets."*

Bawa Bulwant Singh sings;

*"Friends, Peepal's shadow is receding;
If he comes as promised,
what shall I do to welcome him ?*

Prof. Mohan Singh says :

*"I have been dislodged by my wisdom
and education;
I question everything
without faith; I have gone astray and
am hanging between heaven and hell."*

Smt. Amrita Pritam has also been influenced by the Sufi imagery and thought :

*"Four corners are chess-like,
and four eras are playing at them;
Angels are playing
and Rakshasas are also playing;
All are defeated at their own game."*

I myself have used the sufi imagery, vocabulary, rhyme and rhythm in my songs :

*"The thief is under my own cloak
and I am shouting for him;
he is within me !
and watching me looking for him
he smiles
I am him !
nothing else."
and again.....*

*"What is he doing,
somebody must question him;
How can one sleep tonight,
ask him please;
he himself does not tell;
neither is he angry
nor friendly;
what is my beloved doing
somebody may please ask him"*

Even the younger poets are using the same imagery when they write songs. The thought content and philosophy of sufi is as relevant today as it ever was.

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The Influence of Sufism in the Growth of Hindi poetry

—Ramesh Kuntal Megh

THE WHOLE perspective and panorama of Hindi or 'Hindavi' would change, if we do not move astray into the philosophy of Sufism and, instead, begin with the first national and Hindi Sufi-poet of medieval India, Amir Khusrow Dehalwi (1253-1325), the great disciple of the Sufi saint, Hazrat Sheikh Nizamuddin Aulia (1238-1324).

Born of an Indian mother and Turkish father, Khusrow was a fusion of two cultures, imbibing the best of both. Extremely proud of being an Indian, intensely devoted to 'Hindavi' as his mother tongue and profusely versed in the Turkish and Persian languages, this Sufi poet and musician has the singular honour of being the father of both the Hindi and Urdu languages through Hindavi, developed by him into its various genres and folk idioms as well as its bi-polar styles of Hindi and Urdu.

His was also an age when India-born muslims organized themselves to snatch power from Turkish and Slave rulers. Khiljis took the lead and captured power at Delhi. Alauddin Khilji (1296-1316), among them, was greatly admired by Khusrow, as it was during his reign that his genius flowered most. He composed five sagas (masnavis) of love and romance, and also 'Ashika'—a tale in verse about the love of Devala Devi and Khizr Khan Khilji. For centuries, his ghazals, masnavis and quawallis have charmed the people and, even today his ghazals are sung not only in Delhi, Lucknow and Bhopal, but also in Lahore, Karachi, Tashkent and Azerbaijan.

Sufism evolved out of the socio-economic contradictions of the medieval Islamic world. The dominance of the monolithic Arab state power (7c—9c A.D) was based on theo-centrism of the Caliphate. With the subsequent spread of Islam to Asia and Africa (10c—14c A.D), its ethnic composition was very much broadened. The inclusion of local tribes, newly converted princes, and more advanced urban civilizations posed a tremendous non-Arab challenge.

A differential Muslim culture emerged within the Islamic world. To the older groups of the Islamic power-wielders like the Caliphs, Sultans, Salars, Vizirs, Quzis, Subedars etc, were added different kind of craftsmen, merchants and traders to enhance the new forces of production needed to produce items for warfare feudal grandeur, courtly enjoyments and domestic consumption. It was accompanied by the development of scientific attitude (al-Ghazali), natural sciences (Ibn Sina), craftsmanship (Mohammad Khoja Naqse-bandi), new merchandise and revenues. It also led to the spread of education, search for new knowledge, and also to the rapid secondary urbanization. The conflict between the Arab power and the regional national powers became sharper, especially in Central Asia, India and Iran.

As a result, there was, first, the blunting of orthodoxy of *shariat* and *shara*; secondly the rise of the non-Arab thinkers, like Abu-Lababa bin-Hashim, Ms Rabia (10th C) Umar Khayyam, (second half of 11th C) etc etc. As these contradictions

It was Kazi vs. Darvesh, Caliph vs. Sufi, Kaaba vs. Khangah, mosque vs. Durgah

became more acute, there was a radical emergence of polar or alternate epicenters: the qazi vs the darvesh, the Caliph vs the Sufi sheikh, Kaaba Vs. Khangah: the mosque vs the dargah; the sultan vs. the folks; and the classical languages vs. regional dialects. The class alienation of religion was manifest in so many ways as such.

In India, the problem assumed socio-cultural dimensions of challenge and response. The effective advent of Sufi saints and poets in India became perceptible during the phase of Asianization of Islam (10c—14c A.D.), also associated with the synthesis of a composite Hindu-Muslim culture and the various provincial vernaculars (dialects and idiolects) of Hindavi. The major thrust in the cultural leap was provided by the Sufis, who served as a bridge between these two major communities.

Baba Sheikh Farid Shakarganj (1173-1265) was the melting pot of the Sufi cult of love and the nirgun order of saint mysticism. His Khankah had all its windows open equally to all: the Hindu yogis and the Khwajas. His were the unique ways of God-realization, a worldly life of innocence and masochistic restless experience of the divine love. He was master of three languages—*Multani*, *Panjabi* and *Hindavi*. His bani (kalam) has been incorporated in Sri Adi Granth (17th century). He was followed by Amir Khusrow Dehalwi. He also abandoned two of the accepted languages of medieval Hindi poetry. In the first one, i.e. Rajasthani, the *dingal* poetry was prevalent while in

the second namely, *Apabhramsha* oriented (sandha) *Bhakha*, the poetry of the Siddhas and the Jains was being composed. Khusrow endeavoured to transform the common speech of the people into a literary language, 'Hindavi', which he regarded as not being second to either Persian or the Arabic. In accordance with the principles of Sufism, he pleaded the oneness and unity of man and God; replaced the concept of maya with that of Iblis (shaitan); and propounded the four stages of God-realization, viz: *shariat*, *tariqat*, *marifat* and *haqiqat* meaning thereby the unity of God and man and the acceptance of Mohammad as his prophet; the purification of the devotee who would be led by the Pir, the devotee knowing the secrets and mastering the miracles and merging one into the Godhood after overcoming all the obstacles respectively. Such a path of mystical journey had since then been transformed and symbolised into love between the lovers (*mithunas*) or the couples (*damatis*). Similarly, Khusrow elevated the worldly (*markoob*) and the sensuous (*haram*) stages of music into the God-oriented (*nawab*) and the God-dedicated (*halal*). He also brought about a synthesis of Indian and Iranian music with seven and twelve notes, respectively. In a nutshell, the Indian Sufis, with certain exceptions, of course, 'believed in the 'tauheed' (only oneness) of Allah, and not in the 'aikeshwarvad' of the Brahma of Nirgunitia saints. In their works, there are clusters and sets of terminologies of the contemporary Naths, Yogis and the Vaishnavas. As we know that during the 12th and 13th centuries A. D., the systems of religious practices of the Naths and the Yogis

were widely practised and the Indian Sufis not only learnt from them but also adopted them. They had the wonderful tendencies of mobility and adaptability. Even during the times of Addahman (1170-1213 A. D.) the cities of Multan and Lahore were centres of Brahmins, Buddhists, Siddhas and Mussalmans. In the eleventh century the caves of the Siddhas and the Khankahs of the Sufis coexisted harmoniously. The '*Surati-yoga*' of the Naths and Sants was also assimilated as '*surai-sangi*'. The Sufi concept of love is also bi-polar, *ishke-majazi* and *ishke-hakiki*. And love (*ishk*) that is central to Sufism is nothing but a divine mystery (*Sirr-e-ilahi*); for Allah is nothing but beautiful (*jameel*) and loving his own beauty (*jamal*). Therefore it is not a mere coincidence that the '*Geeta-Govind*' by the Sanskrit poet Jayadeva (middle of 13th C), also reveals the similar bipolarity of sacred and profane love. The tradition was carried on by Chaitanya Mahaprabhu (1485-1533) in the exposition of '*parkiya-rati*' and by the Krishna-vaishnavites in elucidation of *mahabhava* (supreme emotion) of love.

A poetic language richly ingrained by signs and symbols, analogies and allegories, and competent enough to perform the exotic religious practices was the medium for Buddhist tantriks and Sufis. The '*ulatabanshis*' by Kabir and '*dristakoots*' by Surdas are such examples from the different schools. Jayadeva's '*Geeta Govinda*' is ritually sung every night before Lord Jagannath in the temple at Puri. Though its poetic style at the surface reflects sensuous love and erotic desires,

in its deeper levels the mystical union of God and the human soul is signified. Similarly the poetic works of Mulla Dawood and Malik Mohammad Jayasi have greater significance because of the semiotic layers inherent in them. It has been reported by Mulla Abdel Qadir Badayuni that '*Chandayan*' (of Mulla Dawood) was most popular amongst the contemporaries because of its latent layers of meanings and it was duly recited from the pulpits of mosques at Delhi. Its importance, then, was parallel to the works by Rumi (1207-1273), Attar (1136-1230) and Sheikh Saadi (1184-1292). Because of its competence for elaborate expressionism of the symbolic, semiotic and the mystical, Hindi, along with its dialects, was extremely popular with the Sufis. The urban citizenry and the rural folks were usually familiar with these conventions. The Khankahs, abodes of Sufi darvishes, were the centres for propagating social awareness and spiritual culture. An environment of equality and fraternity pervaded over there, wherein thousands of the rich and the poor, oppressed and the untouchables, would assemble. Those centres maintained a sort of ethical balance in the rigid medieval society. They left their imprint over the renaissance of Bhakti (14-15c A.D.) movement. That influence is clearly perceptible, especially in Kabir, Guru Nanak (1469-1439) and Namdeva. The teachings and the norms of Khankahs as institutions, had their immense reformist impact upon caste conflicts, class-conflicts, political upheavals and multifarious immoralities of contemporary society. The Bhakti movement owes its deep debt

*Khusrau is father of both,
Urdu and Hindavi or Hindi*

The Sufistic 'Gita Govinda' is sung daily in Puri Jagannath

to Sufi ethos also for its humanistic goals of human love and the equality of all men before God. The Allah of the Arabs was in Kaba, but the Khuda of the Sufis was everywhere and everywhen. The feudal class-contradictions betrayed such social polarities. However the class-stratifications within the medieval order of Muslim Sultanates necessitated certain groups of Sufis aligning themselves as *murshids* with Sultans and Subedars, who sought the legitimacy of their sovereignty, *sans* Kaba and the Caliph. The decline of some of the Sufi orders and the downfall of the Muslim social order was thus brought about gradually. What else could be expected of Sufi Ali Makhdoom Hujveri (1020 C) who settled in Lahore along with the Subedar Masood Ghaznavi? The Sufi influence among the newly converted artisans, craftsmen and lower castes was eroded, and they alternatively sought after new utopias in profane romances (Akhyanas), Yoga and Tantra, and also in the avatar motifs of redemption (*mukti*).

A radical change is clearly visible by the 15th century when the Sufis not only made rapproachment with the legions of Buddhist Tantriks, Siddhas, Naths and the Sants, but also produced various amalgams out of the different sets of terminologies and prepared newer semantic registers. Mir Abdul Wahid Bilgrami bears testimony to such religious transformations. Malik Mohammad Jayasi is now followed by a galaxy of Hindi Sufi poets like Shah Sayyad Ahmed, Shah Sayyad Barkatullah 'Premi', Aalam, Raskhan, etc., who also adopted Vaishnavite terminologies. However, this cultural

exchange was reciprocal and much deeper. We find the Sufi psychic condition of *hal* getting metamorphosed with mahabhava of the *bhakti*.

Another Sufi poet Sheikh Kutub-an-Jaunpur, in his 'Mirtavati' (1503 A.D) an epic of love and romance, has elaborated seven types of mystical experience to meet the Beloved (God as feminine), in accordance with the Sufi canons. Being an alim as well as a pandit, the poet has profusely utilized Hindu mythology, astrology and many a religious symbol to weave a wonderful tale which culminated to preach oneness and the unity of God. Yet the tale is an imaginary one.

Assimilating the historically relevant elements, Jayasi followed the tradition of Khusrôw's masnavis, 'Chandayan' (1379) and 'Mirtavati' (1503) etc to create one of the two best supreme Hindi (Avadhi) epics, 'Padmavat' (1540 A.D). A combination of the classical and the romantic, historical and the imaginary, Sufi and the yogic, tantric (padma, ratna, nag) and the clannish elements of Rajputs for exposition of his world-view, plot, symbolization, conventions and motifs, respectively. Padmavat has to be accepted as a supreme achievement of medieval Hindi poetry in the Sufi branch of the Nirguna school. There is systemic mobility from the rural to urban; folks to classes; langue to parole; signs to symbols; metaphors to metamorphosis etc. and this dynamism of binary oppositions generates a brilliance of the best of Hindu and Muslim ethos—in its composite unity, harmonious cultural identity and Indianness of the lite-

rary tradition. The proliferation of this rich heritage continued to 'Madhumalati' (1545), especially in the exposition of the spiritual methodology of Love and Beauty, in all its diverse and mystical ramifications. And the influence of tradition was relayed and replayed for the growth of 'Chitravali' by Usman, 'Hans Jawahir' by Qasim Shah and a host of other such works. From 17th century onwards, quite a few Sufi poets translated in Dakhni Hindavi the major Persian *masnavis*. It was initiated by Mullah Ghawasi during the reign of Kuli Qutab Shah and reached its zenith in 'Yusuf Zulekha' by Sheikh Nissar.

The reflexive Hinduization of Sufism of Central Asian type, led to the organic growth of Indianization, to the composite Hindu-Muslim or Hindustani Renaissance during the four centuries (10-14-c A.D.) of medieval India. The Sufi poets adopted the Hindu Aakhyayikas (love tales) deeply embedded in the collective unconscious of the folk-psyche. They neither hurt the religious sentiments of the Hindus nor coerced their world view through distortions or deceptions. Rather, they regained the human innocence and the restlessness in human life through spiritual development. They were thoroughly engrossed in eternal problem of the history of religion namely, how to explain the role of evil and how to cope with it. The *maya* has been replaced by the shaitan (satan), whose fate illustrates the results of pride (*Aham*) and intellectual conceit (*Buddhi*). Alauddin Sultan in 'Padmavat' is allegorised as the satan. Counterposed to him is the Dervish-like

Yogi Ratnasen constituting the principle of fruitful restlessness in human life by renouncing sensual pleasures and worldly life to be able to realize some deeper levels of human experience through certain stage of the love of feminine God (*ishke-mijazi*). The Sufi erotica is by-polar: of the *ishke-mijazi* and *ishke-haqiqi*, of the wife and the beloved, of the Yogi and the murid, of agony and ecstasy, of miracles and innocence, and of profanity and mysticism. Therefore it reveals its meanings on to various channels.

The similitudes between the nirgun Sufi *sadhana* and the sagun Vaishnava *bhakti* have also mingled in harmony. Both the ideologies disdain the intellect (gyan, buddhi) as the (sole) guide for spiritual progress; both are romantically wedded to love and beauty and both glorified suffering for self-purification. Such a manifestation of the 'eternal feminine' is a radical departure from the feudal cultural system. They believe that love is the prime cause of creation; love and beauty are the sustainers of the cosmos; the love of creation leads us on towards the love of God; love is the creator of the divine knowledge; love and agony are the twins; love is one and indivisible; love is not realized without beauty and one must sacrifice oneself, in the fire of love. So complex are these ways of eros and psyche in Sufi humanism.

The intermingling of the two phases, or the dialectical dyads, had far-reaching effects in the confluence of two cultures. Kabir and Guru Nanak illustrate the

*The Allah of the Arabs was in the Kaaba,
but the Khuda of the Sufis was everywhere*

In 'Padmavat, Sultan Allauddin becomes Shaitan (Satan) or Maya

two aspects of love (*ishk*) by *Duhagan* and *Suhagan* types of womanhood. Jayasi narrates them as mutually complementary in the characters of Nagmati and Padmavati. Meerabai combines the sweetness of *sagun* trend with the pathos of the Sufi trait :—

राम मिलन के काज सखी,
मेरे धारति उर जागी री ।
तलफत तलफत कल न परत है,
बिरह बाण उर लागी री ।
जिस दिन पल निहाक पीव को,
पलक न पल भरि लागी री ।
पीव पीव मैं रहूँ रात दिन,
दूको सुधि बुधि भागी री ।

सोच सोच पग धरजुं ते बार बार झिग जाई ।
ऊँचा नीचा महल पिया का हमसे चढ़ा न जाई ।
पिया दूर पंथ म्हाारी भीखों सुरत भ्रकोला लाई ।
मीरा के प्रभु गिरधर नागर सतगुरु दई बताई ।
जुगन जुगन से बिछड़ी मीरा घर में लोही लाई ।

(Oh friends my heart is afire with love;
this love's arrow has pierced my
heart; ever since I have looked up
the Lord's way, I have had no rest,
day and night I think of the Lord;
I have lost my mind.)

(I step forward carefully and yet I fall
down. I am not able to ascend to
my Lord's Palace. My Lord is far
away and I am weak. But Satguru
has helped unite Mira to the Lord.)

It would not be an exaggeration to
propose that it was a parallel romantic

current, feeble as it was, and called by
the name of *Reetimukta dhara*, in the
latter phase of the medieval mannerism
that fully exhibited the feudal decadence
through rivalry and revelry, sensuality
and immorality, which owed its inspira-
tion to the Sufi sensibility. Some of the
poets revolted against mediocrity and
mannerism of the *Reeti*-tradition and
joined the romantic band of liberated
poets of love and beauty. Though the
spiritual dimension in them is blurred,
yet they are clearly against sexuality
and lust; they have certainly transformed
their '*ishk-mijazi*' into the '*ishk-haqiqui*';
they have elevated the woman of pleasure
and dance into that one divine feminine.
Among such romantic rebels of the later
medieval period (18-19 c A.D.) promi-
nent ones were (Ghananand (1803-1853),
Thakur (1766-1823), Bodha (early 18th
century). Almost all of them were also
under the deep influence of the Sufi cult
of the agony of love (*prem ki peer*).
'*Ishklata*' by Ghananand and '*Ishknama*'
by Bodha are the glowing examples.
Ghananand bravely accepts the motto.

संजोमी इश्क से, इश्क बियोमी खूब ।
आनन्द घन चस्मों तदा, लगा रहे महबूब ॥
लया इश्क ब्रजचन्द सों, सुन्दर अघिक धनू ।
तब ही "इश्कलता" रच्ये, आनन्द घन सुख रूप ॥
इश्कलता "२-४"

(Spiritual love is superior to physical
love; my tears-laden eyes are always
riveted on the Lord. I am in love with
the supremely beautiful Krishna; that is
why I have poured my love in this '*Ishqa-
lata*', Love Creeper.)

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In their epical works, Ghananand and Bodha are ever intoxicated with the love of, and restlessness in, the separation from the beloved. The romantic agony leading to mystical ecstasies and tragic nemesis overpowers them. Likewise the poets Thakur and Aalam have transcended from the beauty and love of human body, to all loving and beautiful beings and ultimately to the ideals of Love and Beauty as such. Yet those four or seven stages of spiritual realization, as well as thematic symbolizations of characters and events have faded out of the literary system, by now.

It has, of course, emerged in new form in the Baramasa. The dominant Sanskrit-cum-Prakrit tradition of 'Shatrtu' (षट्शत्रु) for the pleasure and beauty of the couples (dampati) and lovers (mithunas) has been gradually replaced by the continuous agony of separation of the beloved (*nayika*) during all the twelve months divided into six seasons of the year along with her differentiated yearnings and sufferings. This rural and folk tradition was much popularized by the Sufi poets and it persists even to this day in our literary culture as a whole.

Furthermore, it appears that the Sufi influence has become a strong archetype in our cultural pattern. Whenever there is a glow and glory of human love and romantic spirit, there would be a sudden burst of the Sufi motifs and symbols. In the Romantic Age of Hindi Poetry, aptly called "Chhayavada" (1918-1935), this influence re-emerged in many a direction.

The Rubaiyyats of Omar Khayyam had become a craze, only to be matched by the 'Gitanjali' of Rabindra Nath Tagore. The Rubais, as we also know through Fitz gerald, are profusely tinted with Sufi imagery, and they have been variously translated by Hindi poets of different schools and periods. Among such poet-translators are Maithili Sharan (Umar : 1931), Giridhar Sharma 'Navratna' (1931), Gupta Khayyam Kesav Prasad Pathak (Khayyam ki Rubaiyan; 1932), Harivamsha Rai 'Bachchan' (Khayyam ki Madhu Shala 1935), Sumitra Nandan Pant (Madhujwala) and others. Bachchan even composed many tendentious lyrics, original rubais, in 'Madhushala' (1935), and 'Madhubala' (1936). An illustration from the translation of Pathak would reveal much :—

“या, प्रियतमे ! डाल प्याली में होने दे आसव का
पान ।
होमित कर मधु की ज्वाला में मनस्ताप का हिम-
परिधान ।
समय-विह्वल को थोड़ा ही पय चलाता है उड़कर
पार,
धीर देख ! उड़ चला कीर सह अपने दोनों पल
पसार ॥”

(Oh Dear, pour your wine in my cup; consign my icy mind in the holy fire of love; time is flying on both its wings; pour your wine before it is too late.)

Apart from 'Naveen' and Bhagwati Charan Verma, Jayashankar Prasad (1891-1937) also has intimately drawn

*The Rubaiyat of Umar Khayyam
become as Popular as Gitanjali*

from the Sufi idiom, a few examples of which hardly need any explanation :-

छिल छिल कर छांले फोड़े धुल धुल कर मृदुल
चरण में

बसि मुल पर बुँघट डाले आँचल में दीप छियाये
जीवन की मोशूली में कौतूहल से तुम आये ।

(I have washed my wounds and cleaned my feet; I have hidden my moon-like face; in the evening of my life you came and gave me divine bliss; all these are sparks of the fire in me; all these are indicators of that my Great Union.)

ये सब स्फुलिंग हैं मेरी इस ज्वालामयी जलन के
कुछ रोष चिह्न हैं केवल मेरे उस महा मिलन के ॥

(Life has become madness and my very breath is wounded; my agonised mind is asking for wine, more wine.)

And last, but not the least, Mahadevi Verma (1907-1987) has immensely dived deep into the layers of Buddhist, Vaishnava and Sufi symbology to express her mystical experiences of love of God and beauty of nature. She eternally pines for oneness with Him who is simultaneously Master (ब्रम्), Lover (प्रिय) and Lord (देव) and from whom the Soul (मैं) has been separated. Since ages, therefore, her life is intoxicated —

“जीवन है उम्माद तभी से निषिद्यां प्राणों के छांले
मांग रहा है विपुल वेदना के मन व्याले पर
व्याले ।”

We can thus conclude that whenever there is a crisis of cultural identity, or the romantic spirit is resurrected, the Sufi heritage would speak with a thousand tongues to us all.

(A-5, University Campus,
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Hath Yoga and Tantrik Sadhana

in

Sufi Poetry

लिहू पावा उत्तम कचि लासू । जहाँ न मोच सदा मुल बासू ॥
पेम पंथ जो पहुँचे पारा । बहुरि न आइ मिलै एहि छासू ॥
तसों कवन अंतरपट, जो अस प्रीतम पीउ ।
नेव छावर गई घाप हों, तन मन जो इन जीउ ॥

That 'Sarva Shoonya State' requires Death—the 'Life in Death' feeling. One who has developed that attitude, these is no death for him. He becomes immortal and drinks at the Cup of Love along with his Beloved. This is *Sukhbasi* state, *Jiwanmukti*—a life without bondage.

—Jayasi/Padmavat/146/6-7 and 315/8-9

How Sufism integrated Perennial Philosophy with the new Faith of Islam

SOME PEOPLE think Sufis are known as such because of the 'Suf' cloth they wore. Others think it is a Persianisation of the Greek word 'sophist', thinker or philosopher. Still others think it is derived from the Persian word 'Safa' that is clean. (Safa in turn is derived from Persian 'Safed' and Sanskrit 'Shvet', for white, that is clean). Whatever the word may mean, nobody has any doubt as to what Sufis and Sufism stand for.

Islam was a great and powerful movement. But with its formalism and fixity, it did not satisfy many thinking and feeling Muslims. On the other hand, many of them were drawn to the pre-Islamic mystic thought of Arabia, Iran, Greece and India. They tried to integrate the old Perennial Philosophy with the new faith. The result was Sufism. But in the process many Sufis including Mansur in Iran and Sarmad in India—had to pay with their life.

Although all Sufis are different from orthodox Muslims, there are any number of Sufi orders, with a wide range of ideological differences. For example some Sufis, used their liberalism to attract more Hindus to Islam. At the other end were Sufis who were closer to Hindu thought than to Islamic thought. All these Sufi schools attracted both, Hindus and Muslims, in various degrees. Sufism came as a fresh whiff of air in mediaeval Islam, particularly in Iran and India.

The Hindu says, the world is 'Maya'. The Persian poet says :

*Ishq-bazi mi kunad ba khwesh-tan;
Shud baharoh dar-miyane mard-o-zan.*

(To play at Love the better with Him-
Self,
He put on separate masks, of man and
wife.)

The Sufi also says that God is not up
there in heaven; He is within you.

*Chashm band, a gosh band, o lab bi-
band;
Gar na bini ruy-e Haq, bar ma bi-
khand.*

(Shut off thy eyes, ears, lips and senses
all, from outward things:
If even then you don't see God, come
and tell me.)

Sufis accept life. Physical love (Ishq Majazi or Vishay-ananda), they believe, can, by gradual stages, grow into divine love (Ishq Haqiqi or Brahm-ananda.)

*Har kham o pech-e ke shud
az tab-e-zulf-e Yar shud,
Dam shud, tasbih shud,
Zanjir shud, zunnar shud.*

(The curls and twists of the Beloved's
locks
Take on; in different hands, the differ-
ent forms
Of rosary, girdle, chain, cord, sacred-
thread.)

And again;

*Bishkanad dasht ke kham dar gardane
yare na shud,
Kor beh chashme ke lazzat-gir didare na
shud.*

(Let their arm be paralysed that knows
not Rest

Islam does not believe in Guru—Sufis do. Nizamuddin Aulia preferred Ayodhya to Haj.

In tender curve around the Loved One's
waist;
Let those eyes blind that tasted ne'er
the Bliss
Of the sweet Vision of the Loved
One's face.)

They see God in everybody. As the
Urdu poet put it :

*Shakle-insan men Khuda tha,
mujhe malum na tha?
Chand badal men chhipa tha,
mujhe malum na tha.*

(I saw Thee not before—I see Thee
now,
Beloved! Thou peepest forth from
every face !)
(I saw Thee not before—behind the
clouds,
Beloved; Thou didst hide, I see Thee
now !)

Islam does not believe in Guru or Pir;
But Sufis do.

*Khasan-i-Khuda, Khuda na bashand;
Lekin ze Khuda juda na bashand.*

(The favourites of God may not be
God,
But neither are they separate from
God.)

Nizamuddin Auliya said : "The command of Pir is like the command of the Prophet." More than once he felt like going on Haj; but every time he decided to go to his own mentor in 'Ajodhan' (Ayodhya). And that gave him full satisfaction. A visit to his Pir's tomb, he said,

"is spiritually more exhilarating than a pilgrimage to Mecca."

Not only in Turkey and Iran, but in India also, some Sufi saints stood up to the Kings. Nizamuddin refused to see Allaaddin Khilji. Sheikh Fakhruddin Zarradi told Mohammed Tughlaq to "control your anger of wild animals". And Shaikh Bayazid took Aurangzeb to task for not giving his daughters in marriage, when even the Prophet had married off his daughter Fatima.

Mansur said 'Anal Huq' (Aham Brahma Asmi). And many Sufis look upon his 'Masnavi' as the quintessence of the Koran, the Quran itself in Pahlavi, old Persian.

The Sufi may offer namaz and go to Haj—or he may not, said the Persian poet :

*Namaze zahidan qadd-o-sujud ast,
Namaze ashigan tark-e-wujud ast.*

(The formal prayer is sitting up and
down;
The real lover's namaz is to drown
our own egoism.)

*Dila! tawaj-i-dilā kun, ke kaa ba-e-
makhfi-st
Ke an Khalil bina kard, wa in Khuda
Khud sakhat.*

(O! circumambulate thy-Self, my heart!
Thou art the Secret Kaaba! Yea, thou
art !

Haj.

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Iran, but in
stood up to
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Fakhruddin
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Sufis look
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jud ast,
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own egoism.)

ke kaa ba-e-
makhfi-st
a in Khuda
Khud sakhat.

elf, my heart!
! Yea, thou
art!

(That outer Kaala, Abraham designed,
Thou wast created by High God's own
Mind!)

And again;

*Dil ba dast awar, ke hajje-akbar ast;
As hazaran kaaba yak dil behtar ast.
Dil guzar-gahe Jalile Akbar ast,
Kaba bun-gahe Khalile azir ast*

(To reach and clasp a human heart
with love—
This is the Greater Pilgrimage; the
other,
To the stone Kaaba, is the smaller
one.
Better far is one living human heart
Than a whole thousand Kaabas built
of stone;
Within the former, God's own life
doth shine,
The latter built by Abraham is dead
shrine.)

For the rest, say the Sufis, renounce
everything

*Sar-barahnan nai stan daram knlahe
char tark,
Tark-e-dunya, tarke utba,
Tark-e-Maula, tar-ke-tark,*

(Upon my head I bear a four-fold
helm;
Of four renunciations is it made;
Renunciation of the world, the next
world,
God personal, renunciation itself.)

For the good Sufi, all religions are

one, all nations are one. The Sufi's only
religion is Love.

*Mazhab-e Ishq az hama millat juda-st;
Ashiqan ra mazhab-o-millat Khuda-st.*

(The Faith of Love differs from all
other faiths.
The Religion and the Community
Of Those who Love, is God, and God
alone.)

Says Khusrau:

*Kafir-e Ishq-am; Musalmani ma-ra
dar-kar n-ist;
Har rag-e man tar gashat, hajjat-e
zunnar n-ist.
Khalq mi goyad ke Khusrau but-parasti
mi kunad—
Are are, mi-kunad, ba khalq o alam kar
nist*

(I am an infidel, idolater,
That idolises Love with all his heart.
I have no use for the Islamic faith;
Nor for the sacred string of Zaradusht,
Nor holy thread of priest of India;
For every nerve of mine has now
become
A tuned wire of the harpsichord of
Love!
They say 'Khusrau has turned
idolatero'
Surely I have; I have now naught to do
With all the thoughtless 'they' of this
mad world.)

And another Sufi sings:

*Veda, Avesta, al-Quran, Injil niz,
Ka ba o But-Khana o Atash-kada,*

*"I am an infidel, idolater,
That idolises Love with all his heart."—Khusrau*

*Qalb-i-man maqbul karda jumla chiz,
Chun-mara juz Ishq nai digar Khuda.*
(Veda, Avesta, Bible, Al-Quran,
Temple, Pagoda,, Church and Kaaba-
Stone,
All these and more my heart doth
close embrace,
Since my Religion now is Love alone.)

Shaikh Abdul Quddus of India once wrote concealed polytheism (of Sufis) was breaking the back of (orthodox) Muslims; that the destruction of the external aspect of religion sometimes becomes essential, and it was for this reason that some men of God had shaved their beards, put on the sacred thread and gone into temples.

And says Rumi :

*Ruh ba aql-o-ilm danad zist
Ruh ra Tazi wa Turki nist.
Ruh b-aql-ast-o-ba ilm-ast yar,
Ruh ra ba (Hindu-o-Muslim) che kar.*

(By loving wisdom doth the soul know
life.
What has it got to do with senseless
strife
Of Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Arab,
Turk ?

Rumi again says :

*Bar-e-digar pir-e ma khirqa ba zunnar
dad,
Ganj-e-navad-sala ra, raft o ba kuffar
dad.*

(A second time my reverend Ancient
went
And changed his gaberdine for 'sacred
thread';
His store of wisdom, gathered ninety
years,
He gave away unto the infidels,
And in exchange took up their faith-
less faith.)

Atter, another great Persian, Sufi, says, 'let Hindu be Hindu, and Muslims, Muslim.'

*Kufr kafir ra, wa din din-dar ra,
Qatra-e darde-dile Attar ra.*
(Let sceptics in their disbelief rejoice;
And in their faith, the faithful ones
take joy ;
One drop of the Divine Heart-ache,
for me !)

Hafiz puts it beautifully;
*Hafiza gar wasl khwahi, Sulh kun ba
Khas-o-Aam,
Ba Mussalman Allah Allah, Ba Braman
Ram Ram.*
(Oh Hafiz, if you want to be one with
God, make peace with one and all;
greet the Muslim with 'Allah, Allah'
and the Brahmin, with 'Ram-Ram'.)

In India, the Bhajans moved and influenced many Sufis. Sheikh Nizamuddin was very sensitive to the music of words and to the tender charm of Hindi. Sometimes Hindi songs moved him where Persian ghazals left him cold.

And Sarmad sang :

*Sarmad ; ba jahan base nek-nam shudi,
Az mazhab-e-Kufsu-e-Islam shudi;
Akhir che khata didi ba Allah-o-Rasul,
Sargashtha murid-e-Lachhman o Ram
shudi:*

(Sarmad !, thou, in this world, did win
fair fame for learning and for pious
ways also, And came from heathen-
Jewist-ways into Islam. What fault
saw'st thou in Allah and Rasul that
thy mind turned away from them, and
thou Didst bend thy head before
Lachhman and Ram ?)

It will thus be seen that Sufis influenced Thought and action—and acted as a bridge between Hindus and Muslims.

('M')

The Influence of Sufism in the Growth of Sindhi Poetry

Dr. Motilal Jotwani

WITH the advent of Islam in India, neither Islam nor Hinduism remained the same here as before: the two interacted and influenced each other. In the course of time, the peculiar Indian psyche made it possible for the two communities of Hindus and Muslims to have increasingly greater appreciation of each other's viewpoints and of fundamentally similar religio-ethical ideals. While it is a fact that large numbers of Hindus were forcibly converted to Islam—the fact that tarnished the image of the Muslim community as a whole—it is also true that many Hindus were drawn to Islam for its new social appeal. Those so drawn did not necessarily embrace Islam: they saw in it a revival, in a way, of their age-old ideas that all human beings are equal before God, and the bars of caste, creed, property, wealth, etc., are created by man. On the other side, the proselytizing activity of Muslims began to lose much of its vigour and the metaphysical doctrine of *wahdah al-shuhud* (Unity of Appearance) very dear to them in the early period, came to shed much of its rigour. Instead, many of them felt at home with the metaphysical doctrine of *wahdah al-wujud* (Unity of Existence) which was similar to *advaitavada* that Hindus knew very well since Vedic times. While the doctrine of *wahdah al-shuhud* held that man could not be God Himself, he might by progressive assimilation of Godly attributes acquire nearness to Him; the doctrine of *wahdah al-wujud* meant in its spiritual sense the unity of soul and Super-soul and, in its sociological meaning, equality on the socio-economic and political levels.

In view of all this, it did not really matter with the common Indian people as to who ruled at the political helm in the country (*'mrpa kolu hoi, hamen ka hani?'*), as long as the ruler did not interfere with their broad Indian way of life. However, it did matter with them, if the rulers, or any body from amongst them, tried to usurp their social rights. Evidently, the popular mind during the medieval period was not aware of the social rights in the manner we are today. But awareness of rights including those for free expression and against the caste Hinduism and ritualistic Islam—in the rejection of both the Pandit and the Moulvi—found itself vividly expressed in the poetry of the age.

The mutual understanding reached at after some initial jerks and jolts between the two communities had its basis in the popular protest, or in the things that were in the nature of such protest, against the rigid Brahmanical socio-religious order and the orthodox Islamics of the time. This mutual understanding characterised the medieval Indian outlook, though on some occasions—for instance, during Aurangzeb's fundamentalistic rule—the two communities might have failed to realize it. One may incidentally notice here that in the modern period the peculiar needs of the British statecraft brought about many breaches between them and underlined their particularities, culminating in the Partition of the country.

It is against this background that the Sindhi people and their poetry should be

Khoja Gurus declared Ali as the tenth Avatar of Vishnu

looked at. Religious eclecticism of the Sindhi people has always been reflected in their works, whether they are called Sufian or Vedantin. Sufism in India has been a type by itself, and has not been dissimilar from both Shankar's *advaitavada* and Ibn 'Arabi's *wahdah al-wujud*. It has become the way of life, or religion, of the Sindhi people, Hindus and Muslims. This explains why they may either stay in the religion of their birth or embrace the other religion (as Hindus did in the past), for they know it fully well that it is a mere chance that we humans are born in a particular religious group and not in some other. But when it comes to practising any religion, it is Sufism they follow in their life and letters. Like the legendary Heer, "they are born of love, not of their parents!" As the Sindhi poet says:

b'i harkai mau-piu j'ai
Heer 'ishq ji j'ai.

As stated earlier, Sufism in its social and political contexts means social and political equality. Since this equality has generally been realized by the Sindhi people in their life, the tone and tenor of Sindhi literature has not been sharply protestant: it is tranquil and serene. It celebrates the basic oneness in spite of the apparent parts.

THE EARLIEST Sindhi verse is by Ismaili Sufi Pir Nuruddin, or Satguru Nur, who came to Sindh in 1079 and launched the Satpanth. He and other Ismaili Sufi Pirs Shams Multani (1201-67) and Sadruddin (1290-1390) blended the thoughts of Vedanta and Tasawwuf and

sang the *baits* in Lari and Kachhi, two of the Lower Sindh dialects, as also in Hindi and Gujarati. That the Ismaili Sufi Pirs of Sindh during the Sumra Age (1058-1349) could bring large groups of Hindus into their Islamic fold through their preachings, and name them as Khwajas or Khojas, speaks, on the one hand, of their syncretism in religious matters (so much so that the Ismaili Sufi Pirs in their *Dasa Avatara genre* declared Ali, Prophet Mohammad's cousin and son-in-law, to be the tenth Avatara of Vishnu), and, on the other, of a socio-religious protest of the lowly, low-caste Hindus who joined them. It is interesting to note that the new converts, Khwajas or Khojas, remained Indian in spite of their alien Satpanthi and Imam Shahi Masters in their social customs, sartorial and culinary habits and, above all, in philosophic thought.

In 1349, the Sammas, an indigenous dynasty like that of Sumras, came to power. Their rule went up to 1520, the year in which the native rule which had been established by the Sumras after having thrown off the alien Arab yoke in 1058, ended. This marks as well the end of the early period of Sindhi literature known for the sporadic compositions by the Ismaili missionaries and the epic poetry 'Dodo Chanesar' and 'Baghul Bai' of the Charanas (bards or minstrels).

After 1520 came wave after wave of Arghuns (1520-1555), Turkhans (1555-1592) and the Mughal Governors (1592-1737) to rule over Sindh. Around 1700, the Kalhora chiefs came to occupy upper Sindh, though the Mughals remained in

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power in the lower part of it. By 1737 the whole of Sindh came into the hands of the Kalhoras (1701-1783). The Talpurs took over from them in 1783 and ruled over Sindh till 1843, when the Britishers annexed it to the mainland under them. Kalhoras and Talpurs were local Sindhi Muslim dynasties. During the period between 1520 and 1843, Qazi Qadan (1463-1551), Shah Abdul Karim (1536-1623), Mahamati Pran Nath (1618-94), Shah Inayat (1623-1712) Shah Abdul Latif (1689-1752), Sachal Sarmast (1739-1829), Sami (1743-1850) and Dalpat Rai (1769-1841) stood out as the major Sindhi poets.

Qazi Qadan—whose seven *baits* (Poems) given in the Appendix to the *Bayan al-Arifin* (1630) are quite known to us, and 112 more *baits* discovered recently from a Haryana temple, eagerly wait to be authentically known—was a *wujud* Sufi poet. He and the other leading Sindhi Muslim mystics, about whom A. Schimmel writes in her *Sindhi Literature*, “mainly propagated the ideas of Ibn Arabi’s *wahdah al-wujud*, which seemed to bridge the gap between Islamic and Hindu mysticism. To Qazi Qadan, *kanz* (a collection of the Prophet’s Traditions), *quduri* (a Handbook of Hanifi Law) and *kafiya* (a grammatical poem) which the Moulvis of the day administered on students in Indian *madrasas*, and were the be-all with them, had no importance. In one of his *baits* he says :

“Leave the people with their Gram-
mar,
“I contemplate the beloved.”

Shah Abdul Karim was a highly spiritual man and he took interest in the suffering humanity around him. If somebody approached him to represent his case with the *zamindar* or ruler and get him justice, social or economic, he would gladly do so. This Sufi poet had an unerring awareness of some social situations :

“Give your heart to the Beloved,
and your body to the people;

“Private cloisters and public mosques
go together for the general weal.”

“The baited hook, O fish
which has pierced your throat,

Has taken in many of your kind
and thrown them to the ground.”

“I tested my people in the north and
those in the south;

“It’s the fuel one has earned that
makes the fire burn (in the kitchen.)”

“Those with faith crossed the river,
those without it, were afraid;

“The Mullas found it too swollen,
you brave it with a smile.”

The *Sindhi Vani* by Mahamati Pran Nath is one of his last works and easily the maturest of all his writings. The Mahamati tried to follow the middle path between Hinduism and Islam, and helped evolve a composite religion during his times. In the *Sindhi Vani*, as also in his other works, he opposed the idea of *vyaktigata moksha* or personal salvation and strove hard to ameliorate the gene-

Shah, Sachal and Sami,
Qazi Qadan, Pran Nath & Dalpat

Shah Inayat blessed Sindh's revolt against Mughals

ral lot of man in that he led a movement against Aurangzeb who had reimposed the Jeziya on Hindus after Akbar had abolished it more than a century earlier. The Mahamati established *sakhyia* (friendship), instead of *dasya* (master-servant relationship), between God and himself and met Him on equal level. He tells Him :

"My darling hubby :

I play games with you

"And if in this play I sometimes be-
have impudently,

"It is because you and I stand on
equal chance in it."

Apart from the friendly husband-wife relationship between God and man clearly brought out in this verse, it means on the worldly plane equality between sexes, and raises the sociology of the Age to a new high : it is not a small matter that during the days of the Mahamati, the woman talks to her man in the way she does, and talks of equal chances between them.

Though mainly a poet of ethereal love, Shah Inayat had nonetheless definite sympathies for the great cause of the day. He is on record to have wished Yar Muhammad Kalhoro, the founder of Kalhoro dynasty in 1701 in Shikarpur (Upper Sindh), victory after victory in his anti-Mughal campaigns for the political autonomy of Sindh.

"My hearty blessings with you always !

"May I recount the tales of the Mughals retracing their steps, going back !

"The day is not far off when you will
wrest power in Kalat, too."

It was in Shah Abdul Latif that social peace and harmony found its unerring, direct, clear expression, though the in-

direct one is the general context of the non-political character of his poetry. He was a representative Sindhi figure of the Bhakti movement which had a major impact in Siadh through the teachings of Guru Nanak (1469-1539). In his criticism of the Moulvi and Pandit alike, and his choice of the language and legends of the masses and the message of equality between big zamindars and chieftains like Umar, Punhu, Chanesar, Izzat Beg (Mehar) and Tamachi, and the poor, lowly Marui, Susui, Kaunru (as a maid-servant), Sohni and Nuri, respectively, Shah Abdul Latif established, in a way, a social democracy. He said to the orthodox Mulla and the dogmatic Pandit :

"Iman or faith consists not in this way ;

You recite holy maxims

"And your heart hides deceit, duality
and devil,

"Islamic outwardly, you have idolatry
inside."

* * *

"If you are true to your faith, why
would you be called 'unfaithful'?

"You are not a Hindu, because you trust
only your Janeo and your Tilak."

Marui in Shah Abdul Latif's *Rasalo* makes a big protest against Umar who kidnapped her from the village-well and confined her unlawfully in his Kot (Fort). The poet satirizes the injustice meted out to the poor and the lowly people, through Marui :

"Marui neither washes her hair, nor
smiles nor eats,

"She sings for ever the 'justice' of
Umar's wild ways

"O Chief ! The wrongs which you have
done to me will boomerang on you."

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If there is God in Peepal, Who else is there in Babul?

The poet seems to compare and contrast the poor maids like Marui and their humble cottages with queen Mumal and her palace in Ladano. He says about the latter :

*"The golden damsels in the palace gambled playfully with silver,
"Their chambers smelt aroma of aloe
"And their bedsteads, the fragrance of musk".*

Shah Abdul Latif was a Shia himself, but then he was a spiritual leader of Shias and Sunnis and, besides both, of the Hindus. He could see that if someone tried to establish one particular religion to the exclusion of other religions, that fanatic might as well endeavour to patronize one particular sect of that religion, to the exclusion of all other sects of that religion, and might even end up in vainly declaring Himself God. When someone asked him whether he was a Shia or Sunni, he replied, "Betwixt both". When it was further submitted to him that there was nothing between both, he said, "I am also nothing". This speaks of his protestant attitude towards theocratic thinking.

After him, Sachal Sarmast, or Sachal 'one intoxicated with divine love', appeared on the scene : he was the most vocal of the Sindhi dissenters of the age and an exception to the general rule of the quietistic Sindhi mystic poetry. What Shah Abdul Latif had artistically concealed in his metaphorical treatment of folk-tales, Sachal Sarmast laid bare as if in a state of 'intoxicated non-chalance'. He spoke straight in *Kalam*, or poetry, and saw no difference among followers of various religions. He says :

*"Break all customs and usages, then
only you'll be heroic ;
"Don't take yourself to be an outsider,
you are yourself He the Peerless."*

And

*"Struck by an aspect of the Majestic Beauty,
"I forgot the traditional fast, or the Roza,
"and didn't remember the Namaz."
"I drink day and night from the cup of
the Divine Love and have little or no
regard for the Qazi or Mulla."*

And again

*"Haji ! we visited the Ka'ba today, it's
the Beloved's face we turned to ;
"Friends ! we did the great Hajj now
and here and were granted what we
had asked for."*

The above-quoted last verse of Sachal illustrates what Al-Hujviri, the Data Ganj Bakhsh of Lahore, mystically interpreted as the Hajj, or Pilgrimage. He said that "anyone who is present with God in his house is in the same position as if he were present with 'God in Mecca'. Another Sindhi Sufi poet Murad (1743-96), equated the Pilgrimage of the Muslims to Mecca with that of the Hindus to Mathura and called both of them futile exercises.

Dalpat Rai Sufi vehemently criticised communal hatred and posed a very pertinent question, the question, that the fundamentalists all over the world may address even today :

*"Whence comes this dissension between
peoples ?
"If God is there in the peepal tree,
"Who is there in the babool tree ?"*

(B-14, Dayananda Colony,
Lajpat Nagar,
New Delhi-24.)

Sufism and its influence in the growth of Bengali Poetry

—Prof. Parvaticharan Bhattacharya

Sufism originated in Islam. A Sufi is a Muslim mendicant. Some scholars hold that the divine messenger, 'Paigham-bar', explained the holy text in an esoteric manner to his beloved Ali—his cousin and son-in-law when his stay in this world was going to end. We may have glimpses of esotericism in Quranic texts—"The reflection of God may be traced in human faces. He likes to sport with His reflected mirror." *'Makar Allaho Khayer ul ma kerin'* (His sport is frolic and fickle, but very sweet). This hints a tie of love. So the Arabs boasted of 'tasavval' mystic emotional feeling—which became in Iran Sufism—a meaningful mystic realisation in devotees, clad in wool.

I know scholars will be vocal to prove the synthetic texture of Sufism in a well guarded manner and declare, Sufism is a belief, a practice originating in Arabia, later spreading to the Middle East refined by Zoroastrianism of Iran and Manichism of Babylon—reinvigorated by the infusion of fresh blood of Neoplatonism; still, we should remember that Sufis had their originality. Ideas are eternal and universal. They flash in different ages, in different circumstances, in different climes and countries in their distinctive guise and character.

In Islam and Christianity, the Almighty had exclusive authority of creation: He wanted it to be done. It finishes there. The Brihat Aranyaka Upanishad says: "God felt lonely. Then Himself he divided into two, man and woman. The process went on "Tad aiksata bahu syam". He wanted to be many, for

the sport suffers in loneliness. Rabindranath in his Balaka says:

*When you were all alone,
you could not see yourself;*

*I came, your sleep ended;
The florescence of delight lighted up the
spaces.*

You could not enjoy yourself till two
and many evolved.

Love originates and develops in two's.
Final culmination may be once more in
oneness in feeling. Jalaluddin Rumi says—

*"Happy the moment when we are
seated, thou and I.*

*With two forms and two figures, but
with one soul, thou and I."*

He continues: "I know when this duality ceases. It will cease with the break of your talisman or illusion. But the guide's help is necessary. The Saki will show the way by pouring inspiration, and the Sharabi will feel 'mast', inspired."

There is no Guruvad in Islam but the Sufis, in all their branches, had their spiritual guides. At the initial stage of Bengali literature, Sahajiyi and Natha cult, Guru is a must. In Tantra 'Guruh Brahma, Guruh Visnuh, Gururava Maheswarah, Gurureva param Brahma, tasmāt Sri Gurave namah'. In Tantra and Sahajiyi cult they speak in an enigma "Guru baba se sishya kala"—Guru is dumb and disciple is deaf. Tantra gives out: "Gurostu maunam vyakhyanam Sisypastu chinnaśams āyah". Guru lectures

in utter silence, but the disciples get rid of all doubts.

Sahaj cult, Natha cult and Tantrik system—all abound in mystical conception of physiology and anatomy. In different language these systems explain the escalation of energy to the highest region of the cerebrum. Some take the help of drink, some abstain from it. The Sufis, with the exception of very few, drank and sang, as did the Tantriks. The Vaisnavas shrink from the very idea of drink; but they sing and dance. This is Samau of the Sufis. Rajayoga and Hathayoga—the affairs of breath, concentration and meditation are common everywhere. Even Babu Chandidas followed the line in his Srikrishna Kirtan—"dasami duare dilon kapat".

We are coming now to Rai Bareli, U.P. Malik Muhammad Jaisi, the renowned Sufi, indulged in *deha-tatwa* and created an allegorical Kavya in a historical myth. Padmavati, Ratansen, Alauddin, Chitor figure in an interesting manner. His book became famous and a Bengali Poet, Alaol, in Arakan royal court, took it up and created a Bengali Mahakavya. Jaisi's Allegory was unfolded in this way—

*Tan citaur, man raja kinha
Hia singhala buddhi Padmini cinha
Guru sua jei panth dekhaya
Binu guru jagat ko nirguna pava
Nagamati Yahan dunia dhandha
Raghava duta Soi Saitan
Maya Alauddin Sultan.*

(Padmini saw the body as Chittor, the mind as king, the Intellect as lion. The Guru had shown her the way. It is impossible to comprehend life without the guidance of Guru; Now she know the world was a riddle; anybody who is attached to it is Satan; Allaaddin was victim of such illusion of Satan)

I draw your attention how Sufism drifted from Arabia to Arakan, from the West to the Far East.

Serving God on the basis of some relationship, is the fundamental idea of all religion—be it Indian Tantra, Vaisnava School or Christianity or Islam. The closer the relationship, the deeper goes the divine love. In the end there is oneness—Rai Ramananda's Radha cries with tears in her eyes: "Love merged our souls into one."

Passionate love may be traced in the old Testament also, where Solomon recites—

My beloved spake and said unto me,
"Rise up my love, my fair one and come away".

Another mystic, St Teresa's disciple, St John of the Cross, lightens his heart by admitting self-surrender, "Fana". Hafiz could conjecture when Yusuf's charm and loveliness overflow, Zulaikha is sure to come out. Radha replied sharply to her friends: "I have abandoned everything, including my family izzat, and you are intimidating me by reminding me of my wooden gate?"

The great poet Tagore says :

*Many Sufis drank and
danced like the Tantriks*

The Sufis' black dress gradually changed to the Indian Geruva

"The enchanting power of love of men and women—the sudden unspeakable emergence of that power gives meaning to the hitherto separate, scattered, neglected universe in the twinkling of an eye. In ages after ages in countries after countries, man has perceived this power as the symbol of spiritual power. Its proof lies in the love literature, of Solomon, Hafiz as well as of the Vaishnavas."

Maharsi Devendranath, Rabindra Nath's father, shed tears of love when he perused Hafiz. I shall quote Rabindranath:

"As the sages in the forest retreats (tapovanas) were his teachers, so Hafiz, the nightingale (bulbul) of Persia's beauty groves was his friend. In the cheery dawn of his life the verses of the Upanishads were the light of the morn and Hafiz's poetry was his morning sun."

Rabindranath inherited both the ideas—Vedic and Sufistic—from his respected and beloved father. There is no question of influence. It is a choice, a noble selection. The poet will never lose his personality which will spark always in new light.

Sometimes I think there is no limitation in the universal. Idris Shah comments in his book, 'The way of the Sufi': "Being a man of timelessness and placelessness, the Sufi brings his experience into operation within the culture, country

and climate in which he is living". It is an interesting subject to study how the original black dress of Sufis changed to red-ochre colour of Indian Sanyasi. There was an interview of Chaitanya and a Sufi saint. Both met together and melted in love. True religion never quarrels, because basic truth is free from conflict, confusion and contention. I have heard a fundamentalist cry in disgust and annoyance over the Sufi statement that he is neither Hindu, nor Muslim nor Christian. Such men were answered by Rumi long ago, when he said that God is like 'Arak' and 'Attar', the Essence of it all.

It was the celebrated Saint Jalaluddin Rumi who could boast of a universal homeland, not limited to a particular corner of the globe. It was Rabindranath who could sing in unison—I have my sweet home every where—

*In home after home
I have my dear one;
I search for him.
In country after country
I have my domicile
I look for my win.*

It is a war, unique in its character, a peaceful conquest, a real victory, which we have forgotten.

Listen again what Jalaluddin says—
"I have neither a house nor any address. I am not confined to a narrow Soul. I have descended from the universal soul, the fountain of perennial stream. I have no narrow creed.

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I have no death or rebirth. I exist for all times. Heaven or hell, both I despise. My source is not Adam or Eve. Look to my immortal universal existence. No holiness can purify me, no sin can tarnish me".

Sheikh Sadi in his ecstasy once felt "why this strife and conflict and pain in this world of love? Can't we unite, forgetting our differences? We belong to a crucible of universal brotherhood. Try to understand—our love is boiling for union."

Rabindranath Tagore had been to Shiraz in Persia for sometime in 1930. He was offered a warm reception by the Iranians.

"Two immortal figures have given glories to the city of Shiraz. We feel nearness to the circumference of their minds. Those of your ancestors who were Sufi saints, poets and playwrights, I am their kin—I have come with a language of the modern."

What an appreciation of Sadi and Hafiz by poet Tagore, what a wonderful confession of heart and soul!

Sufism with its strict rules and regulations has died in modern days but nihilism is unknown in religious history. Sufism had several sects. Out of these sources have come down off-shoots, still green in spirit: Aul, Baul, Saeen, Dervish. Saeen is from Sanskrit 'Swami' and 'Dervish' is Persian. 'Aul' is not from 'Aqal', nor 'Baul' from Batul (mad);

Aul is from Awal, the First One, and Baul from Ba-awal (one with the first). Aulia's grave is a sacred place in Delhi. The Aulia always boasted of his disciple Amir Khusro. He said: "If God questions me, Hello Aulia! What precious present have you brought here for me? I shall answer forthwith, yes my Lord! You wait a bit My Khusro will be coming very soon." Every year the holy mazar is illuminated and it reverberates with the sweet high pitch of Qawali songs. They sing—

"The lamp is burning bright on the Samadhi of Faqir Nizamuddin; he is not dead, he lives in every Hindu and Muslim."

Do you want to have a glance of the huge congregation of the Bauls in Bengal? Go to Bengal and proceed to Kenduvilva or Kenduli in Birbhum. Santiniketan belongs to this District. The great poet was fond of Baul songs. This Mela is famous. The Mela lasts for some days, starting from the last day of Paus or Paus Sankrant. They dance and sing, they whirl in joy. You will perceive how this advancing and retreating and whirling around evolves from the ways of the Dancing Dervishes. They are substantially Guruvadis. Their Guru theory is a comprehensive idea—it is different from the ordinary idea of Murshid and Murid. They say:

"Whom will you offer Pranam as Guru? Your guest is your guru. The wayfarer is your guru, you have countless gurus.

*Aul, Baul, Saeen and Dervish
stand for God and his choice men*

"The pangs of your heart which make you shed tears, they are also your guru. So to whom will you offer your pranams?"

Guru is everywhere, the unexpected guest may teach you something which you never knew. Your escort, your companion in journey, your greetings and felicitations, your extreme sorrow and pangs of death—they are all, all are teachers of this world. Gurus are many; they are countless. Bow down to them. But be brave and dauntless.

Hafiz did not care for Shariyati heaven. And he craved for his 'most desired' here on this earth. People missed the spirit and followed the letter alone—

Agar an Turk-i-Shirazi badast arad dil-e-mara

Ba khal-e-hinduash bakhsham, Samarkandro-Bokhara ra.

(I will sacrifice Samarkand and Bokhara for my black-moled, Turkist beauty of Shiraz.) He was brought before the awful Timur. The scourge of God roared:

"Rascal, how dare you give away my treasure of Samarkand and Bokhara for a black mole on the cheek of your dear damsel?" The poet said: "Yes, malik-e-mulk, king of kings, I give like that. Please look at my rugged robes of a beggar. What do I possess? But my gift is always kingly. I know how to exhaust myself." Now the terror smiled, and sanctified a robe of honour to the poet.

I shall close with the three most respected names of Bengal for their contribution to Sufi thought: Taran Munshi (Ramtaran Mukherjee—18th-19th century) was a free thinker;

Krsna Chandra Mazumdar was author of 'Sadbhava Satak', Golden Treasury of Persian Sufi Poetry; His contemporary Maulana Girish Chandra Sen of 19th-20th century, was honoured even by the Muslims as a great exponent of Islam. He was a Sufi thinker. He wanted to level down the apparent conflicts of Islam and Hinduism. We are reminded of Majma-ul-Bahrain, the commingling of all oceans, of Dara Shikoh.

How Prince Shotoku Reconciled Religions

The saintly statesman, Prince Regent Shotoku of Japan, was "one of the best known figures in Japanese history, for whom when he died in 621 A.D., the old wept as if they had lost a child, and the young, as if they had lost a parent." He reconciled the indigenous religion Shintoism, and the newly come Buddhism and Confucianism, when conflict between the priests threatened to fill the land with dissensions, in this wise: "Shinto is the source and root of the Way, and, shot up with the sky and the earth, teaches man the primal Way; Classicism (Confucianism) is the branch and foliage of the Way, and, bursting forth with man, it teaches him the Middle Way; Buddhism is the flower and fruit of the Way, and appearing after man's mental powers matured, teaches him the final Way. Hence, to love one in preference to another, only shows man's selfish passion."

(—Dr. Bhagavan Das : *The Essential Unity of All Religions*)

The Influence of Sufism in the Growth of Hindi Poetry

— Wagish Shukla

A LOOK at the diachrony of human beliefs reveals that the original belief systems were authenticated by popular narrative pragmatics. At some point of time, a popular narrative pragmatics was overpowered by an ideologic narrative pragmatics. The take-overs by the ideologic narratives are all recorded in various sacred books—Moses' narrative in the Old Testament, Zoroaster's narrative in the Avesta, Christ's narrative in the New Testament, Mohammad's narrative in the Koran. Buddha's narrative, when it was exported out of India, also has occasionally assumed a similar role.

The idioblasts share a few basic characteristics. There is a fierce denunciation of the beliefs and practices which precede it; some are declared unacceptable, thus identifying a few points for differentiation and agonistics, some are acceptable but are now authenticated by the ideologic narrative pragmatics and no more by the popular narrative pragmatics; some are pronounced upon with enough room for a never ending logomachy. The self-righteousness and the persecution myths of the ideologic narrative gradually solidify into a militancy which is differential enough to proselytize. At the same time, since the logos is now privatized into the ideologic narrative, this narrative can claim to be the proto-language and thus term every nonproselyte a tergiversant.

The collective cerebrocosm, at the *terminus a quo* of the idioblast, works as a semi-permeable membrane which will permit the solvent molecules of the popu-

lar narrative to move out but not permit the solute molecules of the ideologic narrative to move in. The osmotic struggle cannot result in a victory for the solute unless there is mechanical injury to this membrane, and thus the ideologic narrative is in a hurry to capture state power and to stamp out visible symbols of popular authentication. The final solution, while it does naturally consist of the solute and the solvent, is authenticated by the solute molecules only and the alchemy of 'paganism' into 'religion' is complete. This *terminus ad quem* is the recorded version.

Perhaps it will not be out of place to draw attention to the fact that the word 'Pagan' derives from 'Paganus', which in its ecclesiastical usage meant 'civilian' (contraposed with 'soldier of the christ') and in its non-ecclesiastical usage meant 'peasant' (contraposed with 'city-dweller'). The synergic processes of militarization and urbanization acculturating the popular symptomatology, constitute the single methodology by which paganism has been transmuted into religiosity in human diachrony. Again the etymology should be looked into: the root from which the word 'religion' derives, means 'to tie' or 'to fasten'. Militarization, Urbanization and Bondage are the three differentials of 'religion' from 'paganism'.

Today, popularly authenticated paganism has been incarcerated into ghettos whose inhabitants are generally described as 'tribals' or 'aborigines'. The largest ghetto which has remained popu-

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(Religions)

The wine in Persian poetry is the Zoroastrian's sacred fire

larly authenticated and is successfully surviving pogroms by ideologic authentications in known as 'Santan Hindu Dharm'. Once again, it is pertinent to recall that all the three words in this nomenclature are negative or natural signifiers. 'Santan' is a relatively recent choice to differentiate from certain ideologic internal movements generally called 'reformist'. 'Hindu' is a Persian word and simply means a 'native of Hind (India)'; its identification with a 'religion' is merely an acknowledgement that the natives did not have a differential name for their belief system. The word 'Dharm', though it could be interpreted as 'a belief and behaviour system', means no more than that and is common to secular and sacramental usage. The differentials of 'religion', namely, militarization, urbanisation and bondage, are absent from 'Hinduism'; it has no ideologic authentication, and has no *terminus a quo* or *terminus ad quem*.

THE FIRST serious encounter that Hindum had with a religion was with Islam. This was mediated by the Persian articulation and it is necessary to recall a few things briefly.

Though the details of acceptance of Islam by Persia have never been analysed, the basic mechanism is not difficult to understand. Zoroastrianism was an ideologic narrative and was already in occupancy of the collective corebrocosm. Any resistance, therefore, was bound to be only of a somatic nature. A transfer from one ideologic narrative to another did not

involve any essential architectural incompatibility; it was only a reset.

The architectural compatibility also ensured that the original ideologic narrative could be concordantly introjected as a hypotext into the new ideologic narrative which was now the text. This was done by certain isomorphisms which are generally not taken note of in Hindi literary studies, and to that extent, the Hindi literary studies are incomplete and deficient. The isomorphisms are as follows.

The 'wine' in Persian and Urdu poetry is isomorphic to the sacred fire of the Zoroastrian houses of worship. This isomorphism enables the 'Mai' (=wine) to serve as a polysememe. It stands for love, love for god, at the text level, and at the level of the hypotext, it stands for the sacred fire of the hyponarrative. The isomorphism extends the 'mugh' (=the cup-bearer) to the guru who shows the path of love for god at the next level and is the priest in the 'fire-worship' (which is not the correct way to describe the actual Zoroastrian thought) at the level of the hypotext.

(It may be recalled that the 'mugh' is a derivative from 'Mag' or 'Magi' who were themselves priests of the hyponarrative on which the Zoroastrian narrative was superimposed. The word 'Mag' is available in Sanskrit literature where it stands for the Brahmins from Shaka-dweep, identified with Iran.)

With the 'mugh' isomorphosing to the priest and the 'Mai' isomorphosing to the

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sacred fire representational of the divinity of the hyponarrative, it is obvious that participation in the worship rites of the hyponarrative now beyond all possibilities of actualization, could isomorphose into only one thing, 'Ishq' (=desire), with the 'Mugh' as the desired. Naturally, it is the 'Mashooq' (=desired, beloved) who is in control. Naturally, the 'Ashiq' (=desirer, lover) is always in a subordinate position, asking for a favour which is never granted. And naturally, the Mashooq has no sex, but being representational of God/Teacher/Priest in the narrative/hyponarrative, is addressed in masculine gender. So both the Mashooq and the Ashiq are 'males', and the imagery of the Persian and Urdu love poetry is never quite clear to those who are not reading the hyponarrative. Indeed, it sounds 'unnatural' if you have already a definite idea of what 'natural' love is. A spoonerist appreciation of this literature naturally ensues. I will be more specific because I think a grave injustice continues to be done.

Maulana Shibli in his 'Sher-ul-Ajam' seems to think this imagery validates from sodomization of the conquered by the conquerors. His argument in hopelessly anachronistic but can be reset. Briefly, the force of the argument lies in the observation that 'Mughbacha' (=the young Mugh) and 'Turkbacha' (=the young Turk) both stand for the Mashooq. When we add to it the fact that 'Tarsabacha' (=the young Christian) also stands for the same and that in some poems ascribed to Amir Khusro and later

Urdu poets, the 'Hindubacha' (=the young Hindu) assumes this role, the argument can indeed be built into a seemingly unassailable one. With luminaries like Maulana Hali, Dr. Iqbal, and Firaq agreeing that this 'unnatural' imagery is a characteristic of the Persian and Urdu literature, a firm connection of the love poetry of this tradition with an 'actual social practice' has been accepted and no one questions it.

But I do. The entire 'pederasty connection' is based on the literary data-base. So in fact the whole argument is circular; you look at the literature, construct a 'social situation' from it and then validate the literature in this 'social situation'. This, in essence, is what it amounts to. I am not prepared to accept this 'social situation' connection for this imagery. I have a more plausible explanation.

The isomorphisms discussed are supposed to have been introduced by Shaikh Abu Yazid Taifur Bustami (ob. 874 AD) whose doctrine of the superiority of *Sukr* (=rapture) over *Sahv* (=sobriety) forms the spinal core of all Sufi poetry. He is also known for the most daring *Shathat* (=ecstatic utterances by Sufis which generally go against the Islamic thought as it is understood normally).

One thing needs to be pointed out. But (= idol) is unmistakably female, in spite of the masculine address, just as Saqi or Mugh is unmistakably male. In

*Rumi's poetry legitimised
all that was illegal in Islam*

Every single Sultan of Delhi was under Sufi influence

pre-Islamic Arabia, the idols were supposed to be female deities. It is tempting to postulate a pre-Islamic Arabian hyponarrative, specially in view of the reported fact that in Arabic Sufi poetry, the beloved is occasionally addressed as a female. I am at present inclined to reject this postulate however, because (barring the Laila-Majnun narrative), the beyond-actualization factor seems to be absent in the Urdu poetry when it has a female beloved. As far as I can see, the but (= idol) stands for Ishq-e-Majazi (= worldly love), of course as a *zeenah* (= ladder) to the Ishq-e-Haqiqi (= love of Truth of God). But I cannot come to a definite conclusion.

My hypotext hypothesis can, however, be construed into an argument that the Persian and Urdu poetry is a 'protest poetry'. Look at the 'wine', the 'music', the taunts at the Zahid (= the meticulously virtuous) and the Vaiz (= the Preacher), the casual, even the disrespectful, treatment of the most sacred symbols like Kaaba (the House of God), the claim of Maulana Rumi that his *Masnavi* is the Koran in Persian, and you can see that the poetry is consistently and consciously legitimizing everything declared illegal by the Holy Law. To the extent that the 'protest' is confined to a political protest, I am inclined to agree, because one can add certain political data in its support. For instance, the court genealogies consciously start from the non-Islamic legendary Kings: Mahmud of Ghazna is said to descend from Yazdgird III, the last Sasanid Emperor of Iran, Muhammad Ghorī from an anti-Islamic tyrant Zuhhak,

Itutmish (and our poet Mirza Ghalib) claimed to be from the family of Afrasiyab who is the anti-hero in Tilism-e-Hoshruba. The symbol of justice is Nausheervan, a 'fire-worshipper' Emperor, contemporaneous with the Prophet. Mahmud's court poet Firdausi, the national poet of the Iranian reassertion, claims to be writing in Pahlavi, a language which was totally destroyed out of existence by an executive order in 697 A.D. by the then governor Hajjaj. Nevertheless, I do not think the 'protest' goes any deeper than this. The hyponarrative serves to acculturate the narrative but the separating membrane is not semipermeable. It is completely permeable. The misunderstandings are not fundamental disagreements and all angularities, if any, were finally smoothed out by Imam Ghazali in any case.

I HAVE deliberately not used the word 'sufism' so far and have talked of Persian and Urdu poetry. I must state my position clearly now. I regard the two as identical. I do not, of course, mean that all Persian & Urdu poetry is only Sufism or that all the Sufism is available in this poetry. But I do not think any differentials can be isolated which can aspire to be significant, certainly not in the context of literary studies. In other words, "the influence of sufism in the growth of Hindi Poetry" is, in my view, the same as "the influence of Persian and Urdu poetry in the growth of Hindi poetry".

THE PART of Indian History which has percolated down to the level of

non-historians is extremely garbled and the historians have certainly helped. I must start, therefore, with removing certain impressions which have informed the axiomatics in the studies of Sufi poets writing in Hindi. These axiomatics have been agreed upon because they have been supplied as 'historical facts' for non-professional consumption.

The first axiom of this category is the contraposition of the 'liberal Sufis' with the 'bigoted Ulema' and of the consequent 'liberal rulers' under the influence of Sufis with the 'bigoted rulers' under the influence of Ulema. However, there is not one single ruler from Aibak to Zafar who was not under the influence of Sufis. All the whipping boys, the invaders Mahmud Ghaznavi, Muhammad Ghori, and Taimur, the rulers Alauddin Khilji and Aurangzeb, the historians Barni and Badayuni were under direct influence of Sufi saints. The same, of course, is true of the blue-eyed boys like Akbar and Abul Fazl. Jalaluddin Khalji did *not* get Sayyid Maula executed; he merely appealed to Shaikh Abu Bakra Tusi, and a dervish of the Hyderia order started torturing Sayyidi Maula. If Aurangzeb got Sarmad executed, he himself belonged to the Naqshbandia silsilah. If Abul Fazl was a Sufi, so was his great opponent, the 'bigoted' Shaikh Abdullah. Sufis were in the army of Taimur.

In other words, Sufism and liberalism are independent of each other. It is possible to be a Sufi and be extremely bigoted; it is possible to be a Sufi and be extremely liberal.

The second axiom in this category is that because these poets were writing in Hindavi (= the language of Hindus, which could mean anything from Avadhi to Gujarati) and were using local names and motifs, they were 'closer to the popular mind'. Through sheer repetition, the naivete of this argument has hardened into a conviction which walls out any sensible appreciation of this poetry.

I will explain what I mean by taking up a couple of generic examples.

(i) We can begin with the much discussed dispute between Kabir and Tulsī. Kabir's stand is that although everybody says that Rama is a son of Dasharath, the actual meaning of Rama is an entirely different thing. This seemingly innocuous and universally acceptable statement provoked Tulsidas so much that he has, in his Ramacharitamanasa, castigated it at length and used a very strong language full of invectives, which is quite uncharacteristic of him otherwise. What is the provocation?

As Tulsidas has stated in his rebuttal, the provocation derives not from the fact that Rama is being described as one who is beyond birth and death, which is of course okay; the provocation derives from the fact that his identity as a son of Dasharath is being flatly denied. The abstract (= 'Nirguna') and the concrete (= 'Saguna') are not contrapositives of each other in the indigenous popular narrative pragmatics which we have agreed to call Hinduism. Kabir's statement is *not* part of this narrative. His stand is

*Tulsī and Kabir disagreed but
society accepts them both*

Bhakti means 'participation' and not devotion

aniconic. His condemnation of temples and mosques is not simply a call to free God from these buildings (which is a non-issue anyway), his condemnation derives from theurgic implications of locations of God, i.e. the implication that by fixing God in time and place, people may seek to control Him. Thus Kabir is against iconism and against theurgy. This is architecturally incompatible with the Hindu Advaita. After all, the greatest Acharya of this Advaita, the Adishankaracharya, is credited with the authorship of hymns to all gods and goddesses in the Hindu pantheon, and is said to be responsible for the structuralization of the worship rituals prevalent today in temples all over India.

This aspect has been totally glossed over by all scholars in modern studies. No distinctions have been made between aniconic and atheurgic monism and iconic and theurgic monism. In fact, most of them are under an impression that the iconism of Hinduism is an 'aberration' which crept into the 'pure thought' of Vedanta under 'non-Vedic', preferably 'non-Aryan' influence.

The Tauheed (=monism) which Sufis talk about is aniconic and has nothing in common with the iconic Advaita Vedantic monism which has been generally taken by modern scholars to be the single philosophical system to which all Hindus adhere. They fail to see that the Hindu Advaita is not a matter of faith and is an intellectual discourse. They close their eyes to the fact that the temples, the ritual worship, the sacramental

rites are not located in one's being an Advaitist or a Dvaitist, that indeed there are several systems of Advaita itself.

It is a sad commentary on the quality and integrity of modern scholarship that the obloquies and the sneers (directed against some 'ritual practices') which are available in the Siddha-Santa literature, have been projected as 'revolts' in order to 'liberate' the Society which was held in thrall by the Brahmins. To be fair to this scholarship, when it comes across somebody like Tulsidas, the author under discussion is again a 'liberator' from, among other things, the 'voodooism' of these very Siddhas and Santas.

Thus Tulsidas and Kabir are both Bhakta poets but both are liberating the Society from the influence of each other! Nobody, of course, bothers to ask the Society why it is prepared to accept without question both Kabir and Tulsi.

The Society, or rather the popular narrative pragmatics, accepts Kabir, Tulsi, or anybody else on its own terms. It respects Meera or Kabir or Tulsi but will not like its quotidian members to behave like them. For, unlike the scholars, it knows that a behaviour mechanism does not make a saint.

The scholars ignore the fact that a vituperation of externally identifiable routine is itself an externally identifiable routine and is recognized as such by the popular pragmatics. So you can rave against idolatry as much as you like, but when the popular pragmatics accepts you

as a narrator, it is not because what you say is true in the sense that the pro-idolatory narrations are false, it is because it believes that what you say is not new, is indeed always already old. In other words, the authentication derives from an eternal participation. As long as this eternal participation is guaranteed, you are accepted, exactly as the one you have censured is accepted.

At this point, it may be helpful to recall that Bhakti means 'participation' and not 'devotion'.

So Tulsiidas is correct in saying that Kabir's negation of Rama as son of Dasharath is not acceptable. But Tulsi's acceptability is not because of this reactive statement, just as Kabir's acceptability is not because of his reactive statements.

The following incidents illustrate the same point. (a) Sayyid Jalal-U'd-din Bukhari Makhdum-i-Jahanian (ob. 1384) was on his death bed. Nawahun, a *darogah* of Uchch, called on him to enquire about his health. "May God restore your health", said Nawahun. "Your holiness is the last of the saints as the Prophet Muhammad was the last of the prophets." Sayyid Jalal-u' d-din Bukhari and his brother, Sadr-u'd-din Raju Qattal construed it as an expression of faith in Islam and, therefore, they demanded a formal declaration of conversion from him. Nawahun firmly declined to make any such declaration. Thereupon he was charged with apostasy. He fled to the court of Firoz Shah Tughlaq in search of

asylum and redress. When Sayyid Jalal-u' d-din Bukhari expired, his younger brother pursued the matter further and reached Delhi in order to persuade Firoz Shah to execute Nawahun. Though some scholars of the capital did not agree with the viewpoint of Raju Qattal, the latter prevailed upon Firoz Shah in obtaining his permission for Nawahun's execution as a renegade.

(b) A visitor asked Shaikh Nizam-u' d-din Auliya: "If a Hindu recites the *Kalimah* (Muslim formulae of faith) and believes in the Unity of God and acknowledges the Prophethood of Muhammad, but, when a Mussalman comes, he keeps silent. What will be his ultimate end?" The Shaikh refused to pronounce any verdict on such a Hindu and remarked: "His affair is with God. He can punish him or forgive him as He likes."

On another occasion a disciple of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya brought a Hindu friend with him and introduced him saying: "He is my brother." "Has your brother any inclination towards Islam?" asked the Shaikh. "I have brought him to your feet", the man replied, "so that owing to the blessings of the Shaikh's glance, he may become a Mussalman". "You may talk to these people as much as you like," replied Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, "but no one's heart is changed. Still if he lives in the company of a pious man, it is possible that, owing to the blessings of his company, he may become a Mussalman". The Shaikh's eyes were filled with tears as he narrated a long story to show that there was lack of

*The two thoughts, Hindu and Muslim,
were architecturally incompatible*

Urdu came into being as a vehicle of Sufi thought

character among the Mussalmans themselves. When Shaikh Bayazid Bistami died, he told his Hindu visitor, people asked a Jew who lived in the neighbourhood of the saint: "Why do you not become a Mussalman?" "If Islam is what Bayazid possessed, it is beyond me. If it is what you possess, I would feel ashamed of such Islam", replied the Jew.

Prof. Nizami has used the two incidents to observe that the Chistia silsilah (to which Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya belonged) had one attitude towards conversion and the Suhrawardia silsilah (to which Shaikh Jalaluddin Bukhari belonged) had another.

As far as I am concerned, the import of the two incidents is that both Shaikhs agreed on one common point: You cannot 'reach' the popular narrative except on its own terms. Both the Shaikhs knew that a Hindu would readily agree that Hazrat Muhammad Sahib was indeed the last of the prophets and yet, this would not mean to the Hindu an acceptance of a new faith because he has simply agreed in accordance with his narrative pragmatics which constitute his old faith.

I can probably use the words of Prof. Nizami to express my view-point: "We find the early Muslim mystics more interested in Hindu religious *practices* than in the Hindu religious *thought*"

And I will offer my own explanation for it: I believe they knew that the 'thought was architecturally incompatible.

All attempts to examine Sufi influence on Hindi poetry (or Hindi influence on

Sufi poetry) have sidestepped the basic question of what 'influence' means. They have found 'love' or 'intoxication' or 'rapture' in Bhakti poetry and concluded that this is Sufi 'influence'. They have found 'Krishna' of 'Mathura' in Sufi poetry and concluded that this is Hindi 'influence'. But both narratives use the terms in accordance with their own pragmatics. For instance 'Mathura' means 'Medina' in Indian Sufi poetry.

There was no Hindi hypotext ready to receive the Sufi narrative and the latter has remained a separate stream in Hindi poetry, neither influencing, nor being influenced, by the mainframe flow. Of course, Sufi works in Hindi have continued to be written, the last two well-known ones in Avadhi were completed in 1915 and 1917, respectively. However, it became clear to the writers quite early that the local legends were not competent to receive this narration and after a few initial efforts, they started writing the familiar story of Yusuf-Zulaikha. Apart from Jaisi, Rahim, Raskhan and a few other exceptions it became clearer and clearer that no compatibility with the popular pragmatics could be achieved. This realization is the one single reason for the emergence of Urdu literature—perhaps the most significant contribution this country has made to the Sufi thought system because this is the only locale where it is still surviving and in turn, has helped this locale to outsmart the 'modernism' which has seriously threatened continuity in the literature of many other contemporary languages.

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Bharatiyata in Sufi Poetry

—C.K. Bharadwaj

IT IS widely known how Sufi poetry and Sufi ethos influenced literature in the various Indian languages. But, an equally important aspect of this phenomenon is the influence of Bharat and Bharatiyata on Sufism and Sufi literature.

Generally, the Sufi poetry we study and discuss is the poetry written in India under the inspiration of saints like Nizamuddin Aulia or Sheikh Salim Chishti, Qutubuddin Bhaktiyar Kaki and Nasiruddin Chiragh. The biggest part of Sufi poetry comprises of epics known as 'Premakhyan' (Love Stories). Many of these are quite voluminous pieces of fiction adopting stories from history or folk-lore. But there is a long tradition of these ranging from Khushro (1253-1325) to modern times.

The first and foremost point about the bulk of this poetry is that it is written by poets, who can be called 'sons of the soil' of India. They were born and bred in this beautiful land fostered by the ever-changing sky, the perennial waters, fruits, flora and fauna. Hence Bharatiyata naturally flows in their veins, it throbs in their heartbeats. Another factor influencing this poetry is that the audience at the recital or dramatisation of these love stories is Indian, and Hindu or neo-converts to Islam.

That is why almost all the stories are in the form of 'Mahakavya'—the traditional Hindu Epic. They may or may not fulfil all its characteristics, but the format is typically Bharatiya, for example every "Khand" of Padmavat by Malik Mohammed Jayasi can be recited or

enacted on an open-air stage in a 'prahar' (3 hours) of the night.

All these stories are well-known Hindu stories—stories from history or ancient folk-lore. The best, of course, is Padmavat by Jayasi the story of Padmini and Ratan Sen of Chittor. Be it Chandayan (or Loric-Chanda) of Sheikh Daud, Mrigavati by Sheikh Kutubn, Madhu Malti by Manjhan, or Chitrawali by Sheikh Usman or Chitra-rekha or Kam Kandala, the heroes and heroines are Hindu. Khushro's 'Ashika' also has Deval Devi as heroine, although the lover in this case is Khizr Khan Khilji. The entire texture of the stories is woven on the soil of India and reflects the soul of India.

Indian Poetics has prescribed certain styles of plot-framing and episode-structuring on the pattern of popular classics. It is quite likely that Jayasi's Padmavat has provided an example and inspired even 'Ram Charit Manas' of Tulsidas, yet Padmavat or any other Premakhyan is not the original pioneer in this field. Siddha-sants Saraha and Kanhapa, and great poets like Swayambhoo and Pushpadanta had already written their 'charit-kavya' and 'Ramayanas' in the same style. The Sufi epic-writers have faithfully followed the tradition in as much as the Khand structure, the meter-grouping and variation (Chaupai and Dohas) follow the style in vogue since Mahabharata, written ages ago.

Sufism was born in Arabia, but the mutation it went through after the conquest of Persia owes itself to Bharatiya Darshan, directly or indirectly through

the Iranians. 'Aham Brahmasmi' of Advait philosophy translates itself into 'Anal-Haq' which defied the gallows and other tortures of the Arabian or Turkish invader, who regarded these sufi-saints as infidels. Similarly the transcendental life, rebirth, renunciation, devotion to angles farishtas (polytheism) are some of the traits of all schools of Sufis. Their principles of 'Fana' and 'Baqa' are only allotropic modifications of Baudh 'Nirvana, or 'Param Shanti'. History confirms that Sufi saint Bayazid learnt the process of 'Fana' from Abu Ali in Sindh. Abu Ali also knew and practised 'Pranayam' of the Hindus and called it 'Pass-e-Anfas'. His 'Habse-Dam' rituals are also variations of Pranayam. The 'Sulhe-kul' concept of the Sufis is derived from the 'Mahasukh-Vaad' of Bauddha Mahayan sect and the 'Kundalini Shakti' of the Nath Yogis is adopted as 'Latayafi Sitta'. Even Al-Biruni has mentioned the close relationship between the allegorical picture of 'Swarga' by the 'Sankhya' Darshan and the Sufi concept of Heaven (Al-Biruni's "India", translation Sachau p. 74).

The Upanishad philosophy has its dominating influence on the 'Ruhani Ilm' of Al-Gazali and the Hindu 'Avtar-vad' reflects itself in the 'Tanazzul' concept of several Sufi sects. Even the Sufi mystic terminology often appears to be a verbatim translation of the Hindu darshans. For example, 'Mutalaq' is 'Param (Nirakar) Satta'; 'Haquiqat-al-Haquayat' is 'Satyasya Satyam'. The Sufis of India were so much influenced that they could see the divine vision even in the 'Butt' (a corruption of 'Buddha', now signifying any idol). Thus the later Sufis (both Iranian and Indian) bear the indelible stamp of Bharatiya Darshan.

Hinduism has always been liberal

open-minded, tolerant, harmonising and synthesising differences through 'Shastrartha' (discussion and interpretation of Shastras). Sufism in its inception was inspired by the monotheism of Islam and it tried as far as possible to follow the Koran and Hadis. But gradually it assimilated the Christian, Jew, neo-Platonic, Bauddha, Parsi and Hindu concepts and in course of time it learnt the process of harmonisation.

The Muslim Establishment—the Sultan, the Kazi, the Mullah—accepted this role of the Sufis because they found that what their swords and Fatwas could not achieve, was better attained through the magic mass-attraction of the Sufi-saints. Fact is that the spread of Islam in India was achieved more through the simple, clean and humanistic living of Sufi 'saints' and 'Pirs' than through the violence and vexations of Balbans, Khiljis or Aurangzebs. Backward classes, depressed and oppressed, were particularly drawn to Islam through the sweet intermediacy of Sufis.

The adoption of some of the popular Hindu religious rites and activities by these sufi-sects helped the transition a lot. One very effective way was the 'Premakhyan'—the nightly recital of Sufi Love stories on the pattern of Ram Katha, Aalha, Bhagwat Katha and Garud Puran.

The congregation namaz of the Muslims is a serious affair. There is no scope for music or celebration about it. But the Hindu social life has been, since times immemorial, festive rejoicing, conferences, samiti-meetings shastrarthas (seminars and colloquium) etc alongwith hard labour and cooperative agricultural and construction drives. Vishal Yajnas like Rajsuya and Ashvamedha, mass Kathas

at holy places like Nimisharanya; pilgrimages, Kumbh and other melas; religious and seasonal festivals—all these are characteristic of Hindu Life. Buddhism and Jainism popularised 'Sangha' and 'Shravan-Vihar' collective life of simplicity and austerity. Shankaracharya re-established the observance of sixteen samskaras in the bastis and mohallas, mass-worship, Sankirtans (e.g. Bhaj Govindam!) and Tantriks had their 'Ratri-Jagran'. Because of the terrible onslaught of Islam all these religious public functions and activities were curbed and their spirits were cowed down altogether. The sufi-saints brought the masses to life again through story-recitals and dramatisations at their Durgahs and 'Khanqahs', the celebrations of Urs, the flower-festivals, Qawwali competitions and mushairas. The natural congregational thirst of the masses was satisfied and gradually these functions assumed the form of big Melas. Sufi-poetry, particularly the Premakhyans secured a devout, disciplined and aesthetic audience through these meetings.

Liberal meeting, lodging and board arrangements attracted to these Khanqahs rural Hindus, resulting in their being declared outcasts by the orthodox. That led to mass-conversion of whole villages and regions.

In the Hindu-epics the entire Brahmand (universe) forms the background—the three Lokas, fourteen Bhuvans, seven oceans, seven continents, seven forests, seven skies and seven rivers. In the Sufi Akhyanas, e.g. Padmawat by Jayasi—we have the traditional view of the universe. The seven islands are: Sinhal, Jambu, Diya, Saran, Kush, Madhu and Lanka. Bharat is described as

'Hem, Set, Gaud, Gajna'—in which Hem stands for Himalaya, Set for the ocean, Gaud is Bengal, and Gajna is Ghazni i.e. Afghanistan. These seem to be the natural frontiers of India.

The mountains described are Himalaya, Kailash, Vindhyachal, Malaygiri, Sumeru. The rivers are Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati, Mahanadi, Kaveri, Godavari. Among forests we have Dandakaranya, Kadarivan, Madhuvan, Vrindavan, Mahavan, Sundarvan, Kishkindha.

The description of the Ganga (and also of Yamuna) is superb and variegated in all its moods in different seasons. There is a reference sometimes to its 'Nirmal Neer', sometimes to the raging floods, sometimes to the sea-like expanse with hundreds of boats floating on it. Rivers are used as trenches to protect the forts, as also for irrigation, navigation and gold-hunting.

All this environment is typically Bharatiya. Whereas many Urdu poets have Arabic and Persian imagery in their descriptions of the land, the Sufis' First Love is the beautiful land, where they are born and bred.

Sarovars, ponds and artificial lakes were used by Indian Kings and Seths for irrigation, for beautifying their palaces, and for storing drinking-water for the general public and pilgrims. The Sufi poets have described their expanse, their picturesque ghats, the palaces on the banks, the balconies, the swimming pools, the rostrums used for worship. They have described the lotus flowers waving on the ripples, morning rays cheering the devout people offering "anjuli" to the sun-god or to Ganga Maiya. They have described the

games played by the damsels in the palace-tanks.

The Gardens abound in sandal trees, mango-groves, bamboo wood-land, vinery. The fruits are almond, apple, pomegranate, mangoes, Jamun, mulberry, orange, plums, cherries of many kinds, coconut, palm, Mahua, Kathal, Barhal etc. etc. The flowers are lotus, jasmine, Bela, Champa, Rajnigandha, Kewra, Nag Keshkar, Shefali, Malti, Maul-Shri, Har-Singar. Of course the lotus is the dearest to the heart of all the gods and devotees and the fairest of the fair ladies. The rose which came from Central Asia, is quite conspicuous by its absence in Sufi poetry.

It is very rare to come across the sad notes of Bulbul (nightingale). The Urdu poets often mention it in their ghazals. The Sufi-poetry does not mention Eagle, Kite, hawk or Human, which mark the landscape in Arabia, Iran and Turkey, but in general keep away from the vast irrigated plains of India. On the other hand, we have the parrot, the chatak, the papecha, the goose, the swan, the ducks, the chakore, the neelkantha, the tectar, crane-couple, the stork, the cock and hen and the most beloved and admired, the peacock. In Sufi poetry India's parrot (Heraman, a mountain variety) and swan (white and big, the Raj Hans) play almost human roles.

The wild forests abound in lions, tigers, leopards, panthers and elephants. Here and there are wolves, jackals, bears, deer, stag and Sambhar. The pets are cows, dogs, cats, monkeys, goats and sheep. The camel is rarely described—never in a caravan. The big epic "Padmavat only speaks once about a "bridled beast of burden". The elephant,

the horse, the mule and the donkeys are there. Aquatic life is described in such detail that it appears as if many Sufi poets had blood-relations amongst Kahars and fishermen.

There are some very typical Bharatiya descriptions. The Tota-Maina are like mendicants, foretelling the future, and revealing secrets unknown to human beings. The crow is not a mere scavenger; he is a messenger, a foreteller of some welcome arrival. The Chatak wails for the cloud in Swati-Nakshatra and prefers to cry and die of thirst, rather than drink any water other than rain-drops. The chakore fixes its doting gaze on the Moon, and even swallows fire. The crane can live only in couples; it dies, if the mate is killed by accident, illness or hunter's arrow. The Veer-bahuti is a blood-red insect infesting the green pastures, dotting them beautifully. The Bhambhira is a buzzing insect, which has the power to transform any insect whatsoever into its own breed, through its constant buzzing. The moth is described as 'Deep-Patang' and not as 'Parwana', who burns itself in the flame of 'Shamma' (candle) unlike Persian and Urdu poetry.

The seasons are Indian in sum and substance in the typical Hindu Ritu-chakra of six. The tradition followed dates from Valmiki via Kalidasa to Jayadev and Vidyapati. The Barahmasa describes the twelve months of the Hindu Samvatsar.

Of course, the revival of Sufism, the recital the 'Premakhyanas', the dramatisation and filmisation of these stories of the Bharatiya hearth and household can help in 'National Integration'. But the movement should not smack of official patronage, appeasement, party-interest and vote-bank-building.