Chapter IV

Social Life
(Sufis and Non-Muslims)
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SOCIAL LIFE (SUFI S AND NON-MUSLIMS)

Muslim saints, popularly known as Sufis and mashaikh, also zealously worked to promote harmony amongst the followers of various communities particularly Hindus and Muslims. Practically they believed in the Hadith of the Prophet of Islam:

"Whole mankind is the family of God".¹

_Al-khalq Ayalullah;

And followed his another famous saying:

"O’ Servants of God, become brothers amongst yourselves".²

This is why they did not keep themselves aloof from the main stream of the society. They looked upon social service as the supreme object of all their exercises. They considered a life of solitary, self-sufficient contemplation to be incompatible with the highest mystic ideals. They used to say if a man became egocentric, limited his sympathies and cut himself off completely from the energizing currents of social life, he failed to fulfill the mission of Islamic spirituality _Tasawwuf_ or _Sufism_. Almost all the sufi teachers always advised their disciples to live in society and bear the blows and buffets of the people.³

According to them, “Nothing would bring greater reward on the ‘Day of Judgement’ than bringing happiness to the hearts of men” and this could be done by attending to the problems of the misery-stricken people, assuaging their wounds, pulling up their hearts and by infusing new life and confidence in their broken nerves. These Muslim saints believed in pacific and non-violent
approach towards all problems of human society. Force, they said, created more problems than it solved, and it set in motion a vicious circle of wrong and retribution which disturbed the very basis of human relationship. They attracted the devotion of as many Hindus as of the Muslims. It may, therefore, be said that Sufis gave new dimensions to the life and thought of the people and an impetus to the process of harmonizing the multi-racial and multi-lingual society of our great country. Both contemporary and later sources as well as modern works provide lot of information in regard to their contribution in the field of social integration and communal harmony. Accordingly, it is highly appropriate to understand the role of sufi saints in bringing the followers of different religions near and closer to each other.

Before shading light on the contribution of the Sufis of sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in this regard, it seems appropriate to say some thing about the role of the early Sufis of the medieval period. As we knows the actual development of Sufism began after the different sufi silsilahs, Muslim mystical orders, were introduced in the Sub-Continent. It was Shaikh Muinuddin Chishti of Ajmer, (the Khwaja of Ajmer), who first of all founded his spiritual order, the Chishtiyah Silsilah, or the Chishti Sufi Order, in the country. Having shifted to India at the end of the twelfth century, he took his abode in Ajmer which was not merely the seat of Chauhan power but a religious centre also where thousands of pilgrims assembled from far and near. He nevertheless, started his spiritual activities there. His determination to workout the principles of Islamic mysticism at a place of such political and religious significance show great self-confidence. “His stay in Ajmer”, says the famous historian K.A. Nizami, “Must have been a serious trial for the principles of the Chishti silsilah”. Mir Khurd, the famous sufi writer and compiler of the Siyar-ul
Auliya, has mentioned him as the ‘Naib-i Rasul Allah fil Hind’ the ‘Deputy of the Prophet of God’ in India.⁶

Abul Fazl, the famous historian of the medieval period, says that groups of people benefited from his inspiring personality.⁷ Living in a small hut and having few pieces of bread, he led a very simple but attractive life. People, belonging to all sections of the society, flocked to him in large numbers. Whosoever meet the Khwaja, repented from sins committed in the past and made a promise not to do so in future. Some of his sayings supply the quintessence of his religious and social ideology and reveal him as a man of wide sympathies, catholic views and deep humanism. Explaining his views about the Universe, Shaikh Muinuddin once said:

\[ Chun ma az post bairun amdaim wa nigah kardaim, ashiq qa mashuq wa ishq yaki didaim, ya’ni dar alam-i Tawhid hama yakist. \]

[When we transcended the externals and looked around, we found the lover, the beloved and the love (itself) to be one, i.e. in the sphere of Oneness all is one].⁸

K.A. Nizami is of the opinion that this approach brought him very close to the treasures of ancient Hindu religious thought particularly the Upanishads, and created an atmosphere favourable for the exchange of ideas at a higher level.⁹ He used to say that a sufi should always create in himself first ‘river like generosity’, secondly ‘sun like affection’ and thirdly ‘earth like hospitality’:

\[ Awwal sakhawati chun sakhawat-i darya, dom shafqati chun shafqat-i aftab, siyum tawazai chun tawaza-i zamin \]^\(^{10} \).

When on one occasion he was asked about the highest form of devotion, he replied that it was:
Darmandgan ra faryad rasidan, wa hajat-i bichargan rawa kardan, wa gurusngan ra sair gardanidan.

[To redress the misery of those in distress, to fulfill the needs of the helpless and to feed the hungry.]^{11}

To Shaikh Muinuddin Chishti the religion is not merely raised above rituals and ecclesiastical formalities but service of humanity is its raison d'etre^{12}. He never asked his visitor about his caste and creed. His mystic morality saved human sympathy from running into narrow grooves and struck at the very root of parochialism, casteism and religious exclusiveness. Whatever information is available of him in original sources, depicts him as a great exponent of human values. He was of the views that social reforms are not possible without reforming common people; if people are just, the whole society, even their rulers would also be just. The saint always avoided the company of rulers and ruling class. His simplicity and sweetness greatly influenced the Indian masses. This tradition was followed by his descendants and the Sufis of other silsilah's also.^{13}

When the Mughal Empire was founded in India in 1526 A.D. by Emperor Babur, Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gangohi, Syed Mohammed Ghauth of Gwalior, and Shaikh Amanullah Panipati, belonging to the Chishti, Shattari and Qadiri orders respectively, were the most renowned figures in sufi domain. They played significant role in promoting communal harmony through their interpretations of the theory of the 'Unity of Being'. Shaikh Abdul Quddu's Khanqah was a famous centre of communal harmony and human brotherhood. He was great scholar of rational and traditional sciences. However, his absorbing interest, as mentioned above, was in the philosophy of Tawhid-i
Wujudi since his very youth. According to Simon Digby, “Throughout his life he remained vigorous advocate of the doctrine of Wahdat-ul Wujud”.  

Simon Digby says that Abdul Quddus drew upon Yogic tradition in his own practice of techniques for attainment of ecstasy; and his explanations of these techniques given to his disciples are conceived partly in terms of Yogic physiological concepts. Digby further says that his (the saint’s) interpretations of Nathpanthi Yogic traditions are also of interest. Shaikh Abdul Quddus also composed poetical verses in Hindi with the pen name (takhallus) of Alakh Das. Many of his verses show a fondness for the love poetry of the North Indian countryside. It is said that the knowledge of the Shaikh was not limited to understanding and practicing pranayama or pas-i anfas. There are several references to Gorakh Nath, ‘Shri Gorakh’, ‘Nath’ and ‘O! Nath’ in the collection of his verses Rushd Nama. In one of his verses the Shaikh identifies Niranjan with Khuda and calls him the creator of the different worlds. Similarly he also attaches great importance to Onkar and expects Sufis to absorb themselves in Onkar through Zikr.

The Shaikh’s Rushd-Nama, which consists of his own verses and some of his pirs identify Sufi beliefs based on the Wahdat al-Wujud with the philosophy and practices of Gorakhnath. In fact some verses with slight variations are included in Nath poetry as well as in that of Kabir and Gorakhnath, such verses were regarded as the common property of both Muslim and Hindu mystics of the many verses in the Rushd Nama there are six references to either ‘Gorakhnath’, ‘Shree Gorath’, ‘Nath’ and ‘O! Nath’. As in many Nath texts, these words at five different places throughout the work imply ultimate reality and Absolute truth, while in the six place, the word refers
to the perfect Siddha or perfect man. The term sabad used by Shaikh Abdul Quddus identifies mystic contemplation with Shakti as well as Shiva and their union as the course of the existence of the three worlds. In other words the union of Shakti, the Sun, and Shiva, the Moon, according to the Shaikh, is the Salat-i makus of the Sufis. The Yogi equivalent is the ultisadhna (Regressive process) involving the complete reversal of Human behaviour, from respiratory behaviour (Replaced by Pranayama) to sexual behaviour (annulled by the technique of the return of semen). In a Persian verse Shaikh Abdul Quddus says:

'Unless the brain comes down to the foot
None can reach the doors of God'.

The nath describes the supreme creator as Alakhnath (the Incomprehensible or unseable one) or as Niranjana. Shaikh Abdul Quddus also uses the name Alakh Niranjan in the same sense. He says that his Lord is unseable (Alakh Niranjan) but those who are able to comprehend him are lost to themselves. In another verse the Shaikh identifies Niranjan with Khuda and calls him the creator of the different worlds.

Like the naths, Shaikh Abdul Quddus attaches great Importance to onkar, to the naths the word represents para-Brahma (transcendent brahm or the undefinable absolute). The physical culture of the naths is designed to make the body incorruptible and purified, onkar is the basis of pranayama. In the initial stages, breath is drawn up through the left nostril, the ira, while the sacred Hindu syllable 'om' is repeated slowly sixteen times. The breath is then suspended in the upper part of the nose where the breath nostrils meet. The junction of the nostrils in called the Sukhmana just as the breath has been drawn up by the left nostril, so it is forced down through the right nostril to
pingala, while the syllable is again repeated sixteen times. The highest degree of perfection is extremely difficult to achieve, but Shaikh Abdul Quddus expects Sufis to absorb themselves in Onkar through Zikr. To him onkar is the Absolute oneness, is interchangeable with Niranjana and indicates the state of Sunyata (void).^2^6^7^8^9^

Shaikh Abdul Quddus also explains the concept of ‘Sahaja’ according to Nath traditions. He emphasizes it in the sense of the union between Shakti and Shiva. However, the realization of Sahaja, says the Shaikh, lead to the achieving of ontological immortality or the Sufi Baqa. A state of perfect equilibrium, it transcends perceptual knowledge with positive and negative experience. The nath in such a state is simultaneously both the meditator and the meditation and the divinity meditated upon. The Sunya or Sahaja of the Shaikh is also identical with the Sunya and the Sahaja of the Naths.

The author of this remarkable nath Hindi poetry. Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gangohi, used Alakh as his Hindi nom de plume. The Shaikh was initiated into the Chishti Sabiri order of Shaikh Ahmad Abdul Haqq who, like his father, wrote Hindi verses, some of which were incorporated by Shaikh Abdul Quddus into the Rushd-Nama Shaikh Arif’s successor was Shaikh Muhammad who was the same age as Shaikh Abdul Quddus. In order to have a living pir as a guide, the latter obtained initiation from Shaikh Muhammad and also claimed to have directly obtained inspiration from the spirit of Shaikh Ahmad Abdul Haqq.

Shaikh Ruknuddin (d. 1575-76), the son of Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gangohi, claimed that God had sent prophets to India who had preached Tawhid (divine unity) and ethical principles in the indigenous languages. However, he believed that the devilish nature of later Hindus had prompted
them to write books which, while they incorporated the teachings of the true prophets, were interpolated with ideas legitimizing idol worship and infidelity.  

It was in the fifteenth century that the Qadiriya silsilah, 'the Qadiri order', reached India and on account of the universal popularity of its founder Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani of Baghdad, its saints soon received respectable attention from Muslims and other people, and attracted thousands and thousands of them to their spiritual disciple. At the same century, another spiritual order, the Shattariya silsilah, 'the Shattari order', also got introduced itself in the Indian Sub Continent. Its followers (Shattari Sufis) exerted considerable influence on the contemporary society during the early years of the Mughal Empire. Both common people and ruling class felt attracted to them. Syed Mohammad Ghauth of Gwalior was the most leading personality amongst them. Humayun had deep faith in him. The saint had undergone rigorous spiritual practices. He had spent twelve years on the lower slopes of the Chunar hills, near Mirzapur in the eastern part of the modern Uttar Pradesh, practicing the most severe austerities and subsisting on the leaves of trees. He was a prolific writer as well and produced the famous works, Jawahar-i Khamsa and Bahr-ul Hayat. The latter work discusses the impact of Hindu ideas on Muslim mysticism. Ghauth Gwaliori’s knowledge of Hindu mystic thought was deep and intimate. His approach was sympathetic and unprejudiced. He had cordial relations with Hindus. He would stand up to welcome every Hindu visitor. His hobby was keeping bulls and cows.

Among the saints of the Qadiriya Silsilah in the sixteenth century Shaikh Amanullah Panipati, commonly called Shaikh Aman Panipati, held significant position. His mystic ideas and the interpretation of Ibn 'Arabi's
thought brought a number of Hindus close to him. The saint's interpretations of the concept of *Wahdat-ul Wujud* undoubtedly attracted several Hindu saints and created the environment promoting the communal harmony.

It is also said that there is something common with Chaitanya and his followers and Sufis such as Nur Qutb-i Alam and his Khalifas. The deep impact made by Chaitanya was felt on a more popular level, for example in the Baul movement.

The Bauls were a popular group of Muslim and Hindu singers in Bengal who used mainly songs in the tradition of Chaitanya. The Muslim Bauls followed Sufi traditions while the Hindu Bauls were Vaishnavites. The movement began in Nadia from where it spread to all parts of Bengal. Among the beliefs of the Hindu Bauls was that Bhirbhadra, a son of Nityananda (1473-1544) was their first Guru and received the Baul faith from a Muslim woman called Madhava Bibi. But the beginning of the movement are as shrouded in mystery as is the origin of the word Baul. The Sanskrit words *Vatula* (affected by wind disease, that is crazy) and *Vyakula* (Impatiently eager) are suggested as possible roots of the word. A Hindi variation, *Baur* (Also meaning crazy) has been suggested, as a closer Hindi equivalent Baula, with the same translation. All these words are compatible both with the poetry of the Bauls and their philosophy of life. They borrowed ideas from the Vaishnava Sahajiyas who preferred to achieve the state of *Sahaja* (the ultimate nature of the self) not through yogic practices but by a process of the divinization of human love, as represented in the Radha/Krishna union.

The popularity of vaishnavite themes used in Sufi sama rituals of Hindi speaking regions is a most remarkable development. The Sufis regarded them
as welcome additions of their devotional poetry to induce ecstasy. In 1566, Mir Abdul wahid Bilgarami compiled a Persian dictionary of Hindi songs which had been well known to Sufis giving prominence to those known by Vaishnavites. The work is entitled the Haqaiq-i Hindi and is divided into three sections. The first section gives a mystic explanation of Hindi words used in Dhurpad songs. The second section allegorically explains the words used in Vaishnavite songs in Braj Bhasha, the dialects of the Mathura region. The Mir justifies the popularity of the names of Kafirs used in Sufi Sama on the grounds that the Quran itself uses the names of both Kafirs and enemies. The third section gives the Sufi explanation of the words used in Hindi Sufi poetry. Nabhaji, the author of the Bhagat Mal, the celebrated biographical dictionary of the Saints written at the end of the sixteenth century.

Malik Muhammad Jaisi was also known as Muhaqqiq-i Hind (Researcher of Indian truth), born in 1494-5, he began to write good poetry at thirty, ‘padmavati’, begun in 1520-21, was a preliminary literary exercise by its author, who finally took it up seriously in the reign of Sher Shah completing in 1540, Jaisi also wrote the Akhiri-Kalam in Babar’s reign and another work the Akhravat apparently before the padmavati. His other works in Hindi are the Kanhavat the Kahra-name, Pusti-Name and Holi-Name and other Sorathas, which are still unfounded. A Hindi Masnavi entitled Chitra Rekha which is not mentioned in the Maarij-ul Wilayat has been published. In his Maarij-ul Wilayat, Qasuri reproduces a number of Soratha from the Akhravat and explains them on the basis of the Wahdat-al Wujud. An unending war against obstinate orthodoxy and meaningless ritualism was waged by the Hindu Bhaktas or Saints of the fifteenth and sixteenth century in the Hindi and Panjabi speaking regions of northern India. They were hostile to all idolatrous
practices and caste distinctions and with equal vehemence ridiculed Muslim forms of worship, Bhaktas came from all classes of Hindu society, but their devotionalism was not concerned with any particular God or one of his incarnations.

Sufis considered Kabir to be a Muwahhid (follower of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*), once Shaikh Ruzqullah Mushtaqi, asked his father, Shaikh Sadullah, a contemporary of Kabir, whether the celebrated Kabir, whose *Bishupads* were on everyone’s lips, was a Muslim or a Kafir, the reply was that he was a muwahhid the Shaikh then asked whether a muwahhid differed from both, Shaikh Sadullah replied that the truth was difficult to understand and such knowledge could only be acquired gradually.\(^{35}\)

Abul-Fazl refers to two different tombs of Kabir one at Puri in Orissa and the other at Ratanpur in Awadh. Although Guru Nanak was a monotheist, it was not the unity of God which the orthodox muslims believed to be his main interest but the unity of Being or the *Wahdat al wujud* represented as *Dvaitadvaita-Vilak Shanavada* by the nath sages. Based on *om* the absolute of Nanak’s teachings in ek-omkar (The one indivisible absolute Being) or the absolute Reality, the absolute is beyond the time process, is unincarnated and named par-Brahm (transcendent). The *Japji* the opening chapter of the *Adi Granth* which all Sikhs are required to repeat in the morning.

The most famous Qadiri saint of the seventeenth century was Miyan Mir of Lahore. He flourished during the times of Jahangir and Shahjahan. Both these Emperors held him in high esteem and are reported to have visited the saint’s *Khanqah* on different occasions. Shahjahan’s eldest son Dara Shukoh was his devout follower and had joined the discipline of the saint’s famous
Khalifa Mulla Shah Badakhshi Kashmiri. Dara wrote Miyan Mir's biography entitled *Sakinat-ul Auliya* in Persian. Miya Mir's *Khanqah* was a centre of Hindu-Muslim joint gatherings. People of both the communities obtained his spiritual blessings. The Sikh sources reveal Miyan Mir as a great admirer of their path and panth. The saint is also mentioned to have laid the foundation stone of the Harminder Saheb in the *Golden Temple* at Amritsar. Mulla Shah, who succeeded Miyan Mir as his chief *khalifa*, was a liberal sufi thinker. He believed in the fundamental uniformity of all religious beliefs. He would pay respect to both mosque and temple.

Dara Shikoh, though not a practicing sufi, had great faith in spiritual path. He had friendly relations with many contemporary saints. He had gone to very deep in studying Hindu and Islamic mysticism. His works on the subject undoubtedly reveal his deep religious as well as scholarly insight. His most significant work, the *Majma-ul Bahrain* (Meeting of Two Oceans), played significant role in Hindu-Muslim unity in the country. He also translated *Upanishads* into Persian. Dara urged on identity of Sufi and vedantic philosophy, and propounded, "Life lies concealed in every idol and, Faith lies hidden beneath Infidelity". He asserted the *Rigveda*, the *Yajurveda*, the *Samaveda* and the *Atharveda* were the Divinely revealed Books. He believed they had been revealed to the ancient Indian prophets, the greatest of whom was Brahma or Adam.

A contemporary of Dara Shikoh was the sufi known as Sarmad. He occupies significant place among the spiritual personalities of the seventeenth century. He took spoke in the same strain when he said that there is no difference between a mosque and a temple. According to him, "It is He (God)
and he alone who takes the form of the ‘blackstone’ of Kaba in one place and becomes the idols of the Hindus in the other”.

At the same time when Dara Shikoh was engaged in writing his works on mysticism, another sufi of prominence, Shah Muhibullah Ilahabadi, emerged as renowned exponent of communal harmony. Hindus frequently obtained his spiritual blessings. He holds a unique place among the distinguished sufi intellectuals of the seventeenth century. He deserves special mention in advocating a tolerant attitude; divide of prejudice and discrimination against Hindus. He permitted his disciples to teach suluk (the sufi path) to the Hindus and draw parallels from the ashloks of their scriptures to explain the sufi ideology. According to Shah Muhibullah the mission of the Prophet of Islam was an elaboration of epithet or “mercy unto all human beings” and it signified the shedding of all discrimination based on religion. He said the Quran intended to embrace the entire human race within the ambit of its application and the Muslims and non-Muslims were equal partners in the domain of God. He was of the strong opinion that in matters of state policies, programmes and opportunities any discrimination of the one being a Muslim or a non-Muslim is of no consequence since it would nullify the very purpose of the Prophetic Mission of the Prophet of Islam.

During his early studies, Dara could not have ignored the various Persian translations of Sanskrit works in Akbar’s Maktab-Khana (translation bureau) and other Sanskrit works translated during Jahangir’s reign, quite possibly aroused his interest in Hindu philosophy and mysticism. Moreover there were a number of Sanskrit scholars at Shahjahans court whom the Emperor had liberally rewarded and to whom he gave ostentatious Sanskrit
titles. Banwali Das Wali, one of Dara’s secretaries had been instructed in Sufism by Mulla Shah and was a historian, translator and poet. Another of Dara’s Secretaries, Rai Chandrabhan Brahman, can only be described as a genius, Jagannath Misra and Kavindracharya Sarasvati of Banaras, both eminent Sanskritists, were also attached to Dara Shukoh entourage. During the prince’s Qandahar campaign in 1653 tantrists (such as Indra Gire), yogis and their disciples, and Muslim Holy men were ordered by Dara Shukoh to use their magical powers against the enemy. An account of their role in the siege, documented in a diary by Rashid Khan Badi al-Zaman, reads like a melodrama. However, one must remember that in those days both the devil and angels were traditionally invoked to achieve worldly success, even the orthodox Aurangzeb was known to have called on the power of talismans during the Satnami Rebellion.

Dara Shukoh described Baba Lal as a Mundiya (Shaven-headed monk) and a follower of Kabirs school. According to Wilson’s research, Baba Lal was born in Jahangir’s reign in Malwa in Rajasthan and later became the disciple of Chetan Swami, a Vaishanavite Bhakta, Baba Lal held conversations with Dara Shukoh on seven different occasions, during which he spoke in the Hindi dialect then used by Sadhus (holy men) in northern India. Dara Shukoh may have picked this up from Sufi poetry in Hindi communication may also have been assisted by Rai Chandrabhan Brahman and Qanungo is quite wrong in his assumption of very simple questions and answers which were later published in a number of different versions. Some questions on Hindu mythology and mysticism were omitted in early versions and later included in Chandrabhan’s unabridged version of the Nadir-un Nikat.
Dara Shukoh's questions on Hindi mythology and philosophy and Baba Lal's replies are now available in only a few copies of the *Mukalama* and *Nadir-un Nikat*. Baba Lal believed that idol worship in Hinduism was designed to help the concentration of the devotee and that it was essential for those who were devoid of inner control. However, the Baba believed it was unnecessary for true spiritualists and he used the analogy of little girls who played with dolls and then abandoned the game when they had children of their own. The belief that those who died in Kashi attained salvation was not a queer idea. Baba Lal said, for Kashi symbolized *Wujud* (Being) and extinction in *Wujud* was a means to Salvation.\(^52\)

Dara Shukoh states that he embarked on a quest for the mystic truth of the Hindu Muwahhids (followers of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*) after discovering the subtle secrets of Sufism. His discussion with Hindu saints had convinced him that, with the exception of verbal differences, the understanding of reality in the two systems was identical. A detailed comparison had been his aim in the *Majma-ul Bahrain* as well as the recording of some facts about mystics whose knowledge was indispensable for all the seekers after the truth. Dara Shukoh implied that an appreciation of the subtleties of *Tasawwuf* in both Islamic Sufism and Hindu mysticism was the exclusive domain of the elite of both religions. He claimed his conclusions had emerged from his own intuition and illumination. To silence reproaches from his Muslim enemies, he concluded his introduction with a painted quote from the celebrated Naqshbandiyya saint, Khwaja Ubaidullah Abrar. If I know that an infidel, immersed in sin, is singing the note of *Tawhid*, I go to him, hear him, and am grateful to him.\(^53\)
Dara identified *Ishq* (love) with Maya, a Hindi word meaning ‘fascination’, and not with the metaphysical Sanskrit term meaning ‘illusion’. The love of Ruh-i Azam maintained Dara Shukoh, prompted it to create *jivatman* (the great soul), which is identical with the *Haqiqat-i Muhammadi* (the reality of Muhammad). In the terminology of the Hindu Muwahhids, according to Dara Shukoh, the latter is called *Hiranya-garbha* or *Avasthatman*, then came into existence the element (unsure) of wind which Dara Shukoh equated with the *Nafas-Rahman* (breath of Divine compassion). This wind was within the being and when it was breathed into *Adam*, it came out hot, and fire came out of this air, but the same breath was endowed with the qualities of mercy and unity, and it became cold and in this way water was created from fire, sound, according to Dara Shukoh, also emanated from the same breath of the Divine compassion, which pronounced the word *Kun* (Be) at the time of the creation of the universe.

Dara then discussed the Sufi concept of spheres, adding that some Sufis considered there were four spheres. *Alam-i Nasut* (sphere of humanity), *Alam-i malakut* (the invisible angelic sphere), *Alam-i Jabarut* (celestical world of Divine Names), and *Alam-i lahut* (sphere of the Godhead), others. However, distinguished the *Alam-i misal* (world of analogies) from the *Alam-i Malakut* and therefore counted five. The Sanskrit equivalents to the four spheres of Sufis were *jagrat* (nasut), *Svapna* (malakut), *Susupti* (Jabarut) and *Turiya* (Lahut). Dara Shukoh explained Jagrat as the world of manifestation and wakefulness, Svapna as the world of souls and dreams, and susupti as the world in which all distinctions of ‘I’ and ‘thou’ were stripped away.
Dara Shukoh believed the fourth Hindu sphere *Turiya* (Lahat) was identical with being and encircled and comprehended all the other three worlds. The spiritual journey of humans from the nasut to the Malakut, from the Malakut to the jabarut and from the Jabarut to lahat, represented an ascent, likewise the Reality of Realities (which Hindus identified with Avasan, the absolute) descended from the lahat to the Jabarut, from the jabarut to the Malakut and from the Malakut to Nasut, to adherents of the *Wahdat-al Wujud*, the ascent of man and the descent of the absolute were a perpetual phenomenon which applied also to Hindu mystic who followed the unity of Being.57

Dara-Shukoh identified the *Triguna* (the three guna or attributes in Hindu philosophy), *Sattva, Rajas* and *Tamas*58, with the beauty and majesty of God, to him, Sattva was creation, Rajas was duration and tamas was destruction. Dara Shukoh identified Brahma with jibrail, Vishnu with Mikail and Mahesvara (Siva) with Israfil59. All of Dara Shukoh’s explanations were given within the framework of Ibn Arabis theory that the universe was simultaneously the manifestation and creation of God.

Dara Shukoh, the Sanskrit equivalents of the Absolute, the ultimate principle and the hidden and Necessary Being were Asanga, Nirguna, Nirankar, Niranjana, Sattva, Chit, etc. Dara Shukoh identified Allah with the Sanskrit *om* Huwa (He) with Sah, *Firishta* (Angels) with divata and the *Mazhar-i Atam* (Perfect manifestation) with Avatara. Through Avatara according to Dara Shukoh, *Qudra* (creative power of God) was manifested in such a way as would not have been manifested otherwise.60

Although Dara Shukoh made a point of asserting that the *Rigveda*, the *Yajurveda*, the *Samaveda* and the *Atharvaveda* were the Divinely revealed
Books. He believed they had been revealed to the Ancient Indian prophets, the greatest of whom was Brahma or Adam. The mystical secrets, devotional exercises and Tawhid described in the *Vedas* were contained in the upnikhats (*Upanishads*). In Ancient times philosophers separated the Upanishads into different parts and wrote commentaries on them, and according to Dara, the study of the Upanishads had always been regarded as the highest form of worship.

The seventeenth century also witnessed another sufi whose affiliation was with the Qadiri order. He was Shaikh Mohammad who lived in Maharashtra. He preached sufi morals in the region through the medium of Marathi. He identified in his famous work *Dochashma* the common ground of philosophical concepts and ideas of Vedanta and Sufism. Maloji Bhosale had sanctioned, 'land-grant' to his *Khanqah*.  

The attitude of Shah Abdur Razzaq of Bansa to Krishna, Rama the Lakshmana was also interesting. In his time *Bairagis* or Hindu mendicants enjoyed considerable prestige because they fought for the Nawabs of Awadh. Renowned for their courage, the Bairagis were admired by Hindus and Muslims alike for the intensity of their spirituality. Shah Abdur Razzaq's relations with champat, the leader of a group of Bairagis from Awadh, were very cordial and involved a large degree of mutual respect. Champat invariably invited Shah Abdur Razzaq to theatrical performances featuring popular stories about Krishna and the *gopis* (cow girls). Local Hindu and Muslim ascetic and Zamindars were also often invited to such entertainments so moved was the Shah that verses of Kabir always threw him into a state of ecstasy.
Shah Kalimullah Chishti of Delhi, who emerged at the end of the 17th century also was very liberal towards Hindus. He made efforts towards deepening the relations between Hindus and Muslims and never hesitated in imparting spiritual training to Hindus. In one of his epistles (maktubat) he writes:

*Sulh ba Hindu wa Musalman sazand wa har ki azin do firqa ki i'tiqad ba shuma dashta bashand, zikr-o fikr, maraqaba wa ta'lim u bigoyand.*

[You should maintain peace and friendship between Hindus and Muslims, and whosoever from amongst them has faith in you, you should give him the training of Zikr, Fikr and Maraqaba; and impart spiritual knowledge to him].

Another important aspect of Shah Kalimullah’s system of spiritual training was that he sometimes imparted Hindu jogis method of recitation to some of his disciples. He writes in his Kashkol:

“There are eighty four baithaks (sittings), in Jog (Yoga), and each of them has special benefits”. In his youth he himself had followed a pattern of Yoga known as Anhad. He (further) writes; “This pattern (of Yoga) is very fruitful and common amongst Hindus and Muslims; it brings peace, satisfaction and onesidedness to heart and mind”.

It may, therefore, be concluded by saying that Muslim saints known as Sufis and Mashaikh, have played significant role in preaching love among the followers of different religions and communities in our great country during the medieval period. Their ideas and action always created communal harmony in India. Accordingly their contribution in this regard is of great value and it can not be over emphasized.
References


2. Ibid.

3. K.A. Nizami, *Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India During the 13th Century*, New Delhi, 1974, p. 236 (later quoted as ‘Some Aspects’).

4. Ibid., p. 239.

5. Ibid., p. 184.


11. Ibid.


13. Shaikh Hamiduddin Sufi Sawali of Nagaur, the follower (the Khalifa) of Shaikh Muinuddin Chishti of Ajmer, also played significant role in creating an environment of communal harmony. Called by his preceptor as the Sutan-ut Tarikin (the king of Recluses). Shaikh Hamiduddin lived the self sufficient life of an Indian peasant at Suwal, a village in Nagaur in Rajputana. Whatever he needed he himself produced, and his needs never exceeded a few maund of grain and a few yards of rough hand woven cloth. He lived in a small mud house and eked out his meager subsistence by cultivating a single Bigha of land. He cultivated half of his land in one season and the other half in the next. He dressed himself like a typical Indian peasant and used two sheets of cloth to cover the upper and the lower parts of his body. He kept a cow in his house and himself milched it. Throughout the life, he preferred poverty and never
accepted any grant or gift from any ruler or noble. People of all sections benefited from his spiritual greatness. *Tarikh-i Mashaikh-i Chisht*, Vol. I, p. 213. Like most of the villagers amongst whom he lived, Shaikh Hamiduddin Sufi was a strict vegetarian. His dislike for meat eating was so great that he warned his disciples against distributing meat preparations for blessing his soul after his death. He even did not like the slaughter of animals. The author of *Surur-us Sudur*, the biography and collection of the *malfuzat* of the saint, says: *Na khwastand ki az barai ishan wa ba sabab-i ishan jani bi jan shawad* [He did not like any living being to be deprived of its life for him or on account of him]. *Some Aspects*, p. 239.

According to K.A. Nizami, “It was his deep faith in *Ahimsa* which made him a strict vegetarian” (*Some Aspects*, p. 240). He exhorted his disciples again and again to develop vegetarian tastes. He carried on conversations in Hindawi, the then form of Hindi language, or according to some others the early form of Urdu. The saint was a man of affable temperament and wide sympathies which made him a popular figure among all inhabitants in Nagaur. His catholicity of views is best illustrated by the fact that he could discern and appreciate spiritual values in non-Muslims also. Shaikh Muinuddin Chishti’s another descendant, Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya emerged as the most popular spiritual personality of his time. For more than a century his *Khanqah* was a great centre of spirituality, brotherhood integration and harmony. People thronged to him in large number for spiritual gain. In the beginning of his spiritual career he established his Khanqah in Ghiyaspur in Delhi. The reigning monarch Sultan Alauddin Khaliji offered villages to him but he refused to accept them saying that he did not need his gift; Allah is enough for him and his servants. After some time he also established, attached to his khanqah, a free Kitchen *langar*, where thousands of people without any discrimination took their meal.
every day. But the saint himself took nothing from his langar. He observed fast every day and did not have any particle of food, except a small pinch of salt and a bowl of water, at the time of Sehr the dawn, during the month of Ramazan because he used to say many people might have gone to bed without eating anything. *(Siyar-ul Auliya, p. 128).* Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya was always kind and sympathetic to all human beings. He even did not feel any sort of harm, (rather he took it as very auspicious), in extending help and support to foes and opponents. He used to say, “If a man places thorns (in your way), and you do the same, it will be thorns every where”. He often recited these verses:

*Har ki ma ra yar na buwad, Izad u ra yar bad;*
*Wa anki ma ra ranja darad, rahatash bisyar bad;*
*Har ki u dar rah-i ma, khari nihad az dushmani;*
*Har guli kuz bagh-i umrash, bishiguftad, bi khar bad.*

[He who is not my friend, may God be his friend. And he who bears ill-will against me, may his joys increase. He who puts thorns in my way on account of enmity; May every flower that blossoms in the garden of his life; be without thorns.]* (Fawaid-ul Fuad, p. 125-6).

It was just because of these great human values that Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya had become the ruler of people’s hearts. They came to him for different purposes. Some of them asked him to pray for their daughter’s marriage, others sought his blessings for the removal of their poverty. In short different people brought different problems and the Shaikh listened to and prayed for all of them. Nobody was ever asked of his caste and creed. *(Tarikh-i Mashaikh-i Chisht, vol. I, p. 226).* The doors of his *Jama’at Khana* (the Khanqah), remained opened for every one from early morning to late night. *(Ziyauddin Barni, Tarikh-i Firozshahi, Calcutta, 1860, (Sir Syed edition), pl. 343).*

15. Ibid., pp. 34-35.
16. Ibid., p. 35.

17. Also known as Alakhbani the Rushd Nama has been critically edited and published by S.A.A. Rizvi and S. Zaidi in 1971 from Aligarh.


19. Sabad

Alakhbani ओझे सुन लोई। दुई दुई मत कही भाई कोई।
जल धल मेहल सरख निरन्तर। गोरखनाथ अकेला सोई।

Sabad

मरिही पंडित मरने मीठा। जो मरना श्री गोरख धीठा।
मृृते जिउ जाय जहा। जीवन ही ते रखो तहै।
जीउ ते चीरे जो कोई मुखा। सोइ खेले परम निसंक हुआ।

20. Sabad or Sabda means word, but it may also mean a hymn.

21. यह मन सकती यह मन सीब। यह मन तीन भुवन का जीव।
यह मन ते जो उन्मनि रहें। तीन भुवन का वाते कहें।

22. Namaz performed hanging upside down with the legs suspended from a roof or a branch of a tree. See the sections on Shaikh Abu said bin Abul Khair, pp. 68-69. Supra, and Baba Farid, p. 139.


24. श्लोक

छितीस जुग नाम निरंजन (कलि मदूर) भर्जी खुदाय।
�नादि रूपी हंमन सृष्टि रची देखै रूपी जग तए की माय।


26. Sabad

जहिया होता एक अंकार। कोई न चित्ता सून विचार।
शूल भए हम जाना सून। जो जानै तिस पाप न पून।
27. Like the Brahman of the *Upanishads* and *Vedanta* and the Nirvana of the Mahayanists, the State of *Sahaja* is indescribable and can not be understood dialectically but only through actual experience, the state of *Sahaja* is achieved by transcending dialectics. *Yoga*, pp. 268-69.


33. The author calls them Vishnupad, but Rudr-Kashke says that he was not aware of the Vishnupadhati (style) in Hindi music. Introduction to the author’s Hindi translation of the *Haqaiq-i Hindi*, Kashi, 1957, p. 19.

34. The name of a metre used in Hindi poetry.


46. Ibid., p. 293.

47. Chandrabhan Brahman, the son of Dharam Das Brahman was born at Lahore and obtained higher education in Islamic philosophy and theology under Mulla Abdul Hakim Siyalkoti in 1629, had appointed his *Diwan-i Kull*, After Afzal Khans death in 1639. Shahjahan in 1645 appointed him as the *waqia Nawis-i Huzar*. After the Death of Dara Shukoh he retired to lead the life of a recluse in Banaras and died there in 1662-3.


54. According to the Hindu cosmology the eternal first cause formed the Hiranyagarbha or ‘Golden womb’, a golden cosmic egg which floated upon the surface of the primeval waters. In early Hindu philosophy this egg is often equated with the cosmic intelligence or soul, and in later myth with Brahma. *Hindu World*, I, pp. 252-53.


58. Guna in Hindu philosophy is used to indicate the attribute or property of a thing and is of wide application. In Samkhya philosophy the term guna refers specially to the three constituent principles of Prakriti or primordial substances, namely, Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas. Sattva, goodness inherent in purity and brightness, is equated with reality and intelligence. Rajas ‘Passion’ inherent in energy, force and movement, is the power that activates and excites the other two gunas. Tamas ‘Darkness’ inherent in Mass or Matter, is equated with inertia, gloom and stupor. It is illusive and results from avidya or ignorance. *Hindu World*, II, p. 264.


60. Ibid., pp. 53-99.


63. *Islam in Northern India during the eighteenth century*, p. 370.


66. Ibid (Shah Kalimullah writes that Miyan Mir Qadiri of Lahore and his followers also had adopted this pattern of Yoga. See, ibid., p. 64.).

67. Ibid., p. 65.

68. This attitude of the Sufis of different silsilahs did not stop here. It was carried on even during the later century. Mention may be made on Mirza Mazhar Jan-i Jahan was renowned saint of the Naqshbandiya silsilah
(the Naqshbandi order), during the eighteenth century. Born in 1699 in an aristocratic family of Delhi, Mirza Jan-i Janan was a unique personality of his time in literary excellence. He was author of several works. His letters specially deserve to be deeply studied. Jan-i Janan held Upnishads as, Heavenly Scriptures. Rud-i Kauthar, pp. 646-47. He writes: “Understand it clearly that what we can infer from the ancient books of the Hindus is that when the world was created, the Divine Mercy revealed a book called Veda, which has been divided into four parts and contains the positive commandments and Prohibitive injunctions, also an account of the past and future world. Its object is to reform the life of men through faith, through an angle, called Brahma, who is also a root cause of the creation of the world”. Also see, Islam in northern India During the Eighteenth Century, p. 526. Jan-i Jana further writes: “The sages of ancient times have derived six systems of philosophy from that Book, tracing their faith and tenets from it”. Describing the Vedic science, he says: “The science propounded in them is called Dharma Shastra, which means the science of duty”. Regarding the sects among Hindus, Mirza says: “Their religious leaders divided the human race into four groups; and for every group they fixed a separate path, doctrines and responsibilities based on their professions. This compilation is known as Karma Shastra i.e. law of action”. Shedding light on religious beliefs of Hindus, he opines: “All these four castes of Hindus believe in the Oneness of God; they believe in the end of the world and reward and punishment for the good and bad deeds on the day of Resurrection and in the revealed book”. Discussing the advent of prophets in India in ancient time, Mirza Mazhar says: “According to the Holy Quran, every community has its own prophet. God has not left the people of India without prophets”. It is interesting to mention here that the term Kafir (Infidel) has been very controversial between Hindus and Muslims during the centuries in Indian Sub Continent. Hindus have
always taken the term as their insult and humiliation. Almost all the Sufis always endeavoured to be sympathetic towards Hindus in regard to this particular aspect and respecting their sentiments avoided to call them *Kafir*. Mirza Mazhar Jan-i Janan also had the same sufi spirit. He expresses his views in this regard, in the same latter, in these words: “In succession to our Prophet, no other prophet will be sent till the end of the world, either in the East or in the West. Everyone is bound to obey him and all other religions are to be replaced by him. Those who have not accepted this religion are *Kafirs* (pagans); but not those who preceded our Prophet’s birth. Again, the Holy *Quran* says that there are some prophets about whom information has been imported to you, while there are others about whom you have been not furnished with any particular. Thus, when the *Quran* has preferred to remain silent about many prophets, it is incumbent on us to adopt a liberal attitude with regard to the prophets of India. No one should be called *Kafir*”. 