The Religious Life and Practice of the Sufis and Its Impact on Thought and Culture of the People.

Sufism in Eastern India is the continuation of the system emanated from the Khāngāhs (monasteries) and madrasas of Samarqand and Bukhara. They resemble in form, practice and creed right up to the 16th century A.D., after which the Sūfis chalked out a line of development of their own. Muslim saints of unquestionable poetry and miraculous power were sent from Baghdad to preach Islam at different Sūfī centres of Northern India. The strong character of monotheism of Islam made it a religion of millions of humanity, irrespective of race and colour within a very short time. But with the passage of time the spirit that Islam showed at first began to wane. When the Sūfīs preached the doctrine of Islam in Bengal it received ready response on account of two things. Firstly, pure monotheism which advocated the belief in one supreme God proved simple. As for the masses soon as they professed Islam, they felt being relieved from worshipping many gods and goddesses. Secondly, the
masses were fed up with the existing social and religious conditions, in which the so-called Brahman priests exploited peoples in the name of religion. The evils of the caste system and observance of esoteric religious rites and ceremonies had made the life of the people miserable. The social equality offered by Islam attracted the masses overwhelmingly.

The new faith gave the converts a new life, no doubt, but we should remember that the mode of life is not changed all on a sudden. The converts who came to the fold of Islam brought their manners and customs with them. This led the admitting the Hindu customs and manners into the Muslim ways and life.

The Sufis of Bengal found the land full of Hindu saints, sadhus, siddha and samayasis. In course of their missionary activities the Sufis met them and

1. Ishwari Prasad, *Muslim Rule in India*, pp. 14-15. He states that the "most famous order was the Chishtiya, which included such men as Shaikh Meinsud-Din Chishti and Shaikh Naqshbandi. The Chishtis were a powerful force in the state and society of this time and their teachings were appreciated by the Hindus and the Muslims alike. The other notable orders were the Suhrawardis, the Shattari, the Qadiri and the Naqshbandis which tried to spread the light of the faith among the people in whose midst they lived. Great success was achieved by the Sufi saints in Bengal."
had religious conversations. They found the Siddhas having the monotheistic belief. The personal contact with them made the Sufis aware of the religious values of the ancient Hinduism. Though their mode of preaching and practice differed from those of the Sufis, there was the scope for accommodating certain manners and customs in their own life.

That is why we find the presence of some Sufi elements in the Hindu society and that some Hindu elements in Muslim society. In the Muslims of Bengal Mr. J. N. Farquhar says, "It was through the teachings of Sufis that Islam found entrance to Hindu hearts. They fraternized with Hindu Ascetic and Gurus; and each learnt to respect other's religious faith and life. But no until the last quarter of the 15th century did the movement get any notable force. Kabir (1398-1448 A.D.) was the man through whom the leading ideas of both systems got popularised. From this time the condemnation of idolatry and politeism became frequent."

Indian Vedanta and Islamic Sufism mingled in Kabir Das in such a way that it became difficult to
distinguish one from the other, Kabīr, the most radical disciple of Ramana, a Hindu Bhakta of Deosan, gave a positive shape to the social philosophy of his illustrious teacher. He had the courage to condemn what he considered to be shameful and counterfeit in both Hinduism and Islam. 3 Kabīr then became the disciple of Shaikh Tāqī Suhrwardī, a great saint of Suhrawardiya order. But this saint could not satisfy his spiritual thirst. Then he approached a third saint of Chishtia order, Shaikh Bhika Chishti, who enlightened him and made him his successor. His follower came to be known as Kabir Panthi. Thus Kabīr was the first who have introduced the local term panth, which is equivalent to Silsila or order.

Kabīr's mission was carried further by Guru Nanāk, who was a believer in Bhakti. He lived in the 15th and the early part of the 16th century, when the doctrines of Kabīr had already made their way in Northern and North Western India. Guru Nanāk was preceded

2. Probably he flourished between 1300-1470 A.D. (Bharatiya Madhya Yuga Sadana, Calcutta University, p. 63). But according to other scholars Kabir lived from 1440-1516 A.D.
3. A. Rashid, Society and Culture in Medieval India, p. 246
by an evolution of ideas and he followed the path laid by his illustrious predecessors. Kabir attempted to draw ideas from both religious and created a new system. He wanted to show that essentially all religions were the same, and he interchanged the names of Allah and Hindu God without preference or distinction. Nanak (1469-1539 A.D.) went a step further than Kabir in his approach to God, for he sought to describe him without reference to either the Hindu or Muslim names.

Like Kabir, Dadu, Chaitanya (1484-1533 A.D.) and Sankaradeva, preached unity of Godhood and a monotheistic doctrine as Kabir had done before.

Akbar's Din Ilahi, Dara Shikoh's (d.1659 A.D.) Maismul Baharisin and Persian translation of 80 verses from the Upanishads were all directed to the same spirit of fusion of the religious thoughts.

The life of the Sufis revolves on three things only; namely, God, Man and Love. From God emanated the theories of Tanhid (divine unity) sur (divine light), hama ut (All is He), hama as-ut (All is from Him), sat (divine essence) and sifat (His attributes). From Man sprang out the theories of ruh (Human soul), Vast (divine proximity), hulul (fusion in the divine spirit) etc.

4. Tara Chand, Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.166
5. For details see G.R. Westcott, Kabir and Kabir Panth, Calcutta, Edition 2, 1933, pp. 18-27
6. For details on Sankaradeva (1449-1569 A.D.) see Maheswar Neog, Sankaradeva and His times
From Live came out the theories of ishq (divine love), fana (self-annihilation), baqa (abiding in God), etc. These are the main theories of Sufiism.

The Sufis believe and teach that God is the Real (al-haque), all loving (wadud), eternal (qadim), the visible world is mortal (fani halik) and God is the light of the universe. His essence and attributes are fully manifested in the Universe but His jamal (absolute beauty) Jalal (majestic beauty) and Jalwa (phenomenal beauty) cannot be seen by an ordinary person.

Pure love is always selfless and the devotee has no selfish purpose to serve through it. The Sufi did not worship God with hopes of attaining heaven or from fears of being consigned to hell. What the Sufi wants is God Himself, for he knows that He is the Real and the Truth. The Sufis recognised no other feeling more powerful than love. They opined that the more intense the love the deeper was the man's penetration divine secret. They believe that the greater the love the closer was the approach of the devotee to the

7. QURAN, chapter XXIV-V-35
Fountain of all love, According to them the Divine love is the media, through which relation between men and God can be established.

Practice of Indian Sufis:

In order to attain proximity to God, even before actual death, the Sufis preached that every one can attain this virtue provided he follows certain methodical practices for driving his soul to attain a higher stage of development. These practices, it is obvious, can be done under the guidance of some great saint, who knows mystical formula of the path (tariqat).

The path is divided into four stages called magamat or manazil. After travelling through them he reaches higher stages. In the first stage a devotee follows shariat or religious laws of orthodox Islam. At this stage a Sufi must zealously follow the religious commandments and never think of violating them to the slightest degree. A Sufi can manifest his high character and perform numerous deeds of virtue.

G. F.C. Davar, Iran and its Culture, Bombay, 1953, p. 272
In this first stage of practice, the Sufi remains busy in prayer, fasting and strictly observing the rules and practices as ordered by his Preceptor, which leads him to complete forgetfulness of his natural identity, so much so that the shariat became his own nature. This is called fanafissat or alam-e-nasut.

After completing this alame-nasut he starts his journey towards 'alam-e-malkt', where he completely resigns to his spiritual guide. Here he recites God's name, which is technically called sikr, as prescribed by the Shaikh. The sikr varies in different orders. The Qadriya order prescribes 'La Ilaha Illallah' (There is no God but Allāh) as sikr. This stage is called fanafish-shaikh, as the devotee obeys the Shaikh without hesitation or doubt.

After completing this stage he enters into the next higher stage called alam-e-jabrūt. This concerns with the world of spirit (alam-e-arwāh). Here the traveller becomes able to establish contact with the spiritual world. He recites 'Allahu' (There is only Allāh) and utters God's name, his attributes sifat and his glory (shān). The three things, asma, sifat and shān,
according to the Sūfīs, fall into the divine attributes, by realising which he strives to know the owner of the attributes. Now he recites a sikr, the name of Allah and he becomes fit to detach himself at will from this world and reach the world of higher order. It is also called famā-fil-kasūl.

The final stage is alam-e-lahut (the world of Divinity), where the traveller ends the journey and attains close proximity to God called Ahdiat or Famā fi Allāh. At this stage the traveller, recites Allāh hoc (He is Allāh) as sikr.

The spiritual guide is called Shaikh, Marshid or Fīr, while his follower is called Salik or Murīd. The practice of preceptorship is called Fīrī-Murīdi. Zikr may be jālī (loudly sung) or khāfī (suppressed). Jālī is preferred by all the orders excepting the Naqshbandiya order. Some mystics advocate Arabic formulae to recite loudly or secretly. It may be performed alone or in congregation. When it is done alone, it may be done at any place and on any day. If it is done in company, it is done on some fixed day at one place. Thursday evening is generally preferred. In the Chishtiya and Suhrawardiya orders sikr is done with music (anfās). Breath plays
Muraqba or the Divine contemplation is done by dropping head downwards. The salik (traveller) sits awaiting descent of God's light on his soul. In so doing he forgets everything, even his ownself, contemplating all the while on the light of God.

It has already been said that when Sufism entered India from Persia, Bukhara and Samarqand, it was already influenced by Indian scholars, who were generally Brahmanas by caste, were working in Harun al Rashid's court. They were known as Barmakides. Besides, during the reign of Kanishka of India, many Buddhist scholars, Shaktas and Siddhas were sent to the west and the east. They established monasteries for preaching Buddhist doctrines in the main cities of those places. When Islam expanded and the Sufis spread, they met the Buddhist scholars and saints. As a result of this contact, they followed spiritual communications. As the Buddhist doctrine was based on equality of mankind mortality of this world and extreme austerity of life,
the Sufis found in them some points of resemblance.
The result was that the Sufi theosophy, which was based on monothelism, underwent a change as it will be clear from succeeding lines.

Orthodox Muslims believe that a human soul (rūḥ) is a pure creation of Divine Will. Though it is pure, it becomes impure after its entrance into the body. Hence an impure soul is subject to punishment. After being purified it returns to God, but does not merge in Him. The soul of the departed will stay at two places Iliṅa and Sijjān, till the day of resurrection for the final decree to be declared by God.

But the Hindu theosophy holds that as the soul of man, a part of the Divine Soul, unites with it after Salvation and also it can be united even before death, if it develops properly.

This cannot be done except through the theory of Divine fusion called (ḥulūl) which was considered from the very beginning as heretical and polytheistic by the doctors of orthodox Islam. But in India this theory of ḥulūl found favour with some Sufis, supporting it by subtle interpretation of their own?

9. *Anw. Islām* vide article on 'Hulūl'
Indian Sufis admit that the Prophet of Islam is next to God according to the verse, "Obey God and obey his Prophet."; but the Pir gives more stress on establishing relation with himself. The function of the Prophet to serve as an intermediary has been taken away by the Pir's. This is also due to Indian influence where a Guru exercise full control over his disciple.

When the Sufis touched the Indian soil, they interpreted Islamic faith in the light of their existing spiritual conception, which were akin to Aryan mind. The idea of incarnation (the appearance of God in a human form) was already in the minds of the local people. He sent his message through incarnation according to the Hindus. But in Islam the Angel Gabriel is God's messenger.

In early days the boundary of the Kushan Empire during the time of Kanishka (enthroned in 78 A.D) extended up to Bukhara, Samarqand and Turkistan. Buddhist monasteries flourished in Bukhara, the metropoleis of ancient Bactria, which later on became centre of Sufis.

10. Gold Zaker, Muhammad and Islam, (tr. from German by K.T.Chambers), pp. 172-173
It has now been admitted by all eminent scholars, both European and Indian, that Buddhism influenced Sufism during the early days of its formation through the Bhaktas and the Shikkhas (preachers) and monastic organisation in different parts of Islamic world. Upanishads also went to add or modify or replace some Sufi theories after their introduction in India during the 8th and 9th centuries that may be termed as Indian Sufism. The Yoga system of Indian philosophy as a means of the attainment of union with God was accepted by the Indian Sufis with some modifications, such as controlling of breath, meditation and diet. The atma and purusa as given in the various systems of Upanishads, is the same as ruh (soul) and Brahman, the only real of Vedanta is the al-Maq of the Indian Sufis. The last two atma and Brahman, help a good deal to bring the Sufis closer to the Bhaktas. According to Upanishad when a man frees himself from the cycle of rebirths to attain mukti or emancipation he becomes one with Brahman, for now he breaks through Maya to see himself as a part of the Brahman. This

comparis fairly well with the famous Arabic dictum "Man araaf a mafsa hū faqad araaf araaf rabbahū, " (He who knows his own self undoubtedly will know God).

The strong pessimistic attitude of the Indian Sūfīs toward the world seems to be the outcome of the Vedantic Influence on Sūfīsm. According to the Sankara, the famous Vedanta doctor, who flourished during the later part of the 8th century A.D., only Brahman is real and all the world is an illusion. This compare with the theory of fana (annihilation) of the self expounded by the Sūfīs and supported by the verse of the Holy Qur'an "Kullū man alai hā fānī-i-æe Yabqu Wajhahu" (All things in the world are to perish. Only the Almighty Allāh will remain eternal).

The theory of fana (annihilation) and baqa (immortality) resembles perfectly with nirvana of Hindu and Buddhist doctrines. The method of Sūfīsm in so far as it concerns itself with refinement of the self through ascetic meditation and intellectual observation concerned, bear close resemblance to Buddhist practice of monkhood.12

12. H. A. Nicholson, Mystic of Islam, p. 17
According to Sufism, a salik has to practice strict piety, which keeps him away from all sins. In Shakti, the Shakti restrains himself from committing all sinful deeds. An arif (knewer) possesses marifat (divine knowledge). Both the Sufi salik and the Buddhist arif type of saints are free from the bondages of this world when they attain perfection.  

In practicing SIKR the Sufi generally used tasbih (rosary) as an aid to memory. It came from the Buddhist monk, when Islam spread to the East and came under the Indian influence. Recency became the symbol of parity for the Indian Sufi during the 13th and 14th centuries. It became a counterpart of ma'na. 

**Qalander says:***

*شَيْخُ مُكْحُلٌ، وَلَسْعَمْ بِرْسَتْ*

*هَلْ وَارِدَ نَبِيَّ أَيْ بَيْتَ بَرْسَتْ*

'sheikh mukhul wa tasbih baddat
and buti dafa alban al buhurat'

(You style yourself to be a Shaikh (PFr) with rosary in hand; you have hundred icons concealed, O idol worshipper).


Sadi Shirazi says:

ود باراد و لابیج مرقع
فروراً علیمانه تلویه‌یه برى ماته
حاجت رکیة، سیلی راستناد نیست
در راهی دوست باش کله چهرمی دار

'dalgat bachi kar iyad va tasbih va muraqqas
kud ra si mahmalhai nikukida badiwa.

dajat-e-kulahi barki dashtanad nist;
darvish sifat bash kulahi tatri dar.

(Of what avail will be your patched garment, rosary and prayer carpet? Keep yourself away from evil deeds. There is no need to put on the gorgeous cap of nobility; live like a saint and wear ordinary cap).

After a close study of the practices of the Sufis, uttering sikr and the Sat chakra of the yogis, compare favourably to each other. Sufis divided the sikr into six parts: (i) qulub, (ii) ruh, (iii) sirr, (iv) khafi, (v) khafa and (vi) aafs. The yogis also divided sat chakra into six: (i) mubtadhara, (ii) swaddisthana, (iii) manipura, (iv) anahata, (v) visuddha and (vi) ajna.

Thus we find the methods of the Sufi practices of sikr and the yogis' practices of sat chakra have been taken comparable lines. Whether the Sufis were
influenced by the Yegis or they had their own independent growth, is a matter of dispute.

Every missionary religion is bound to change its form and colour according to the cultural condition of the country, where it is established. Christianity and Buddhism have done so, and so has done Islam. Hinduism, though it is not a missionary religion, has gone through a lot of changes when it spread to Java, Sumatra, Siam, etc. Islam in Sudan and other African countries also have accepted some change in forms without changing the fundamental principles. Islam in Persia, Java and Malaya have its own colors though retaining the main principles of Islamic teachings.

The changes that took place in India and non-Aryan Bengal are named as bida'ят (religious innovations) and shirk polytheistic beliefs and practices) by the orthodox Muslim, but the bida'ят and shirk are going on since long time.

Shihabud-Din Talish says "As for the Muslims of Assam who had been taken prisoner in former times

15. Edward Gait, A History of Assam, Calcutta, 1933, p. 153, quoting from Shihabud-Din Talish, Tarikh-

and had chosen to marry here, their descendants act exactly in the manner of the Assamese, and have nothing of Islam except the name." But the condition of India was more or less the same so that the Sufis of India and those from outside India have been preaching the correct Islamic methods, rules, and regulations and practices right from the beginning. Even today they are engaged in reviving their faith and practices.

The people of Eastern India accepted the new faith, without knowing the real knowledge of the creed. The result was that the converts came to their own cultural, social and religious beliefs and practices of their previous faith. No significant efforts were made in the beginning to uproot these. It was decided as a matter of policy that the converts should have been enlightened gradually through speeches and by imparting education to make them aware of the actual teachings of Islam, which does not admit of any superstition.

The Muslim converts living in regular Hindu environments had to maintain friendly relation with the sister Hindu community. Daily personal and social
contract tended to influence one another and they adopted, consciously or unconsciously, each other's rites, ceremonies, customs and habits.

It is also a fact that some people embraced Islam on its merits as it gave them equal social status and opportunity for spiritual upliftment.

Ishwari Prasad says: "To the down-trodden of Hindu society in Bengal, Islam came as a message of hope and deliverance from the tyranny of the higher castes. The simplicity of the Muslim creed was another cause of its success. Islam makes no great intellectual demand upon the believer; it has no elaborate ritual the practice of which is in the hands of a recognised class of priests. A person embracing Islam, enters a brotherhood which knows no distinction, daily contact with Muslims must have brought about a change in outlook. It is quite true that these causes operated to spread the faith of Islam in India. The most powerful attraction of Islam in India has been its brotherhood which recognised the equality of all its members. As Arnold rightly observes, it is this absence of class prejudice which

16. Muslim Rule in India, pp. 15-16
constitutes the real strength of Islam in India and enables it to win so many converts from Hinduism:"

The contact of Hinduism and Islam in this country has produced far reaching consequences. The well known historian Sir Jadunath Sarkar thus sums up the benefits which have accrued to India from Islam:

1. Resurrection of touch with the outer world, the revival of Indian navy and sea-born trade, both of which had been lost since the decline of the Cholas.
2. Internal peace over a large part of India;
3. Administrative uniformity;
4. Uniformity in social manners and dress among the upper classes;
5. Indo-Saracenic art, in which Hindu and Islamic ideals, are blended together;
6. A common lingus-france or Recbta (Urdu) and official prose style;
7. Rise of Vernacular literature near the courts of Delhi and Agra;
8. Monotheistic religious revival and Sufism;
9. Historical works of great value, which have helped us to reconstruct the history of the middle ages;
10. Improvement in the art of war; and
11. Refinement of habits and behaviour.
Much water has flown down the Ganges and the Brahmaputra since Islam entered Eastern India, but the indigenous character went throbbing in the heart of every Muslim in Bengal, Assam and elsewhere. So far as Bengal and Assam are concerned the nick names, folk songs, dress, habit, language, festivals and marriages styles, all display a local colour. Arabic and Persian language were Bengalised or Assamised.

Bengali and Assamese mothers preferred to give their children Bengali and Assamese nick-names such as for daughters, Jhimuki (Oyster), Jonti which is the contracted form of Jonaki (fire-fly), Maina (a sweet song taling bird), Chini (Sugar), Khoki (Baby) and for sons Khoka, Basi (flute), Lalmia, Madhu Mian, Budha Mian, Makhan Mian, etc.

The influence is so intense that even the elders have suffixes or prefixes words of Hindu extraction as in names like Mohan Shaikh Sundar Ali, Manehar Shaikh Marden, Shaikh Chand. Such names are common in West and Central Bengal and Assam. Dinesh Chandra Sen in his book *Folk Literature of Bengal*, published by Calcutta University, has given a detailed description
of the folk literature, which is prevalent among Hindus and Muslims alike.\footnote{17}

In Bengal, as in all over India, saint worship had been one chief characteristic of the Bhakti cult coming down from ancient time. In Muslim society also we find the same practice being followed by the disciples of the Sufis. They believe that the Pir are divinely bestowed personalities. In order to have their Messiahs it is their desire to become their Murid to earn the pleasure of God through him. Hence they prefer their Pir above every thing else. This Guruwadi spirit is enshrined in their hearts even today.

Khānqāhs:

The khanqāh plays an important role in the world of Sufism. Its establishment was based on the principle of renunciation, and a life of solitude compatible with contemplative meeting of the highest mystical ideals. In constructing khanqāhs, according to Shaikh Izzud-Dīn Mahmūd, the Persian translator of the famous book Awariful-Ma'arif of Shaikh Shihabod-Dīn

\footnote{17. D.C. Sen, \textit{Folk Literature of Bengal}, p. 37}
Suhrawardī, which was accepted by medieval Indian mystics as the best guide book for the organizers of khanqāhs. In a khanqāh there are more advantages for novices (murīds) who come to take Sufi teachings from their murshid (master). It is a training centre, for the mystics, a house for the poor, a shelter for travellers, a place for free mixing with each other for all including Muslims and non-Muslims and the rank and file of the society. It is a common platform for all men. Common penitences and sufferings drew out the noblest qualities of their souls and made them understand what Carlyle describe the 'divine significance of life'.

According to Islamic Law a traveller can stay in any Muslim family for three days, so khanqah or jāmāt khāna was like a circuit House for travellers. The permanent residents of the khanqah or sawiyyah (smaller place) were divided into two categories: permanent (muzāminā) and travellers (muḥāfaran), muzāminā were divided into three grades: ahl-i-khāwat (secluded person), ahl-i-suhbat (associated person) and ahl-i-khidmat (attendant) according to their nature of duties

18. K.A. Nisārī, Studies in Medieval Indian History and Culture, Allahabad, 1966, pp. 83–84
assigned to them. Strict discipline was maintained in
in the khanqahs and elaborate rules were laid down for
the guidance of the inmates how to address the murshaid
(spiritual guide), how to sit and wear dress in the
khanqah; how and when to go to sleep; how to talk with
companion; and how to deal with visitors and guests.
The Shaikh sternly dealt with those inmates, who were
found guilty of the slightest irregularity.

Shaikh Shihabud-Din Suhrawardi quoted from
the QURAN, for the establishment of khanqah in the
verses S. XXIV, 36-37, and gave the following fundamental
principles for organizing the mystical khanqahs:

(i) The people of the khanqah should establish
cordial relations with all mankind.
(ii) They should concern themselves with God through
prayers, meditation, etc.
(iii) They should abandon all efforts at earning a
livelihood and should resign themselves to the
will of Almighty God.

19. Misbah al-Hadwy, pp. 120-122, quoted by A.K. Misami
Medieval Indian History and Culture, p. 85, for
detailed accounts see Shaikh Diyanud-Din Suhrawardi,
Awarif al-Kuridin, Urdu tr. by Abdul Basit, Hyderabad,
1965; and Shaikh Shihabud-Din Suhrawardi, Awarif
al-Hadwy, p. 123.
20. Shaikh Shihabud-Din Suhrawardi, Awarif al-Hadwy,
Lucknow, 1926, pp. 123-127, quoted by A.K. Misami,
Medieval Indian History and Culture, p. 84
(iv) They should abstain from things that produce evil effects.
(v) They should strive for the purification of their soul and inner life.
(vi) They should learn the value of time.
(vii) They should completely shake off indolence and lethargy.

The Chishtiya khanqah usually consisted of a big hall, called jamāt khāna, where all the inmates lived a community life. They all slept on the ground without discrimination. If food was available all would partake of it; if not, all would suffer jointly the pangs of hunger. We did not find any detail accounts of medieval Indian khanqahs except the khanqah of Shaikh Nizamud-Dīn Auliya. Amīr Khurd gave a detail account of the khanqah and its daily programme in his book Sīyar al-Auliya. Amīr Hasan, and Hamid Qalander also describe some details in their books Fawā'īd al- Fa'ād and Khāir al-Malālīs respectively.21

The Suhrawardi khanqahs were basically different from that of the Chishtiya khanqah. They did not hesitate to accept jāgīra from the rulers instead of

21. A.K. Nizāmi, Medieval Indian History and Culture, pp. 84-85
depending on the uncertain and irregular income through 
suťāh (gifts) as those ran by Chishtiya. Secondly, the 
Suhrāwardi khānqāhs had an aristocratic atmosphere. It 
provided separate accommodation for the inmates and 
visitors and was well-furnished. Thirdly, the Suhrāwardīs 
did not throw their khānqāhs open to all. Shaikh Bahādur-Dīn 
is reported to have allowed only those to stay and dine, 
whom he considered fit for reception in his khānqāh.

There are many khānqāhs of other Sūfī Orders 
of the early period. According to Ibn Batūtā that he 
went to see Shāh Jalāl Suďarrad, where he had seen 
hānqāh of the above saint. Khān Sahib Ābid Allī gave 
a full account of Bhandār Khāna and Taḥūr Khān. 
(store and kitchen rooms) and its inscriptions, dated 
1084 A.H. and 1093 A.H. of Shāh Jalālud-Dīn Tabrīzī 
of Gaur and Pandua (west Bengal). The saint had a 
wāqf estate (Bais Hasāri Estate), yearly income of 
which amounted to about ₹.23,000.

22. Amīr Hasān, Pervaīd al-Fu‘ād, p. 223-224
23. Ibn Batūtā, Ruhā, Beirut, 1968 for detailed 
account of the life and time see Chapter IV, 
pp. 102-106
24. Khān Sahib Ābid Allī, Memories of Gaur and 
Pandua, Calcutta, 1931, pp. 97-106
The mature and extent of the influence of these khānqaḥs on medieval Indian society can be assessed with reference to the condition of Hindu society in the 12th century, the Muslim governing class, and the general Muslim public as follows. When khānqaḥs were established in Northern India, Hindu society was passing through one of the most critical phases of its history. The caste system had eaten into the very vitals of Indian society and had rendered it invertebrate and rickety. In the khānqaḥ the unassuming ways of the mystics, their broad human sympathies, the classless atmosphere of the khānqaḥs attracted the despised section of the Hindu society to their fold.

Since men belonging to different religions and speaking different languages assembled in the khānqaḥs, it was only natural that a common lingua franca evolved there. The birthplace of the Urdu language was, in fact, the khānqaḥ of the medieval Sūfis. Besides, the rise of the Bhakti movement in the 14th and 15th centuries may be traced back to the influence of the khānqaḥs.

25. For detailed account see al-Biruni-Kitabul Hind, Eng. tr. by Sachau, Chapter X, Section 51-55
26. K.A.Nizami, Studies in Medieval Indian History, pp. 91-96
The leaders of the Bhakti movement were Chaitanya, Kabir, Nanak, Dadu and others. There was hardly any saint of the Bhakti cult who had not passed some of his time in a khanqah.  

Ur Yusuf Hussain Khan a renowned scholar describes that in about all parts of the country the Sufis had established their hospices (khanqahs) where spiritual congregations were held under the presidency of the mystic percepror (Pir), who prescribed the mystic discipline for his followers. Music was generally patronised in the khanqah of the Chishti and the Ahmadawadi orders and the qawwals (singari) sang Persian songs, sometimes Hindi songs were also sung. References to such musical congregations where Qawwals was recited are found in the Akhbarul Akhyar, Badauni, Amali Sahib, Haft Aqlim and other works on medieval Indian history.  

Urs Sharif:

Urs Sharif is the death anniversary of a departed Pir. The word urs literally means 'bride's day'; but it is used in a characteristic sense. The

27. K.A. Nisami, Studies in Medieval Indian History, pp. 91–96
28. Islamic Culture, Vol. XII, No. 3, July 1956, p. 262
death of a Fīr is actually his union with God, called (wassal). A lover meets his beloved with this idea in mind the practice of urs ceremony was started near a saint's mausoleum in India.

It is held in the khanqah on the fixed date, which is attended by his disciples, associates and some important dignitaries as guests. The successor of khanqah called Sajjada Nashir receives them affectionately. The period of urs varies from place to place and the programme goes on for three or four days or a week and in some cases even for a month.

On the occasion of the urs a sort of fair is held, in which all the stall holders participate in selling their goods irrespective of caste and creed.

Nazrana:

The disciples of the Fīrs who attend the urs offer some presents to the Khādim of the tomb of the Fīr, offer lamps and perfumes to be lighted by the side of the tomb believing that lightening the lamp their heart's desire will be fulfilled by such practices. It is called cheraghi. It is also called Fakīrī in which cash or kind is included.
Shirni:

Literally the word means sweet, but in Sufi terminology in Bengal and Assam it means eatable things offered at the dargah of a departed Pir or at the khanqah of a living saint. Sweets from rice, bread, ghoo, molasses, etc., are usually offered. They believe that this offering wards off evils and dangers and heralds safety. Shirni is also offered after recovery from illness, after some victory or during litigation as a mark of some vow technically called mannat and aasr.

Tabarruk:

It is the same thing as prasad among the Hindus. It is a food or eatables distributed at the khanqah of a Pir, dead or alive. It is taken by the people as a token of sacredness granting future prospects.

Milad Sharif:

Generally speaking milad sharif or the Prophet's birth day is the most sanctified function of the Muslims falling on the 12th of Rabi-ul-Awwal (the birth date of the holy prophet of Islam). Milad
sharif is held annually by all Muslims who can afford it. This function is also called Fateha-e-dwaandaum.

It is held individually or collectively in which certain aspects of the Prophet's life is narrated by the Maulvis. The function starts with reciting salam in chorus to the Prophet by standing. Rose-water is sprinkled, perfumes are offered and in the end some sweets are distributed among the congregation. In yrs sharif also Milad is the special feature of the function which is attended by a large gathering. The procedure and programme of holding Milad is stated before. After the Milad is over, the scholars of the religion make speeches on various aspects of Prophets' life and recite nataa (praise) poems in his honour. Milad sharif is also held on other days when there is some special occasion.

Id-ul-Asha or Id-i-Qurbān:

It is held on the tenth of Zulhijja, the twelfth month of the Islamic calendar. It is most important of Muslim festivals. It is generally regarded as a substitute for the sacrifice celebrated by pilgrims in the valley of Mina near Mecca in commemoration of Ibrahim's readiness to sacrifice his son Isma'il in
obedience to the command of God.

Id-ul-Fitr:

The festival of the breaking of the Ramazan fast, is observed on the first day of Shawal, the tenth month of Islamic Calendar the long drawn fast of a whole month of Ramazan. It is also an important festival of the Muslims in general.

Fatheha-e-Duwān daham:

Fatheha-e-Duwān daham coming on the twelfth day of third month of Islamic calendar is the Prophet's anniversary day. The Prophet is generally believed to have been born on the Eleventh Rabi-ul-Awwal and is also held to have departed this world on the same day. Therefore, Muslims celebrate that day, by some observed as the Manīd or Milād Sharīf. We already mentioned above.

Muharram:

The first ten days of the Islamic month of Muharram is celebrated to commemorate the martyrdom
of Imam Hussain in the field of Karbala in Iraq is
61 A.D. Though it is mainly a Shia festival, a large
number of Sunnis also take part in it. Procession of
the Dul Dul horse, tazia, lathis and swords and high
flags, called amal, are displayed with great enthusiasm
as a symbol of the battle that took place between the
forces of Yazid (683-686 A.D.) and a handful of the
faithfuls of Imam Hussan and Hussain. The procession
exhibits mock fights with the wielding swords and
lathis; sweets and sharbat are offered at the mausoleum
of the Imam called Daryah, as offering to his memory.

The way in which this festival is observed
compares more or less with the celebration of the
Hindu Durga puja festival. In Iran and other Islamic
countries, Muharram is celebrated in a quite different
fashion. They hold congregational meetings, in which
the Mjatkhid deliver speeches, relating the confrontation
of Karbala, privations of the holy house of the Prophet
and the miserable plight of the companions of Hazrat
Imam Hussain. This is called Zikr-e-Shahadat. The first
ten days are spent in solemn remembrance of the historic

29. Kamal Haque, p. 346
event. Sharbat and sweets are distributed among the poor without making any public show.

In Bengal as well as in other parts of India Zikr Shahadat is also held in imam bara, where pious Muslims gather to listen to it with reverence.

Shab-e-Barat:

This festival is held on the 15th night of the lunar month of Sha'abān as it is considered to be a sacred night. According to popular belief the livelihood of each individual for the ensuing year is apportioned by providence on this very night. Hence it is called Lailatul Bar'at ( "ليلة القدر"). According to others it is a night when the sins of the people are condoned by God. Devoted Muslims pass this night in prayer, reciting the Holy Qurʾān and repeating God's name. They observe fasts. The most special feature of this festival is that the Muslims recite the Holy Qurʾān and send Darud to the Prophet and blessings to the saints. 30 Halwa and sweets are prepared with special care and kept at

30. Omer Md., Atharvēn Sadi Men Hindustānī Mahābhārat, p. 226
the site of the prayer probably in honour of Masrat Uwais Qarni, who broke all his own teeth at hearing the news that a tooth of the holy Prophet was broken in the battle of Uhud.\textsuperscript{31}

In western India people, generally, ignorant of the sanctity of this month, indulge in illumination of their houses and even in fireworks in certain places. This is the influence of the great festivals of the Hindus namely Sivaratri, Lakshmi puja and the Divali.

**Madari:**

This festival is celebrated in honour of the Indian saint Badshah-Din Shah Madar (1315–1436 A.D.) by the Muslims of Pabna, Bogra Dinajpur, Rajshahi and Calcutta. It is generally held in the month of Chaitra (March–April) with great pomp and display of the jhanda (flag) of Madar. Processions, bearing the flag and accompanied by music are taken out asking for and receiving alms both from Hindus and Muslims. The fund

is collected to be spent on the preparation of Shirni in honour of Shah Nadir.

Geyarhavin Shari' or Fateha-e-Ye'sahum :

It is solemnised on the 11th Rabi-ul-Akhir in commemoration of the death anniversary of Piran-e-Pir Hazrat Mu'inud-Din Abdul Qadir Jilani of Baghdad, who is considered to be the fountain head of the Qadriya order, spread throughout the world. Fateha Ye'sahum is held once a year, it may be spread over the month, in which the saint died. But it is not as popular as Milad sharif. The Fateha starts with fasting of women folk and prayers by men. And in the khanqah or in private places it is accompanied with Qawwali (songs with musical instrument) called Sama in Sufi terminology. Sama (qawwali) is allowed in the Chishtiya, Qadriya and Firdausiya orders, but other orders do not recommend it. According to Makhtubah Sadi, Qawwali is allowed only in certain conditions such as the following :

1. Makam : The place where the Qawwali is held must be the seat of saints, pure, spacious and ventilated.

32. Sharfu'd-Din Munayri, Makhtubah Sadi, p. 39
2. Ikhwan: The assembly must be of the Darvishes or their followers, well behaved, cultured and devoted.

3. Zaman: At the time of devotional music their hearts must be purely concentrated on religious devotion; they must observe the rules of congregational gathering.

4. Adab: All must be with ablution and must sit with knees folded, as in prayer, lowering the head forward, must not move their heads, abstain from drinking water even when feeling thirsty, should remain silent. No applause are allowed.

Shaikh Misamud-Din Auliya imposes the following conditions for music to be considered lawful: (1) The singer must be a man and not a boy or a woman. (2) The content of the song must be free from obscenities and jests. (3) The listener must listen to it only for the sake of God, that is to say, he must always keep himself free from carnal desires. (4) The song must not be accompanied by musical instruments, (5) Such assemblies must be free from women.

Following are some of the Şafi'i literature, which we find in Bengali, Sylheti, Nagri, Assamese,

33. Sharifudd-Din Mushayri, Maktubat-i-Sadi, p. 59
34. Amir Hasan 'Ala Sajji Dehlewî, Fawaid ul-Yawad pp. 95, 246
Persian and Urdu languages (verse and prose) in Eastern India:

Bengali verse:

1. Adam Khur Akananda-Bakander
   Puthi — Abdul Latif.
2. Apār Bangla Vopaī Bangla Gān— Nirmal Choudhury and
   Guiri Bhattacharjee.
3. Badshah Alaud-Dīn O Piya
   Shahir Puthi — Muhammad Abdul Bari.
4. Bara Satya Pir-O-Shandhya
   Banti Kanya — Krishna Hari Das.
6. Bibi Fatimar Bebah
   — Author unknown.
7. Bun Bibir Zahur Nama
   — Munshi Muhammad Khatir
8. Bun Bibi Zuhrānna
   — Muhammad Munshi.
9. Bun Bibi Zuhrānna
   — Baimud-Dīn.
10. Fatīmar Suraṭānna
    — Shaikh Tanjū.
11. Fatīmar Suraṭānna
    — Shaikh Giraj Chowdhury.
12. Fatīma Zuhrānna
    — Azmatullah Khandakar.
13. Fatīmar Suraṭānna
    — Gāzi Baidud-Dīn
15. Gaī Sahib-er Gān
    — Kalimud-Dīn Gain, collected by Nagendra Nath Basu.
16. Gaī Kalū Champawati
    — Gulam Khair and Abdul Rahīm.
17. Gurnahān Ruzchali
    — Shaikh Lāl and Shaikh Zainud-Dīn.
19. Hasan Resar Tin Purush (Gamer Bau)  - Hasan Rosa, Aqlim Rosa and Tasmur Rosa.
24. Kalī-Gūn i Namidīa  - Author unknown.
27. Manik Pīrer Qisaa  - Munshi Muhammad Pīrīrūd-Dīn.
34. Mubarak Gāsīr Qisaa  - Faqir Muhammad.
35. Munshi Pīr Gurachand  - Khudā Nawās.
36. Panchali  - Shairab Chandra Ghatak.

| 37. Pīr Akdīl Sha Panchali  - Ashq Muhammad. |
| 40. Shah Madār  - Syed Ālī Khandakār. |

There are more than eighty books on Satya Pīr or Satyanarayan written by many known and unknown authors.
41. Shaha Shubhudaya — Malud Misra.
42. Shaitta Pirer Puthi — Faisullah.
44. Shakh Sufi Sultan' da Parvar Qissan — Mohind-Din Ustagar.
45. Shahid Hazrat Abbas Ali-r-Puthi — Munshi Ahmad Shahjee.
46. Shahid Hazrat Guruchander Puthi — Munshi Niyaamatullah.
47. Tamika-i-Qadiria-e-Pir Guruchand-er Puthi — Muhammad Ummor Ali.

The following books are in Bengali prose:

Bengali prose works:

1. Arife Rabbani Hazrat Abdul Munim — Md. Mohind-Din.
2. Saitsh Auliyor Puthi — Bishnu Pad Chottapadya.
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7. Faw'id al-Muridin
8. Faw'id-e-ghaiibi
9. Faw'id Rukni
10. Gang-e-Laya'ani (Ed. Zain Badar Arabi)
11. Guzair-e-Abfar
12. Ishaarat
13. Irshad al Talibin
14. Irshad al-Salikin
17. Lataif ul Ma'anif
18. Ma'dan al Ma'anif
19. Maghfurl Ma'anif
20. Malfuzal Asghar
21. Miftah al-Muhaqqiqin
22. Makhtubat-e-Sadi
23. Makhtubat-e-da'Sadi
24. Makhtubat-e-se Sadi
25. Makhtubat-e-Bist e Makhut
26. Manis al-Muridin
27. Raha Qalib
28. Rosula De Bidayat Mal
29. Rosula Vasul Allah
30. Rosula-e-Makkiya o Zikri Fardansiya

35. The book is translated into Urdu by Shah Qasimud-Din

36. The Malfuzat Literature, it is note down by others saying of Makhdum Yahya Munayri, for details see chapter LA, p. 91
31. Sharhadab al-Muridin

Makhdoom Sharafud-Din Yakhya Munayri

32. Suhne-e-Yemen

Masirud-Din Hyder

33. Wafat Nama

Makhdoom Jahan - Zain Badar al Arabi.

Urdu :

1. Amir-e-Shariat Rabe

- Abu Zafar Rahmani.

2. Aina Naisi

- Dr. Mutilr Rahman.

3. Nasrat Naisi

- Zaimul Abidiin.

4. Nasrat Syed Shâh Jalâl Mujarrad

- Abdul Jalâl Sylhet.

5. Jada-e-Irfan

- M. T. Abdali.

6. Khum Khanai Taswuf

- Zahiral Hasan.

7. Maktubat-e-du Sadi (tr.)

- Makhdoom Sharafud-Din Munayri

8. Maktubat-e-Sadi (tr.)

- Abdul Nasi Siddiqi.

9. Manaqib-e-Shuaib

- Abu Muir Wahid
  (Urdu Translation).

10. Suhne'Yemen

11. Taskire-e-Auliya

- Mirsa Md. Akhter.

12. Tarikh-e-Jalâli

- Mubashir 'Ali Dabir.

13. Taskira Shaikh Syed Jalâl

- Mujarrad Kinyai.

Assamese :

1. Assamiya Zikr aru Zari

- Asan Faqir, Ed. by
  Syed Abdul Malik MP.

2. Asan Faqir

- Muhibul Museaia.

   Andish Muridin, translated into Urdu by Shah Qasimud-Din.
3. Satyar Path or Nurul Haque - Sūfī Sahib (tr. Suh Kazi).

4. Tarīqul Naq fī Bayan-o-Nurul Haq - (Arabic Script)

Sylheti Nagari:

Sūfī Songs:

1. Alqum Shāh (MSS)
2. Aqlīm Rāzā (MSS)
3. Majutam Nābī (MSS)
4. Sitālong Shāh (MSS)
5. Talib Hussain (MSS)

Prose:

6. Amir Hamsa
7. Salatun Nabi
8. Hanifor Kahini

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