INTRODUCTORY

MONOLOGUE
terms, however, are not synonymous, for 'Sufi' has a specific religious connotation, and is restricted by usage to those mystics who profess the Mohammedan faith. .. *4. The torch bearers of the Sufi-cult have proved their thoughts with the experiments of truth which is above the low grounds of sectarian religious appeal. The Sufi saints linked their thoughts with their words and actions and their controlling agent was the will of God. They tried up their mystic conception with the Vedantic thinkers of the eastern hemisphere, particularly with the Indian sub-continent. Dr. Nicholson also holds the same view that the Sufis had enriched their thoughts, developed their heart from the interaction all other existing thoughts, of the ancient-countries of Indian Sub-continent including the neo-platonic thoughts of Europe, but the Sufis never severed their connection with the Quranic utterances...*5.


An Indian poet glorified the Lord of Universe in his panegyric creation:

Akhanda mandalākaraṁ vyāptam
yen carācaram
Tatpadam darsitam tana tasmāi
Srigurave namah.

'I also like to bow down to my preceptor who had seen the holy feet of the Lord of the universe'. Here monistic approach of the universe is presented by the Vedanta philosophy of India. The Holy Quran also admits the same idea about the supreme Godhood. The Holy Quran shares the same view of transitory nature of material world. The Holy Quran declares boldly not only the oneness of God but also omnipotency of the creator of the universe. The Sufi saints never delinked themselves from the holy utterances of the Holy scripture and they also tried to glorify the advice of the prophet, who advised his followers, "Seek knowledge even if it is to be got in China". Sufism acted as a bridge between the

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*5.a. Quran, XVIII p 38.
*6. Ibid.
western thoughts and Islamic culture, it intermingled the neo-Platonic ideas with cherished ideas of Buddhism. In India the Sufis imbibed ideas of Vedanta philosophy and made them, they also gracefully shared the ideals of Nath yogis, a new class of Buddhist, who were known then as Saivites. They never disregarded the lofty ideals of dualistic (Dvaitavad) thought of Indic philosophy. They made an impact with Vaisnavite thinking of God. Vaisnavas of India tried to enjoy the godliness in this world, alike them Sufis wanted to have enjoy the world spiritually and denounced the enjoyment of heaven. The Sufi poet Ha?iz said: 'Bartar az gardun maqam-i-Adam ast.' (Man's status is far superior to anything on earth or in heaven).

The Sufisaints contributed much to the cultural development of India in Islamic setting. As 'man is the crown and final cause of the universe', so Jami, a Sufi-poet saint beautifully described the relation between man and spiritualism. Jami said:

"The unique substance, viewed as absolute and void of all phenomena, all limitations and all multiplicity, is the Real (al-Haqq). On the other hand, viewed..."
in His aspect of multiplicity and plurality, under which He displays Himself when clothed with phenomena, He is the whole created universe"... *7.

The whole human community is nothing but the offspring of the same eternal parent. The propagators of Sufi philosophy were really seers of truth; even in the socio-political base, they showed keen perception. They formed a norm, an unwritten tenet of the religious sect which was to be followed by all Sufis. 'The Sufi should never visit the kings and officers, for their friendship is worse than that of the serpents; the Sufi should wake up in the nights and constantly shed tears in separation. Let him not smile because the Lord has said, 'the pursuers of the path laugh less, weep more'... *8.

Indian mysticism based on the Bhakti culture owes much to the Sufis. Sufism was also influenced by the mediaeval devotional culture. Truly speaking 'Indian Sufism is a child of both these forms'... *9. Both of them used Bhakti (devotion) as vehicle of propagation. The concept of

Bhakti or devotion was not unknown to the Indians. One of the ancient scriptures and epics of India, the Ramayana depicted bhakti as a source of social and spiritual inspiration. In a spiritual scripture written on the basis of the theme of the original Ramayana, the Adhyatma declared clearly in the latter age of the ancient period thus:

"In the practice of Bhakti (devotion) no distinction is to be made between man and woman, between one of high caste and one of low, bhakti alone is needed". 10.

The Sufi-saints created a favourable atmosphere for preaching their message to the masses in their own tongues and in a manner they could easily grasp.

The Sufi-saints and the Indian mystics contributed much to India's spiritual resurrection. It has therefore been considered necessary to study the biographies and message of some of them in the following pages.

Saints and Society

In the year 1955 there was a Seminar in Madras to evaluate the role of saints in our country. Dr. S. Radhakrishna, the then Vice-president of India in his inaugural address said: "I am keen that the followers of the different religions should understand one another and interpret other religions at their best and promote a spirit of harmony. In a world haunted by fear and torn by strife what is needed is a spirit of tolerance and understanding, not a mere grudging admission of other religious view but a glad recognition of the variety of human mind." 1. In the same seminar T.M.P. Mahadevan, a philosophical thinker of modern India presented a paper, 'The significance of sainthood' where he distinguished between saint and sage. According to him Saints have a universal outlook with tie of earthly outlook and sages are above all the bondages of world, their experiences exist in the higher stage as a perennial source of inspiration. The saints use the media of love to communicate with their earthly fellow beings. They can be compared with the propagator of devotionalism. Swami Vivekananda, a patriot monk of India advocated: "this higher form of Bhakti is too near the God of Love to become an instrument for the diffusion of hatred." 2.

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1. (A) seminar on saints (Papers presented at the second seminar of the union for the study of the great religions (India) 1955.
The mediaeval saints used such medium for the resurrection of degenerated and oppressed humanism of India. They, all crossed the barriers of social customs and religious boundaries and filled their thoughts with the high ideals of love. The true essence of their thought was lay in following the verses:

'O heart, the high-priced learning of the schools. Geometry and metaphysics rules
Yea, all but lore of God is devil's lore;
Fear God and leave the lore to fools. 3

They believed in the oneness of God, though they each called their personal God by different names, they never kept themselves close to the suffering humanity. Puspadanta, a saivite saint praised the God Siva in a panegyric hymn where he admitted the devotes as his brothers:

Mātā me devi Parvati pita devah Maheswara!
Vandhava Sivabhaktasēha Svadesā bhuvanatrayam!

'My mother is Supreme Mother (creator of the matrimonial conception), My father is Supreme creator ( from Saivite personal name of supreme God ), My friends are the followers of the supreme and my country is the universe'. The same idea is expressed in the Srimad Bhagaved-Gita with reference to the man of God - vision : 'Seeing the Lord existent everywhere, he

3. The Quranic sufiism - (Dr.) Mir Valiuddin, Delhi, 1977, p.4.
injures not the self by the self. And not only that, he
becomes 'engaged in the good of beings' " 4.

Here is the candle extinguished and
there the living lamp of the Sun
Do mark the difference between the
one and the other. (Hafiz) 5.

The saints of the devotional era propagated the
main theme of the devotionalism and simultaneously they
interpreted the wisdom (Jnana) through their sublime approach
of devotionalism (Bhakti).

"India is unique in the history of the world
in that it has had an unbroken saintly tradition, and that in
every walk of life ". 6.

Sainthood has no distinction of caste, creed,
sex or social status. A true saint arises out of the
narrow barriers of social consideration. In mediaeval India,
many low-born saints contributed much to the social development.

4. (The) Divine life: its practice and realisation -
   - Swami Yatiswarananda, Madras, 1972, p.73.
5. (The) Quranic sufism - (Dr.) Mir Valiuddin, Delhi, 1977, p.15
6. (The) Significance of sainthood - T.M.P.Mahadevan - A
   seminar on saints in Madras, 1955, pp.6-13.
The freedom of women, in general, came under more and more restriction during the middle ages. But no restriction could suppress saints, was considered no sacrifice too great in the path of God." 7. Saintliness imparts an uncommon strength even to those that are otherwise weak. It is needless to repeat again the contribution of Ramananda, pioneer of the Bhati movement in medieval India for the eradication of social superstition and religious bigotry. He tried to develop the moral standard on uniterary basis. Without personal endeavour to raise the standard of morality, society can never be clean. The formation of character comes from the circumstances. Man forms his character out of good and also from bad, from the misery of life and also from happiness. He, who uses constantly the wrong thoughts and actions, turns into an immoral person. Swami Vivekananda, said in his 'Bhaktiyoga': "..... as soon as an animal researches a higher plane of existence, the lower kind of pleasures becomes less intense. In human society, the nearer the man is to the animal, the stronger is his pleasure in the senses; and the higher and the more cultured a man is, the greater is his pleasure in intellectual and other finer pursuits. So, when a man gets even higher than the plane of spirituality and of divine inspiration." Such inspiration from the divinity helps others, to make them perfect men.

7. Ibid.
Islam calls such an individual as 'Al-kamil' - a perfect man. The saints of the Bhakti era imparted spiritual education, which is nothing but a moral education, commonly it is called 'Religions education'. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan remarked: "Religious education depends far less on the spoken word than on the living examples set by the saints themselves, who live in God, clothed in love and immersed in service.

The saints are free from snobbery, and their daily tasks are charged with meaning, their slightest movements reveal the grace within and their words are weighted with wisdom. They abhor cruelty in every form and detest exploitation of man by man."

The saints of the devotional movement had tried to explain what religion and spiritualism mean. They dispelled conception of religion which prevailed among the common people. To them religion was nothing but 'Asthasiddhi' or Thaumaturgy which had no link with spiritualism. In the tenth century a Kashmiri woman saint Lallesvari denounced the Thaumaturgy:

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8. Inaugural lectures of Dr. S. Radhakrishan on the seminar of saints in Madras, 1955.
"Why cool flames, yogi? Stay the stream
Why dost walk feet upward in the sky?
Why milk a bullock? Why magic dream?
Why these base feats of the juggler try?"

A Christian mystic nun said: 'God walks even among the pots
and pipkins.' She was Teresa of Avila. The compassions of
the mystic saints were not limited to the human beings only,
they extended their love for all living beings.

Mystic Sufi saint Ma'ruf al-Karkhi (d.815 A.D.)
said: 'Bhakti (devotion) cannot be obtained by practice, it
is a gift from the Lord Almighty. This has a coincidence
with the Upanisadic verse.

Nayamatma valahinena lavyo, na madhayā bahunā
srutena
Yamevaisha Vrittvte tena lavya stashai atma
ViViNutoutanum Svama
( Katha Up.)
"The Atman (the supreme) soul cannot be attained by weak
personality not even by wit or by gathering information,
only he can attain it, if he is blessed by Him."

"It is not social service, in the conventional
sense that the saints do. It is service of God in the crea-
tures or manifestation. It is service born of the conviction
that the world is filled with God. God thus is the centre of the saint's life .......... It is the love of God or the universal vision of the supreme spirit that moves the saint to exert himself in the services of man and the world. Godly love so occupies the whole of the saints' heart that there is no room in it for hatred. The sufi saint, Rabia was once asked, 'Do you love God?' She unhesitatingly said, 'Yes'. Again she was asked, 'Do you hate Satan?' Equally unhesitatingly she replied: 'No, My love for God has so possessed me that no place remains for loving or hating anyone save Him'.

The final step in the path of Bhakti is the soul's surrender to the supreme spirit, the soul of the soul through thought activities. Service to the humanity is service to God. It is the true idea of a devotee. But the Almighty exists in every living being. A scripture of devotionalism says:

Sarvasmin sarvatthutastam sarvah savvaswarupadrtyk/

Sarvam tvattastatusca tvam namah SarvatmanahStute//

(Vishnupurana I. 12.71)

'Lord, Thou abidest in all; Thou art all;
Thou assumest all forms; Thou art the origin of all. Thou art the self of all. Salutation unto Thee.'

(tr.by Swami Yatiswarananda)

Their service to humanity is far above the political thinking.
Bhaktism: its influence on the mediaeval Indian history.

Origin of Bhakti Culture:

Bhakti, a Sanskrit word derived from the root 'Bhaj' which means a selfless love for the creator of the universe. Madhusudhana Sarasvati, a monistic philosopher has interpreted meaning of the word such as 'a psychic phenomenon devoted with the love for God.' But generally it indicates the terms of languages for the glorification of Godhood in any form.

In one of the ancient scripture Sandilya's 'Bhaktisutra', it is explained with an extensive connotation of a term: Sa paranuraktirisvare.' i.e. undivided love for the Lord of the universe is called Bhakti or devotion. The same idea on the Bhakti is depicted in another noted scripture on devotionalism 'Naradiya Bhakti Sutrani' speaks

Sa tasmin parampremarupa 1
Amritisvarupa ca 1 21
Yanlavdha puman siddhobhavati,
Amrito bhavati,
Tripto bhavati 3

'That, verily, is of the nature of supreme Love of God' - 2.

'And in its own intrinsic nature, Divine Love is nothing less than the immortal bliss of freedom (Salvation) itself, which comes unsolicited by the grace of God and by self-sacrifice.'

'Gaining that, man realize his perfection and divinity and becomes thoroughly contented.'

That Bhakti is firm love as it was the opinion of the exponents of the devotional school of thought from early days. Bhakti must not be always confused with the emotional excitement or eroticism. The preceptor of Jnanadeva, Nivritthinatha, warned his disciple in early of the thirteenth century about the misuse of devotional culture.

The term Bhakti, really the culmination of all yogas (four ways of spiritual life) to attain the supreme realization of the creator of the universe in all creators, expressing itself in the form of unselfish service to God in living beings in the spirit of worship, service to the fellow beings is worship of God as it is depicted in a verse of the Bhagavata (VII-14-36-Bhagavata).

Historical contribution of Bhaktism in formation of socio-spiritual thought.

Dr. A. Rasid, a noted Indologist has passed
remarks on his famous research work in 'Society and culture in medieval India': 'The Bhakti movement has had long history in India. As far back as the times of the Katha and Svatasvatara upanisad believers in God looked upon the supreme as personal God who bestows grace.'

A prayer from an upanisad:

Sa tanmayo hyamrto isosamtho
Jnah sarvago bhuvaasyasya gopta
ya iseeya jagato nityameva
nanya heturvidyate isanaya
Yo Brahmanam vidadhati purvam
Yo vai vedamscha prahinoti tasmai
Tam ha davam atmabuddhiprakasam
mumukshvibai saranamaham prapade

"He is the soul of the Universe, He is immortal. His is the Rulership; He is the All-knowing, the All-pervading, the Protector of the universe, the Eternal Ruler, None else is there efficient to govern the world eternally."

"He who at the beginning of creation projected Brahma (i.e. the universal consciousness), and who delivered the Vedas unto him - seeking liberation I go for refuge unto that effulgent one, whose light turns the understanding towards Atman."

(From Bhaktiyoga - S.V.) svetasvarata-upanisad vi.17-18.
The upanisad Svetasvatara is an old among the upanisads. It boldly declares that only that man realises the truth, who has an intensive devotion for the supreme Lord and the great teacher. Another upanisad Chandogya proclaims that: 'What indeed, one performs with knowledge, faith and meditation, that indeed, become more powerful'.

Dr. Ramnarayan Vyas says: "The upanisads, no doubt are primarily wedded to knowledge and claim to be the highest achievement of human speculation about supreme Reality. But the seers of the upanisads know very well that Bhakti is a safe, and generally convenient path of reaching the supreme. That is why the Kena, one of the earliest upanisads, declares with utmost certainty that the supreme is the object of worship. The Katha, which is also an old upanisad, in the same vein, proclaims, that the true self can be realised neither through the meditation of the scriptures, nor by much intelligence, nor by profuse learning. It can be realized only by him whom it chooses. The self can be realized only by the grace of God".

The Bhakti culture has contributed much for the formation of higher outlook for masses in the sphere of socio-religious society all over the world.

3. Rk veda 1.1.10.
4. (The) Bhagavata Bhakti cult and three advaita acaryas.

Ramnarayan Vyas. Delhi, 1977. p.27
qualities of a good citizen depends on advanced morality of a person, who lives in a society. The Srimad Bhagavad Gita is one of the opinion that if a man cultivates an intense devotion for the creator of the universe, certain gunas (human qualities) bestowed upon him to realise the truth (The Bhagavad Gita canto 14 verse 26). The Holy scriptures of different religions support such ideas. Islam has its undivided love for one impersonal God. According to christman Humpheres the Mahajana school of Buddhism is devoid of devotion and has respect than lower level for Bodhisattva. 5. Asvaghosa vindicates Bhakti (love/devotion) in a prayer in the form of prayer. * 
'I worship that venerable Buddha, who won the God vidhata by producing the best beauty, who defeated the sun by dispelling darkness from the hearts of the people, who vanquished the lustre of the moon of the sky by dispelling the pangs of the world from the minds of the people, and who is simply peerless in the world.' 6. It apparently shows that the Bhakti culture has direct leanings with the moral development of the common masses. The Jaina orders are not devoid of such trend in their religious progress as it is claimed by the savant person like Mrs. Sinclair Stevenson, 5. Buddhism - Christmas Humphres. London, 1962, pp. 161-162.
6. Translation of the verse by R. N. Vyas (from the Bhagavata Bhakti...etc.) p.32.
without the social gain, the follower of the Bhakti-cult
never interested in their gain. Sri Yamunacarya, the
preceptor of Sri Ramanujacarya (Circa 11th Century)
prayed to the Almighty nothing for his personal worldly gain, 
but to share the spiritual enlightenment. Thus he says : 

Na mra paramartham eva me
Srnu bignapanamakamagratth /
Yadi me na dayisyase tato
dayaniya natha durlabah //
Stotraratna, 50

'O Lord, first of all do Thou hear my prayer. I am speaking
only the truth and no falsehood. Unless Thou bestowest Thy
mercy on me. Thou wilt never get one more deserving than
myself'.

(Tr. rendered by Swami Yatiswaranda)

Yet Bhaktism had tremendous impact with the social structure
of the mediaeval India, the devotionalism saved the country
from the social disintegration as a force based on spiritual-
ism. The common people denied their social and religious
rights. Hindu law giver like Manu has allowed the Brahmins
(as a caste) to enjoy the solace of privileges of the Society
even in the mediaeval age of Indian history. Manu promulgated
a rule which was strictly mentioned by the rulers of the
land :
"A Canda, a village pig, a cock, a dog, a menstruating women, and even eunuch must not look at the Brahman while they eat."

(Cited by Dr. A. Rasid)

But the tradition lost the tract in the mediaeval centuries in the history of India. A challenge peeped into the country at this crucial juncture a powerful religion from the west propagated by prophet Mohammad preached in the main land of India with opposition and bloodshed in the first stage of proselytization and conversion of the Hindus. The Mohamedan saint, betterly known as sufis throw the challenge in India in the mediaeval age. Thus a new conscious created among the Hindu traditionalist in the name of protecting the main tenants of Hinduism. An intermingle thought covered the pyschisic sphere of the saints and savants of the age. Ramananda, a disciple of Swami Raghavananda, a rusticated saint of his monastery shouldered the responsibility for the resurrection of dead Hindu religion which had only the skeleton but not the vitality. Ramananda did away the insular social behauions of the Hindus by throwing his spiritual ability. Dr. K. M. Asraf stated the condition of religion which prevailed in mediaeval India.
'It has been rightly held that caste and the Hindu theory of Dharma encourage a feeling of charity and consideration towards both men and animals and lead to a general contentment among the people. It may be further conceded that the institution of caste has greatly contributed towards the preservation of Hindu Society. All these considerations, though very strong, are hardly sufficient to justify the system. Politically, it means the permanent domination of the higher classes over the lower, which results in the decay of both.' Ramananda revolted against authoritative regime and stagnant condition of society. He launched a movement with the weapon of non-violence in the fold of Bhaktism. At the critical period of India religious history, every thinking person was keenly aware of difficulty of the problem before him, and each tried to solve it according to his own light.

He was not really a founder of the Bhakti movement practically movement was in progress before he was born.

7. Life and conditions of the people of Hindustan - K. M. Asraf
   Delhi, (1959) P7.

8. (The) cultural heritage of India V.4 R. K. Mission Inst. of
   Culture, Cal., 1956.
   (Writings of Keshitimohan Sen)
His main contribution to Indian spiritual life was the synthetic thought from the cultural heritage of South India and acquired knowledge from the different philosophical ideas including the philosophical ideas and fraternal feelings of the Sufi mendicants. Ramananda borrowed ideas from all these different religious school of thoughts, but revitalized them the love and devotion of heart like the Sufi-saints.

'Though Ramananda used the popular name of Rama, his God was the God of love and mercy, without any imperfection not the unconditioned Brahman of the vedanta, but the beloved, the friend, and the Lord of one's heart.'

In social life, a devout soul emerged with devotion frequently contributes to the progress of social structure and to achieve the goal of human aspiration. The devotion makes a man perfect through self-sacrificing attitude. The devotionism preaches the gospel of the universal love and act as a go-between from the higher level of life of a society to a lower level of social beings.

9. Ibid.
Ramananda himself was a practical man and believed in reality of one personal God, but he never stressed much on the outward ritualistic performance of a daily life of a saint who has no link with social adjustments. He gave much emphasis 'On the direct experience of God attained through the practice of Bhakti' 10. A noted hymn which is well placed in the Granth Sahab, the holy scriptures of the Sikhism shows the following version of Ramananda:

'Whither shall I go, Sir? I am happy at home
My heart will not go with me
It hath become a cripple
One day I did have an inclination to go;
I ground sandal, took distilled aloe wood and many perfumes.
And was proceeding to worship God in a temple.
When my spiritual guide showed me God in my heart.
Whenever I go I find only water or stones.
But Thou, O God, art equally contained in everything.

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10. Society and culture in medieval India - A Rasid
The Vedas and Puranas all have I seen and searched to thou thither, it God be not here

O, true, Guru I am sacrifice unto Thee
Who hast cut away all my perplexities and doubts
Ramananda's Lord is the all pervading God;
The Guru's world cutteth millions of sin.

Above verse shows his intense inward love for God which is associated the social judgement for humanism. Idea of Ramananda and his philosophical thought was carried out by his twelve disciples in the different parts of India. Most of them are not literate persons, but they have their deep love for suffering humanity. The main characteristics of an ideal saint was reported by the observation of the mystic saints of Maharastra. 'The saints are disinterestedly generous clouds and fulfill all the aspiration of those that commit themselves to their care' 11. Bhakti (devotion) tried to give right perspective towards the fulfilment of a life. It saved the social life based on individual unit in the medieval age in Indian history by waning out the gross indiscipline came out from covetation of riches, women and wine. 'Every devotee is a powerful fighter against the forces of inequity and social degeneration.' 12

12. The Bhagavata; Bhakti Culture P13.
Love and liberation were main theme the mystic Bhakti movements in Islam and Hinduism in medival history of India.

Role of the mystic movement of Sufis in Indian medival society India.

Sufism was always with Islam, but revolted within the fold of Islam and maintained the Islamic discipline. 13. It is also a religion of love like the Vaisnavism of India and originality of Sufism goes to the Quran. Ibin Khalun a learned scholar of all ages holds the opinion that the word 'Sufi' derived from Sufi (wool) some honest Muslim surmised that they revolted against the extreme worldliness of Muslim powerful men and renounced personal desires for higher enjoyable life. They used the garments made from wool against the costly dresses used by the Muslim regal personalities. But there is another opinion exists as it was passed by Hujwiri that 'Sufi ' means 'purity ' (Safa-cleaner) Hesaid: 'Sufi is a blessing from God and the 'Wool' (Suf) is a proper dress of the cattle.' 14.

13. (The Quramic Sufism - Mir Valiuddin; Delhi, 1977, p. 6
14. Ibid. p.2
It may be doubted at the instance of uttering of Iman Uhazzali, a devout Muslim soul who existed (1058-1111 A.D.) in the century in Persia.

"When after acquiring proficiency in these sciences, I turned my attention to the methods of the Sufis, I came to know that their method attains perfection by means of theory and practice. The gist of their knowledge is to mortify the self and acquire freedom from baser passions and evil attributes so that the heart may get rid of the thought of any thing save God and to embellish at with Divine remembrance."

For the love of God he alone wondered in the lonely forests giving up his prestigious of a Qadi and habits learning of different branches of knowledge. From pangs of the heart he composed:

'O heart, thy high-prized learning of the schools Geometry and metaphysics rules Yea, all but lore of God is devils lore:
Fear God and leave this lore to fools. 16

That was the philosophy of the Sufis. The originality of sufism in Islam hold divergent views based on the following theories. 1. The spontaneous origin, 2. the view of the Esoteric Doctrine of the prophet 3. Aryan Reaction theory and 4. the Neoplatonic origin 17.

From the early stage sufism was not based on highly religious cult or philosophical arguments but it was highly ethical and environmental based mysticism in the fold of Islam. Later on sufism received undoubtedly inspiration by extra Islamic ideals.

"Thus it is held that Sufism was influenced by Indian philosophy, especially Buddhism, Vedanta, Christianity, Neo-Platonism, Gnosticism and also by Persian ideas" 18.

The Sufi saints had link with India from the seventh century. Al-Hallaj (858-913) came to India for a pilgrimage in ninth century. Most of the mystic sufi saints acquired knowledge not only from the saying the Koran. But they acquire knowledge from the different

18. Ibid. ..... ..... P 154
countries and different environs, as the Prophet himself stressed much on the need of acquiring knowledge for the individual progress and social advancement. But they never lost their basic thought, which the prophet propagated for the welfare of world population. They had been devotion for one form less God. When they came to India, they directly came in touch with the gospels of the Puranas, the Bhakti of both Saguna (qualified) and Nirguna (unqualified) from the Bhagavata scripture and its cult. In India they reiterated the saying of the Holy Koran which has a resemblance with the utterance of the upanisadas:

'Allah is the light of the heavens and earth ..... Allah guides to His light whom He pleases, and Allah sets forth parables for men, and Allah is cognizant of all things.'

The Sufi found a fertile land of preaching in India. The Muslim scholars, particularly of different school thoughts translated the different scripture of the different branches of knowledge in their spoken languages from the Indic language especially from Sanskrit.

'The mystic saints made many contribution in their own way to the social and cultural life of the period under consideration. They were a group of men of wide sympathies, broad minded liberal and tolerant.'
They played an important part in moulding the attitude and activities of the people. They were free from base pride, fearless yet humble, strong and yet they were tender to all classes of people. They had their high moral structure based on religion of catholicity.

In recent time Dr. Raja Ramanna said in a convocation address at Srinagar in the University of Kashmir in 15th October, 1984 that: 'It should be noted that while religion has brought large number of the people together, it has also separated them and made them flight against one another.' But such assumption is quite incorrect in case of non-political morally based true saints. There were also false Darvash in the sufi cult but a true Sufi-saint never misguided the people in wrong path. The Rationalist have questioned on their contribution. But in the age of Bhakti cult saint from the Hindus and Muslim sufi saints made a high castle in the practical field of life - building in mediaeval India. Most of them had no link with the state of administration yet they shouldered much woes of the masses of the Society. They had a philosophical realization on the oneness of Mankind. 'The sage though silent and still, acts a

19. Society and culture etc. (From the chapter 'Role of the Sufis in Society PP 176-209.
mighty catalyst and exerts on society a leavening influence, which though immediately imperceptible, express itself, in the long run in the higher culture and ethics of Society.* 21

In mediaeval in India Sages of the different Vaisnava school and the religious leaders (the Pir's different sufi-schools of thoughts saved the country from the degraded moral standards including the art and culture of the society. They taught the masses the true feelings of higher education through their spoken language. They also fought against the social oppressions just like Suttidaha (burning of the widows) and practising casteism as an way of oppression in the name of religion. They taught what was pragmatic outlook of a religion in a value-based society in mediaeval India. Their thought is still passing even to the mediaeval century of to-day life.