CHAPTER - II
This chapter deals with Islamic ways of worship as well as devotion, popularly known as Sufism.

In this section the views of Hindu authors have been analysed on the forms of Islamic worship. It includes prayer (*salah*), charity (*zakah*), fasting (*sawm*) and pilgrimage (*hajj*). The authors and their works have been selected to present the several possible views on the issue, nonetheless it is not exhaustive.

**Prayer (*salah*):**

The discussion includes the views of Hindu authors on various aspects of prayers in Islam. It is interesting to see the contrasting inferences derived from the same evidence, for example, whereas the importance of congregational prayer in Islam is read as a means of fostering brotherhood and equality, it is also portrayed as a cause for the Muslim dogmatization and hostility towards others. This discussion includes the comments of Ramakrishna Srivastava, Nitin Vyas, Bhagwan Das, M.K. Gandhi, Dayanand Saraswati, S.Radhakrishnan, V.S.Naipaul, Swami Vivekananda, J.G.Tiwari and Ram Swarup.

Ramashanker Srivastava finds the five pillars or fundamental beliefs as means of preparing an individual for

"further assent and self realisation" (Srivastava 1974:148)

However, five pillars of Islam are not fundamental beliefs but consist of
one belief and four practices. He opines that

"prayer has immense power to purify man and it saves him from lewdness, unrighteousness, lust, greed and evil acts. The whole creation prostrates and worship God" (Srivastava 1974:151).

He bases this opinion on the Quranic verse:

"Say: Lo! my worship and my sacrifice and my living and my dying are from Allah, Lord of the World."

He quotes the passages from the Quran, naming them as "prayers of Islam", consisting of Surah Fatiha, Surah Falaq, Surah Nass as well as the following verses:

"Creator of the heavens and the earth! Thou art my Protecting Friend in the world and the Hereafter. Make me to die submissive (unto thee), and join me to the righteous."

"My Lord, arouse me to be thankful for thy favour wherewith thou hast favoured me and my parents, and to do good that shall be pleasing unto thee, and include me in (the number of) thy righteous slaves."

Nitin Vyas notes that,

"religious duties have much significance in Islam" (Vyas 1982:184)

This is because, according to the author, Man's duty in Islam is to follow God's laws, also that worshipful obedience to God is the goal. He asserts that,
"God is to be constantly remembered and His realisation longed for" (Vyas 1982:183)

He regards prayers as one of the five pillars of Islam, as he remarks that,

"through it one realizes the primal essence of God. God's attributes are pure and perfect and devotional remembrance and intense feelings for Him help man tremendously." (Vyas 1982:184)

He asserts that the distinctive contribution of Islam is the

"conception of the Unity of God and simplicity of rituals in Islam." (Vyas 1982:216)

Bhagwan Das finds salah to be congruent with Christian Prayer and Vedic Sandhya-Upasana, so much so that he concludes that,

"they are almost like translation of one another" (Das 1939:422)

M.K. Gandhi asserts that.

"a prayer to be true has to be intelligible and definite. One has to identify oneself with it. Counting beads with the name of Allah on one's lips whilst the mind wanders in all directions is worse than useless" (Gandhi 1996:85)

He opines that

"God has a thousand names, or rather, He is name less. We may worship or pray to Him by whichever name that pleases us. Some call Him Rama, some Krishna, others call him Rahim, and yet others call Him God" (Gandhi 1996:88)

He narrates that repeating 'Ramanama' gives him solace, yet he notes that,

"a Christian may find the same solace from the repetition of
the name of Jesus, and a Muslim from the name of Allah." (Gandhi 1996:98)

He writes that,

"My Rama, the Rama of our prayer, is not the historical Rama, ............He belongs to all, I therefore see no reason why a musalaman or anybody should object to taking His name. But he is in no way bound to recognize God as Rama. He may utter to himself Allah or Khuda so as not to mar the harmony of the sound." (Gandhi 1996:100)

S. Radhakrishnan finds it difficult to dismiss

"the sense of majesty of God and consequent reverence in worship which are conspicuous in Islam" (Radhakrishna 1940: )

V. S. Naipaul in his record of journeys, rhetorically assumes that,

"if salvation could be compared to a banquet, prayer was ................like a tasty preparatory snack taken five times a day, a kind of paradisal food, never cloying, always sharpening the appetite." (Naipaul 1998:48)

Swami Vivekananda opines that

"there never was a religion started in this world with more antagonism" (Vivekananda 1994:VI,60)

Towards the worship of forms than Islam. He assumes that

“although the Jews, Mohammedans and Christians do not set so much importance upon the excessive external purification of the body as the Hindus do, still they have it in some form or other." (Vivekananda 1994:III,362)

He notes that,
"among Mohammedens the Prophets and great and noble persons are worshipped and they turn their faces towards caaba when they pray." (Vivekananda 1994:III,130)

He mentions that, the Mohammedens from beginning stood against worship of human incarnation. He notes that,

"they would have nothing to do with worshipping the Prophets, or the Messengers, or paying and homage to them, but practically, instead of one Prophet, thousands upon thousands of saints are being worshipped." (Vivekananda 1994:IV,121)

He retorts,

"the Mohammedens think that when they pray, if they try to form a mental image of the temple with the caaba, the black stone in it, and then turn towards the west, it is all right, but if you form the image in the shape of a church it is idolatry." (Vivekananda 1994:IV,44)

He informs that,

"a pitcher of water has to be present in the Mohammeden worship as a symbol of God filling the universe" (Vivekananda 1994:VII, 40)

In one of his lectures reported in Appeal avalanche, he mentions that,

"Mohammedens believed in the Old-Testament of Hindu (hebrew) and the New-Testament of the Christian. They do not like Christians, for they say they are heretics and teach man worship. Muhammad ever forbade his followers having a picture of himself." (Vivekananda 1994:VII,427)

J.G.Tiwari asserts that,
"quite unrivalled in the history of mankind have been the firmness of Muslims in their faith." (Tiwari 1987:21)

He elaborates that,

"millions laid down their lives and made unlimited sacrifices in various regions of soviet empire facing persecutions of inconceivable severity by Yarmolov in Czarist days and Stalin and his successors in the soviet regime." (Tiwari 1987:21)

He asserts that,

"history records many communities bartering away their religion for a better life. But not a single example of a Muslim having changed their religion even in the face of most condemnable brutalities on the part of their oppressors." (Tiwari 1987:21)

He lists out the reason for this virility of Islam, which includes,

"elaborate and assiduously observed practice of indoctrinating the member of the Ummat from generation to generation is done which consists of daily five prayers and eid prayers." (Tiwari 1987:22)

He quotes the verse of Quran that are recited in five daily prayers:

"the way of those on whom thou hast bestowed thy Grace, those whose (portion) is not wrath and who go not astray."

He concludes that,

"each one of the five daily prayers, Muslims regard themselves as a community distinct from the non-Muslims and repeat in their minds that the wrath of God falls upon the non-Muslims." (Tiwari 1987:23)
He regards the institution of prayer as one of the means of unity and dogmatism of its followers. He notes that,

"the immense importance of prayer for indoctrinating the Ummat is underscored by all scholars of Islam." (Tiwari 1987:24)

Here he quotes Shah Wali Ullah and Maulana Abul Hasan Nadwi, whom he titles as the "top most Islamic Fundamentalist". He quotes Shah Wali Ullah:

"the state of affairs and the programme of the life of Ummat can never be sound unless attention is paid to it at short intervals and after every little while."

Maulana Abul Hasan Nadwi writes:

"with the passing of the Prophet, the link that had been established between the earth and the celestial world for the new Revelation and Apostleship was broken. But it was necessary that the relationship between the man and his creator be maintained so that the process of fulfillment of his destiny could go on un-interrupted. In order to fulfill this need and to ummat to function as the deputy or representative of the Prophet after him. Two things were granted to him, the eternal book, the Quarn whose freshness never fades nor ceases, and Salat which also, like the Quran is full of vitality and unequalled in shariat forging a link with God and gaining an access to him."

He quotes the hadith:

"what separates a believer from apostasy is simply the salat."
He notes that,

"mosques are the spiritual centers of Muslims, the spring well of their guidance and indoctrination. As in the days of Prophet, today as well Muslim discuss there their collective problems, uplift their Islamic spirit daily and waves of jihad and martyrdom for the cause of Islam radiate from them."
(Tiwari 1987:26)

He supports his claim by giving the hadith:

"the salat celebrated congregationally is twenty-five times more valuable than the one celebrated at home or in the shop for when a Muslim performs ablution for it, and performs it well and goes to the mosque solely with the object of saying his prayer, his status is raised by one degree and a sin is forgiven at each step. When he begin the prayer the angels send salutations and blessing of the Lord upon him as long as he remains on the prayer mat and say, "O Lord, Bestow thy peace and blessing upon him and treat him with mercy."

He asserts that,

"the institution of congregational prayer performed with regimental uniformity provides the ummat many a times a day dozes of dogmatism and hostility toward non-Muslims."
(Tiwari 1987:26)

He quotes Maulana Mawdoodi:

"the prayer endows a muslim with a strong character and a wonderful capacity by which he can not only brave successfully the most violent storms of evil and falsehood but can even subdue them............If a Government does not establish Salat, Muslims are justified in over throwing
not establish Salat, Muslims are justified in overthrowing it." He concludes that, "this explains the extraordinary zeal with which muslim protect and ornament their mosque and go on erecting new ones wherever and whenever possible."

(Tiwari 1987:26)

In short for Tiwari, the prayers with its institution of mosque and congregation are nothing but sources of instilling in the minds of believers enmity towards non-Muslims.

Dayanand Saraswati quotes the verse:

"whichever way ye turn, there is the face of God. (2:109)"

and retorts:

"if this is true, why the Mohammedans turn their face towards Qiblah (ie the sacred Mosque at Mecca)? If it be argued that they have been commanded to do so to answer that they have also been permitted to turn their face in whatever direction they choose. Now which of these two (contradictory statements) should be held to be true. If God has a face, it can only be in one direction and not in all directions at one and the same time." (Saraswati 2003:662)

He discusses the verse:

"We have seen thee turning towards every part of Heavens, but we will have thee turn to Kibla which shall please thee. Turn then thy face towards the sacred mosque, and wherever ye be, turn your face, towards that part (2:139)"

Labeling it as the

"crudest form of idolatory." (Saraswati 2003:663)

He remarks that if Mohammedens claim that they do not believe Kibla to
be God then he reminds that,

"they too, whom ye call image-worshippers, do not regard the image as God. They profess to worship God behind the image. If you are image-breakers, why do you not break that big image called Kibla." (Saraswati 2003:663)

He suggests that,

"Muhammad expunged the worship of small images from the Moslim faith, but introduced into it the worship pf the sacred mosque (at Mecca) which is as big as a hill. Is this idol-worship on a small scale? You could free yourselves from image-worship and the like evil practices only by embracing the Vedic religion and not otherwise. Unless you give up the worship of your big image you should feel ashamed of yourselves and abstain from condemning the worship of small images found in other faiths and purify your hearts by avoiding idolatory." (Saraswati 2003:664)

Ram Swarup discusses the contrast between the Indian and Islamic traditions, and notes that,

"such problems as self-exploration and self-knowledge, problems of enduring concern for the spirituality of the Indian tradition" (Swarup 1984:23)

Is not the concern of hadith literature. He emphasizes that all the '203' chapters in the "Book of Prayer" of the "Sahih Muslim" relate to the external. He comments on Muslim prayer that it is

"not carried on in one tranquil posture, sitting or standing." (Swarup 1984:25)
He opines that for the Arabs

"the change of direction towards Ka'ba must have, made a strong appeal to arab nationalism." (Swarup 1984:26)

His understanding of the hadith, the whole earth is made a "mosque" for Muslims and given as a legitimate place of prayer is that,

"this is the idea of the world as a "mandated territory" bestowed on the believers by Allah." (Swarup 1984:27)

He further infers from this hadith that in Islam can be found,

"all the ideological ingredients of imperialism in any age: a divine or moral sanction for the exploitation of the barbarians or heathens or polytheists; their land considered as labensracum or held as a mandate." (Swarup 1984:27)

He notes the hadith:

"women can go to the mosque but they should not apply perfumes" adding

"a privilege not denied to men who can afford it." (Swarup 1984:28)

His conclusion of the hadith:

"when the supper is brought and prayer begins one should first take food"

is that,

"this rule may seem to lack piety but in some ways it is realistic. The believer is told to prefer supper to prayer." (Swarup 1984:29)

He opines that,

"Muhammad had no friendly eye for the nature." (Swarup 1984:31)
This conclusion is based on the hadith: "when there was on any day windstorm or dark cloud its effect could be read on the face of the Messenger of Allah, and he moved forward and backward in a state of anxiety." The author is of the opinion that through prayers, "five times a day, a pious Muslim is expected to declare that the Gods of others are false and that only his God is true."

(Swarup 1992:42)

Reflections:

The discussion and interpretation of prayer or salah in Islam records a plethora of views. The views distinctly give the interpretation of the writer, which may or may not be conciliatory with Islam.

While Srivastava, Vyas, Das, Gandhi and Radhakrishnan discuss the benefits and importance of prayer; Vivekananda, Tiwari, Saraswati and Swarup record its demerits. Vyas records the simplicity of rituals in Islam. Srivastava's discussion includes verses from the Quran, he finds a direct relation between prayers and purification of self. Radhakrishnan points to the reverence of God in Islamic worship. Das compares Salah with Sandhya-Upasana. Hence they prove that prayer or Salah is a means to realize God, His majesty that in turn help further ascent and provides solace. Affinity and comparison in various religions can be found. Prayers are prescribed by every religion. These commonalities authenticate Quran's claim that it came as a confirmation of earlier revelation. They
find prayer in Islam helps in inculcating the firmness of faith, a strong sense of community brotherhood, congregational affinity through mosque activities, importance of purity and a strong character that can resist even subdue evil.

Vivekananda has made flawed charges against Islam. i) Islam lacks adequate importance of purity. However Islam equates faith with cleanliness and confirms: cleanliness is half of faith. Also the presence elaborate discussions in Islamic sources on purity make this charge baseless. ii) Saints and people worship in Islam: This exhibits the ignorance of the basic message of Islam. Quran declares in Surah Nisa, verse:48: "Allah forgiveth not that partners should be set up with him; but He forgiveth whom He pleaseth: to set up partners with Allah is to devise a sin most heinous indeed." iii) Pitcher filled with water must be kept while praying. iv) Old Testament of Hindus and New Testament of Christians. Such comparison is unqualified lacking awareness of Hindu and Jewish traditions.

The objections raised by the latter group are the question of image worship and the dogmatisation through prayers. The attempt by Vivekananda, Saraswati and Swarup to equate the prayer in the direction of K'aba with image worship is distinctly against the fundamental doctrine of Islam. Ameer Ali records the rationale behind fixing this direction in his book, *The Spirit of Islam*. He records:
"in order to keep alive in the Moslem world the memory of the birthplace of Islam (the religion of all the prophets), Mohammed directed that during prayers the Moslem should turn his face towards Mecca, as the glorious center which saw the first glimmerings of the light of regenerated truth with the true extinct of a prophet he perceived the consolidating effect of fixing a central spot round which through all time, should gather the religious feelings of his followers; and he accordingly ordained that everywhere throughout the world the Moslem should pray looking towards the Kaaba......" (Ali 1990:167)

Syed Mahmudul Hasan expalins the concept of image worship. He notes:

"Shirk ul-`ibadah is a palpable sin for created things such as stones, idols, trees, tombs, heavenly bodies, forces of nature or demi-gods, sons and daughters of God, incarnation of God venerated besides the single supreme God. Shirk ul-`ibada means association in worship, prostration, saying prayers at the shrine, kissing any particular stone which are reminiscent of pagan practice of the Meccans. They are condemned as shirk." (Hasan 1962:55).

In the presence of such Islamic views, which regard idol worship as unpardonable sin, the opinions expressed by these Hindu writers become obsolete. God with His majesty and power can never be confined to any one place. Inspite of this a symbolic house was built to create one direction or qibla for prayers. Also to develop homogeneity and unity fixing one direction is imperative. Ka’aba and Hijr-e-Aswad are not the
objects of worship. Ka’aba is point of direction but *Hijr-e-Aswad* is of no value at all.

Although Tiwari wrongly quotes *Surah Fatiha* as an evidence to prove that prayers give dozes of dogmatism and hostility towards non-Muslims, his treatment and findings on the prayer in Islam is commendable. He has produced not just the Quranic verses and hadiths but also the comments of luminaries such as Shah Wali Ullah, Maulana Abul Hasan Nadwi and Maududi. Abul Kalam Azad encapsulates the essence and significance of this Suarh. He notes:

"Let us, for a moment, look at the Surat-al-Fatiha as a whole and see what types of mind it reflects or tries to build. Here is a person singing the praise of his Lord. But the Lord he praises is not the Lord of any particular race or community or religious group but Lord of all the worlds, Rabbul-'alamin, the source of sustenance and mercy uniformly for all the mankind. The devotee invokes God in the name of His attributes but of all His attributes, those of mercy and justice particularly strike his mind, as if divinity manifests itself for him wholly in divine justice and mercy, and that all he knows of his God is nothing except that his God is just and merciful. And then he bows down his Lord and utters: "thee alone do I worship; and from thee alone do I seek help." The devotee thus thinks of his Lord as an abiding source of all help to him in life and discards every thought of dependence on any other. Thus strengthened in spirit, he thinks of his duty in life. He feels that he must
pursue his life in a manner pleasing to his Lord. He therefore asks of God to give him the urge to pursue his life. This is his primary prayer. He therefore asks of his Lord to show and keep him to the path which is straight—the path trodden by those with whom God was always pleased. That is this concept of the straight Path: The path that he wishes to walk on is not the path devised by any particular race or by any particular community or by any particular religious group. The path that he has in view is that royal road the straight path which the founders of all religions and all truthful people have walked on, whatever the age or country they belonged to. In his anxiety to keep to his path, he seeks the protection of God. He wants to be saved from either straying away from that straight path or from taking to the path which wayward people have pursued, and while so wishing, he does not refer to the communities or religious groups to which such wayward people have belonged. What he asks for is the privilege to walk on a path, which has meant the happiness of all mankind, and not on a path, which has led to their ruin.

Think over. What type of mind does this all argue or aim to build? whatever view one may take, this is clear that the mind which the Surat-ul-Fatiha depicts is type of mind which reflects the beauty and mercy of God or Universal humanity, the mind which the Quran aims to build." (Azad 1962:1,193+).

The hadith from which Swarup infers Prophet's unfriendly eye towards nature, in reality depicts the wisdom and cautious nature of the Prophet,
which is expected out of any wise and balanced person in such situations of drastic climatic change.

He argues that women are stopped from using perfume in the mosque stands for inequality towards women. However, this is against the fundamentals of Islamic doctrine of gender relations and rights, which are based on justice. This act of the Prophet enforces the idea that Islam is vehemently against the undue objectification of women in society. Hence, it prohibits such actions, which may even slightly lead to the objectification of women. Conclusively such teachings show the respect and honour that has been attached with women in Islam. Permitting prayers in any part of the world does not indicate the concept of mandated territory. It shows the universality of Islam. His assessment that prayers in Islam are not performed in a tranquil position is refuted by several hadith, Abdullah B. Qatadah reported: Prophet said: when you come for prayer there should be tranquility upon you. [Sahih Muslim CCXXI, H:1253]

His view that Qibla or direction was a measure of Arab nationalism lacks the clear evidence. Prophet's change of qibla has been discussed by Fazlur Rahman, who in conclusion notes:

"there is nothing 'national' about this but a simple manipulation of the actual forces and materieux of history for the moral cause." (Rahman 1996:21)

Moreover even non-arabs who embraced Islam considered it as their
Qiblah, if it was a symbol of Arab Nationalism the non-arabs would have disagreed to accept it.

He views pilgrimage to Mecca as a process of nationalization of Arabs. In this regard, Abul Kalam Azad records:

"Abraham had come as a leader of mankind. He had constructed a central place of prayer, the Ka'aba and then prayed for the rise of a body of people devoted to God. It was a part of Divine Dispensation that a particular moment had to be fixed for the fulfillment of this prayer. When that hour arrives, it was marked by the advent of the Prophet Muhammad and as the result of his teaching and training the promised community aroused to be a model community, and it was entrusted with the task of educating mankind at large. This situation called for setting up of a center to radiate spiritual guidance to the people of the world, and the Ka’aba, the house of prayer chosen by Abraham, naturally furnished such a center. In fact the shifting of the Qibla to the Ka’aba was an announcement to this effect.” (Azad 1962:II,57)

Swarup acknowledges the realistic approach of Islam even in prayers, the injunction that if one is hungry and food is served, food must be given priority to prayers. His objection that all the 203 chapters on prayer deal with external is not correct. There are chapters which deal with devotional aspect. For instance some of such chapters are: CCLXVII- supplication in the night prayer,

CCLXXV-desirability of reciting the Quran in a sweet voice, CCLXXVII-
descending of tranquility by the recitation of the Quran, CCLXXXI-
excellence of listening to the Quran and asking one who has memorized it
from his memory and shedding tears while listening to the revelation
deliberating over it.

Hence these objections lack proper understanding and goes against the
established meaning and interpretations of the issues discussed. These
objections might arise by the superficial reading of Islam, however a
thorough study of these issues dispels the claims of Swarup, Tiwari,
Vivekananda and Saraswati.

Charity (zakah):

Zakah is a religious duty on a Muslim involving his wealth. It is an Arabic
word, which implies purity and growth. By giving the destitute their share
from wealth, a Muslim purifies it, at the same time according to the
Quranic assertion causes a growth. It is difficult to find an English
substitute for the word zakah. The common translations are charity, alms-
giving or even poll tax. However each of these terminologies have their
own connotations, inconsistent with the essence of zakah.

The authors discusses the Islamic teachings of zakah from the Quran and
the traditions of the Prophet. Few compare it with Hindu teachings, few
others with socialist and also with Marxist theories. It includes the
comments of Ramashanker Srivastava, Nitin Vyas, I.Samanta, Bhagwan
Das, K.D.Bhargava and Ram Swarup.

121
Ramashanker Srivastava’s comments and discussion on zakah is based on the verses of the Quran and a few traditions from the hadith literature. He opines,

"zakat is legal impost. It is a tax to be levied to the extent of one-tenth of one's property. It is one's religious duty to give alms to the poor" (Srivastava 1974:152)

He quotes the verse:

"the sadaqat (tax levied on Muslims are only for the poor, the needy, and those work (for these state revenues), and those whose hearts are to be won, and for (freeing) the necks, and the heavily indebted, and in the path of God, and for the way-fearers-a duty imposed by God, and God is the knower, the Wise."

He finds that

"when one pays zakat one does so not because of pity for the poor but for performing religious duty. Zakat enjoins upon one to have only as much as one requires." (Srivastava 1974:152)

He observes,

"the giving alms which one loves most is a spiritual virtue." (Srivastava 1974:153)

He quotes the verse:

"Ye shall never attain to goodness till ye give alms of that which ye love: and whatever ye give of a truth, God knoweth it."

He discusses the verse:

"there is no piety in turning your faces towards the east and the west, but
he is pious who believeth in God, and the last day, and the angels, and the scripture, and the prophets; who for the love of God disburseth his wealth to his kindred, and to the orphans, and the needy and the way-farer, and those who ask, and for redeeming the captive, who observeth prayer, and payeth the legal alms, and who are of those who are faithful to their engagements when they have engaged in them, and patient under ills and hardships, and in time of trouble—these are they who are just and these are they who fear the Lord." -and remarks that

"whereas prayer carries half way to God, fasting up to the door, zakat procures oneness with Him." (Srivastava 1974:152)

He notes that

"God bestows twice and often many times of the alms given by a person." (Srivastava 1974:153)

He quotes the verse: "If ye lend God a generous loan, He will double it to you and will forgive you for God is all-thankful, all-clement." also, "the likeness of those who expend their wealth for the cause of God is that of a grain of corn which produceth seven ears, and in each ear a hundred grains, and God will multiply to whom He pleaseth, God is liberal, knowing." The author discusses the verse: "A kind speech and forgiveness is better than alms followed by injury. God is self-sufficient, clement."

"O ye who believe! make not your alms void by reproaches and injury, like him who spendeth his substance to be seen of men, and believeth not
in God and in the Last Day.................No profit from their works shall they be able to gain." He concludes from these verses that,

"zakat is neither an act of philanthropy done out of piety for the poor nor is it to show one's dignity to others." (Srivastava 1974:153)

He notes that,

"the alms giver does not oblige anyone but purifies his own soul and seek God's grace" (Srivastava 1974:153)

in conclusion with the verse: "who giveth his wealth that he may grow (in goodness), and none hath with him any favour for reward, except as seeking the pleasure of his Lord, most high." He notes the saying of the Prophet: "O Aisha! turn not the poor away (from thy door)without giving him something, although it be a date. O Aisha! love the poor, and let them come near thee, God will bring thee nearer to Himself on the Day of Resurrection." He remarks that,

"alms-giving is a religious duty to help the beggars and indigent people and to contribute to mosques for use in the cause of God, which should be the minimum of one tenth of one's property." (Srivastava 1974:174)

Nitin Vyas asserts that,

"alms (jakat) expresses the compassion and solidarity of the community."

He reasons out that,

"the historical situation during the time of Muhammed necessitated the latter to tax the rich. This practice became a
religious deed in the course of time."

The author emphasizes that,

"it is decreed to be a good deed which returns with reward."

Also, that, "giving alms secretly has a high value" (Vyas 1982:184)

I. Samanta eulogizes the establishment of the system of zakat by the Prophet. While explaining the concept of jiziya, he notes that, the Prophet also made it obligatory on the part of believers to pay a poll-tax (zakat) for, "the welfare of the poor and the destitute." He asserts that,

"this is a unique measure adopted by the Prophet which though a voluntary contribution appeared as a salient peaceful socialist method of achieving greatest social good and cannot be underestimated." (Samanta 1988:126)

He observes that the Prophet

"envisaged a political society and its gradual transformation into a welfare state by the principle of mutual adjustment and co-existence without revolution and bloodshed." (Samanta 1988:126)

He emphasizes that, what Karl Marx and Eugels propounded in their political theories in the 'Daskapital' and the 'Communist Manifesto', was in reality achieved by the Prophet through a process of peaceful transformation. He compares the two theories, one which indicated that the process of such transformation should be through a conflict of class, revolution and blood-shed and the other gives a theory of zakat. He concluded that it was this theory of zakat which,
"practically envisaged a Socio-Political system in which there was hardly necessity of conflict, revolution and bloodshed." (Samanta 1988:126)

Bhagwan Das asserts that,

"all religions equally enjoin discriminate 'charity' to the deserving, *patredana, zakat* and the construction of 'pious works'." (Das 1939:444)

K. D. Bhargava notes that in Islam,

"charity is no longer a voluntary act of individual, it becomes a public duty, not only for the state, but also for the individual." (Bhargava 1961:3)

Ram Swarup opines that the *zakat* is

"an obligatory payment made by the Muslims to the new state that was forming, and to be spent by its representatives. In this form, those who paid *zakat* were resentful, and those who spent it actually acquired a new source of power and patronage." (Swarup 1984:33)

In his opinion the 'Book of *zakat* of *Sahih Muslim* is concerned with the question of power." He traces the "rhetoric on charity" from the background of a migrant Muslim community in Medina, who were initially depended upon the good will and charity of the people of Medina. Here the author remarks that,

"*zakat* was solely meant for the brothers in faith, and everyone else was excluded on principle. This has been the Muslim practice ever since." (Swarup 1984:33)

While discussing the usage of *zakat* funds, he explains the Quranic verse
emphasizes that two items, 'deserve special attention'. These two items according to author are 'in the service of Allah' (fi sabili'allah) and 'gaining over (or reconciling or inclining) the hearts (muellefa qulubuhum)-(9:60)

He then explains these two terms at lengths, according to him, "in the service of way of Allah" means religious warfare, or jihad. Zakat funds are to be spent on buying arms, equipments, and houses. The second item, "gaining or reconciling hearts", means "bribes" in unadorned language."

(Swarup 1984:34)

He concludes that the institution of zakat was

"an important limb of the Prophet's religious offensive and diplomacy." (Swarup 1984:34)

Reflections:

A unanimous view of zakah in Islam emerges with the exception of Swarup, who reads zakah as a 'question of power'.

Srivastava, Vyas, Samanta, Das and Bhargava emphasize the various distinguishing features of zakah in an effective manner. Srivastava's discussion emerges distinctive due to its treatment of drawing evidences from the Quranic verses and the traditions of the Prophet. His understanding of zakah is proper and comments on the rewards of zakah are commendable. However his assertion that zakah is used in the construction of mosque and that the rate of zakah is one-tenth of one's
property cannot be qualified. The categories of those to whom zakah can be given are already explained. Similarly the rate of zakah varies from kind to kind, it is only for the crops that the rate is $1/10^\text{th}$, for other categories it is 2.5% of the savings per lunar year.

Swarup takes objection on two of the categories mentioned in the Quran on the dispensation of zakah. From these he infers zakah to be a means of 'religious offensive'. He finds it objectionable that zakah can only be distributed to Muslims. However, there are other modes of charity defined as sadaqah, which can be given to non-Muslims too. Murata and Chittick have explained this rule of priority in case of zakah. They note:

"Islam asks Muslims to put their own houses in order first. Only then are they expected to look at other people's houses, according to the instructions given by God" (Murata, Chittick 1995:16)

Fazlur Rahman clarifies that zakah besides providing the spiritual benefits,

"contributes enormously towards producing that cohesiveness and spirit of solidarity which is specially necessary for a young struggling community and which is still a palpable characteristic of the Muslim community to this day." (Rahman 1966:15)

Moreover since it is a religious duty, it can be executed only by involving those who share the similar faith.

Vyas's comment that it emerged as a historical necessity does not take
into consideration that this duty is found in all the religions. Samanta has briefly compared the revolution brought about by the Prophet and the revolution of Marx and his comments on the methodology of the Prophet is praiseworthy. He uses the word poll tax for zakah not differentiating between the essence of zakah- a religious requirement for the purity of self and tax which is levied by the state that can be lawful or unlawful. Das’s assertions of comparing zakah with charity in other religions has neglected the its spirit.

**Fasting (sawm):**

The authors in this discussion have utilized the Quranic verses, hadith as well as the works of Muslim authors. The discussion affirms the varied reading of the fasting or sawm. It includes the comments of Ramashanker Srivastava, Nitin Vyas, Dayanand Saraswati and Ram Swarup.

Ramashanker Srivastava analyses 'fasting' by discussing the verses of Quran, Prophetic traditions, as well as the works of a few writers. He asserts that,

"fasting for the whole of ninth month Ramadan during the daytime is a rigorous discipline for curbing the baser urges of men." (Srivastava 1974:151)

He quotes the verse: "The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Quran, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs of guidance, and the criterion (of right and wrong). And whosoever of you is present, let him
fast the month, and whoever of you is sick or on a journey (let him fast the same) numbers of those days. Allah desireth for you ease; He desireth not hardship for you; and (He desireth) that you should complete the period, and that ye should magnify Allah for having guided you, and that peradventure ye may be thankful." He deduces from this verse that,

"fasting is a spiritual exercise which makes................pious and spiritual." (Srivastava 1974:151)

The author also quotes a passage from the work of Athar Husain titled, "Prophet Muhammad and his Mission". It says:

"concrete efforts made over a period of one month to lead a pious life of a very high standard fortify the will of the believer, lay down the pattern to be followed during the rest of the year and assist him in following it. Along with the spiritual benefits one derives from fasting, temporal advantages in the matter of health, discipline and development of will power etc. are also great. The person who fasts realizes for himself the pangs of thirst and hunger and is inclined to be more charitably disposed towards his unfortunate brethren."

The author is of the opinion that fasting

"subordinates one's animal nature to reason and spirit." (Srivastava 1974:151)

He notes that,

"fasting is obligatory in the month of Ramadan, the month in which revelations of God have said to come. It continues for twenty-eight days of the month of the lunar year."
Nitin Vyas remarks that, "one must remain without food and meditate God in the month known as Ramzan." He discusses the benefits of fasting that it "generates self-control, tolerance and sympathy for starving and hungry men." (Vyas 1982:184)

Dayanand Saraswati quotes the verses from the Quran and interprets them in a fanatic zeal. He quotes: "You are allowed on the night of the fast to approach your wives, they are your garment and ye are their garment. God knoweth that ye defraud yourself therein, so turneth unto you and forgiveth you! now, therefore, go in unto them with full desire for that which God hath ordained for you; and eat and drink until ye can discern a white thread from a black thread by the daybreak." (2:183) He infers that, "it seems that at the time of the Muhammadan religion came into being or before that period some (Arab) must have asked a follower of the Purans as to what was the mode of observing the Chandrayana fast, the latter being ignorant of the true method of observing this fast, which consists in decreasing or increasing in the digits of the moon and taking one's food in the middle of the day, might have told him that one should take the food as on seeing the moon. The Mohammedans have thus adopted the Chandrayana fast in a corrupted form. But there is one great difference between the two fasts, sexual intercourses is forbidden in the Chandrayana but is permitted in the Mohammedan fast since it is said (in the Quran): "go in unto them with full desire."
Again the Mohammedans are allowed to eat at nighttime as often as they like. Now what kind of fats is to eat during the night and abstain from food during the day? It is contrary to the laws of nature to take one's food during the night and abstain from it during the day." (Saraswati 2003:665)

Ram Swarup finds that,

"fasting in the Muslim tradition is rather different from fasting in many other religious traditions" (Swarup 1984:45)

He finds the Muslim tradition different because the Prophet forbade the practice of uninterrupted fasting (sawm wisaI)"out of mercy" for his companions. He narrates the Hadith: "the difference between our fasting and that of the People of the book is eating shortly before dawn." The author thus concludes that, this difference,

"distinguishes the Ummah of the Islam from other Ummahs" and "hammers" into its consciousness the sense of its separate entity which is the first step towards prosperity of any nation." (Swarup 1984:46)

He describes the merits of fasting by giving two hadiths: "the breath of the observer of fast is sweeter to Allah than the fragrance of musk." And, "on the day of Resurrection, there will be a gate called Rayyan in Paradise, through which only those who have fasted will be allowed to enter....and when the last of them has entered it would be closed and no one would enter it." The author never forgets to mention that, the recompense of one who combines fasting with jihad will be immense. He quotes the hadith:
"every servant of Allah would remove because of this day, his face from the Fire of Hell to the extent of seventy year's distance."

Reflections:

The discussion on fasting or sawm forms two major groups. One group discusses the merits and benefits of fasting in Islam while the other group finds certain rules related to fasting objectionable.

The first group includes views of Srivastava and Vyas. Srivastava rightly defines the purpose of sawm as a spiritual exercise instrumental in curbing the baser urges of men. However it is either 29 or 30 days in the month of Ramadan in a lunar calender and not 28 days as he mentioned. Vyas assertion that fasting generates self-control, tolerance and sympathy for hungry men is admirable.

Saraswati regards Islamic way of fasting a corrupted form of Chandrayana fast, his speculation is not confirmed by authentic historical facts and hence can be regarded as false. Fasting or abstentions prescribed in every religion, with its own idea of self-restrained. For e.g. Islam's premise for fasting is not to harm oneself as Quran prescribes: "Allah intends every facility for you; He does not want to put you to difficulties." (Surah Baqarah: 185) Consequently even for self-disciplining such laws are promulgated which are not harmful or go against natural laws. In contrast, Hindu ideal of Moksha or Nirvana is to destroy the body in order to achieve salvation, it is self-destructive in nature. Saraswati's claim that
Prophet copied fast from Chandrayana fasting is his unawareness of Islam's concept of fasting. Fasting were prescribed for earlier Prophets and their followers as well. "O Ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that (ye may learn) self-restraint. (Surah Baqarah:183) The fasting with its regulations of eating only at night is not harmful for the body. On the contrary it has been found that the method of abstinence from food and water throughout the day is medically helpful for the body. It helps in eliminating toxics from the body and increases the intestinal absorption. His objection is boomeranged; since how natural is it, to fast during the whole day and whole night?

Swarup's main concern is the sense of alienation that fasting in Islam creates amongst, its followers. It is more of self-awareness and self-realization that Islam aims at developing in its followers. His discussion on fasting covers various dimensions; particularly his mention of sehri is praise worthy. However, his effort at equating the fasting and jihad is erroneous, the evidence or hadith that he cites does not corroborate his claim sufficiently.

Hajj (pilgrimage):

Hajj or the journey to Kaaba in the month of Dhul-hajj is a duty enjoined upon every Muslim who can afford to undertake it, once in his lifetime. Writers such as Ramashanker Srivastava, Nitin Vyas, Bhagwan Das,
Swami Vivekananda, Dayanand Saraswati and Ram Swarup have discussed the hajj. A few of them have discussed the topic by giving the relevant verses from the Quran as well as Prophetic traditions. Some others have tried to draw a parallel between the Hindu and the Muslim pilgrimage, while some others have equated the Hajj as a gathering of idol-worship round the kaaba itself.

Ramashanker Srivastava gives a passage from the book: “Prophet Muhammad and his Mission” by Athar Husain. He cites:

"literally Hajj means an effort. In essence it means a great effort of assimilating oneself with the will of God. In gratitude to God and in obedience to His will, believers from all parts of the world assemble in all humility to forget themselves and their mundane affairs, to be transported to their divine Presence and enrich the sense of God in their consciousness."

He narrates the history of Kaba and declares that,

"Mecca is the most sacred place of worship for it has been purified by Abraham and Ishmael." (Srivastava 1974:154)

In addition he quotes the verse: "And when We made the House (at Mecca) a resort for mankind and a sanctuary, (saying) take as your place of worship the place where Abraham stood (to pray). And we imposed a duty upon Abraham and Ishmael (saying), purify my House for those who go around and those who meditate therein and those who bow down and prostrate themselves (in worship)." He describes the merit of hajj saying
"brings a sense of Islamic unity and brotherhood amongst the peoples of different races and countries. It is a place for exchange of spiritual experiences and views. On this sacred spot people join in all humility in the glorification of God, discuss Islamic ideals and tread the sacred birthplace of Islam. One re-lives the memories of Muhammed's effort, sacrifice and suffering and forgets about one's mundane affairs. One comes back to God, as it were and enkindles his soul by the celestial fire of God." (Srivastava 1974:154)

For Nitin Vyas,

"pilgrimage(haj) is assigned to a Muslim to visit Mecca and Medina at least once in a life"

He acknowledges that, "it helps spiritually." The author further explains the pre-requisite of taking this journey that,

"before going to this place, man must read the Holy Quran and remember Him." (Vyas 1982:185)

Bhagwan Das explains the reasons and the account of construction of Kaaba, that,

"the Prophet Muhammad destroyed the three hundred and sixty idols of Mecca, because he perceived the ill effects of excessive idolatry. Yet, realizing the needs of human heart, he preserved one viz. the temple built by Abraham, Kaba, the cube, with its Hajr-al-Aswad and Hajjar-al-Yaman, and with great foresight made it the principle place of Islamic worship.

He defines it as
"a uniting center of an ordained pilgrimage, the Hajj." (Das 1939:453)

He compares the rites of Hajj with the Hindu religion that,

"the pilgrims drink the water of the well and sprinkle it over their bodies, and like the Indian avastiya (dhausti-dhoti) and Uttariys; make tawaf, pari-krama circumambulation of the temple." (Das 1939:454)

Dayanand Saraswati quotes the verse: "When We decreed that the Kaba is sacred, you should go to Abrahams place for prayers"(2:117) and argues that,

"had not God appointed sacred place before He sanctified kaba? If he had, where was the necessity of consecrating Kaba? But if He had not, it is indeed a pity that those who were born before that period had to go without a holy place. Perhaps it had not struck God to consecrate a place like Kaba before that." (Saraswati 2003:563)

Swami Vivekananda finds in the rites of Hajj, evidences of symbol-worship. He remarks that,

"the Mohammedan, who thinks that every ritual, every form, image or ceremony, used by a non-Mohammedan is sinful, does not think so when he comes to his own shrine, the Caaba."

He cites further that,

"when he makes a pilgrimage there, he must kiss the black stone in the wall of the shrine. All the kisses that have been imprinted on that stone, by millions and millions of pilgrims,
will stand up as witnesses for the benefit of the faithful on the last day of judgement. Then there is the wall of zim-zim Mohammedan's believe that whoever draws a little water out of that well will have his sins pardoned, and he will, after the day of resurrection, have a fresh body, and live for ever."

(Vivekananda 1994:II,39)

In his 'Memoirs of European Travel', he while citing the streamer coming from Mecca with a cargo of pilgrims notes that,

"before the time of Mohammed, it was the custom to circumambulate round the caaba temple in a state of nudity; since his time they have to wrap round a cloth. It is for this reason, that our Mohammedans unloose the string of their trousers, and let their cloth hang down to the feet."

(Vivekananda 1994:VII,348)

Ram Swarup while discussing the famous Canonical of Hadith literature viz. 'Sahih Muslim' remarks that in the long book of pilgrimage (kitab-al-hajj) containing 583 traditions, there is not a single one that remotely suggests the idea of the

"inner pilgrimage about which mystics speak so much."

(Swarup 1984:xv)

He comments further that,

"the book on Hajj (setting out) is full of ceremonial details which have little interest for non-Muslims. Its ninety-two chapters contain minute instructions on the rites and rituals of the pilgrimage providing useful guidance to a hajji (pilgrim) but of dubious value to a traveller of the Spirit."

(Swarup 1984:49)
The author opines that,

"from the viewpoint of Muslim theology, the whole idea of pilgrimage to Mecca and the Kaba is close to being idolatrous."

In his opinion,

"even the very first Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca under the leadership of Muhammed was perhaps more of a political demonstration and a military expedition than a religious congregation." (Swarup 1984:49)

The author sketches the "Farewell Pilgrimage" of the Prophet as

"a demonstration of the power of Muhammad." (Swarup 1984:50)

Reflections:

Amongst all the Hindu writers discussed here, majority compares worship at Kaba with the image worship. Only a minority consisting of Srivastava and Vyas accord positive statements about pilgrimage or hajj in Islam. Vivekanada, Swarup, Das present the former view.

Srivastava shows from Quranic verses that hajj promotes unity and brotherhood and the entire journey rekindles the soul. His discussion stands unique due to its coverage of diverse materials. Vyas also shares the idea that Hajj helps to attain spirituality. He misunderstands journey to Medina as part of hajj.

Vivekananda and Das have comments about water of zam-zam and kissing the black stone; they appear to hold the idea that these rituals are compulsory and would grant paradise in exchange. However such
teachings does not have any proof in Islamic sources. The other main
issue raised by Swarup, Vivekananda and Das is the image worship. These
authors equate hajj with image worship and further attempt to justify
image worship.

Das efforts of finding commonalities between the rites of hajj and the
Hindu rites are admirable. It is similar to the Quranic assertion of Surah
Hajj, verse:67: “To every people have We appointed rites and ceremonies
which they must follow: let them not then dispute with thee on the
matter...” Therefore it is natural to find similarities between practices of
various religions. His postulate that excessive idolatory is found harmful
is not a correct understanding. Even slight idolatory is condemned in
Islam.

Circumambulating round the Ka’aba in nudity was a rare practice of a few
ascetics. The tribes of Mecca due to their connection with Ka’aba
considered only their clothes appropriate and holy for the rituals, those
from outside tribes used to borrow clothes from Meccans for the
performance of rites. But others who were unable to acquire would find
their clothes unfit for this ritual and hence used to perform it in nude.
However, even in those times women never performed it in nudity.
Moreover this practice was not encouraged even at that time. He stumbles
further by connecting Ihram with this nudity, shows his ignorance of the
basic information about Islam. A dress code for men has been prescribed
from the viewpoint of homogeneity and simplicity. Adornments and embellishments have always been a measure of financial status and ethnicity. By prescribing a simple dress unification is developed among the people who participate in this important form of worship in consonance with the aim of hajj.

Saraswati's comments exhibit his unawareness of the historical fact that Ka'aba was built before Prophet's time.

The authors have wrongly equated rites of hajj with image worship. They neglected the historical fact that Azan or call to prayer was given by mounting up on Ka'aba. An image, which is worshipped, has reverence and is never trampled upon, but this historical fact cancels any trace of idolatry attached with Ka'aba.

Swarup's argument that first Muslim pilgrimage under Muhammad was a military expedition is not correct, since the Prophet was armless so were his companion. His argument that hadith books on 'hajj' lack 'inner dimension' and deal elaborately with the rituals. However, it must be noted that the hadith collections are a source of guidance, a kind of catalogue for the believers to learn the Prophet's way of performing hajj. Hence in keeping with this objective, the books serve its purpose. Although the mystics have emphasized the inner pilgrimage, they never stopped from hajj. Their assertions are to glorify the essence of the spirit of the hajj and not as Swarup understood to shun it altogether.
Tasawwuf:

Tasawwuf through time has acquired a plethora of views and ideas, some of these have become part of Tasawwuf so much so that it is difficult to differentiate them. Definition of Tasawwuf is diverse; one view regards it to be entirely foreign to Islam, having Christian, Buddhist and Hindu elements. The others like Husain Nasr, Prof. A. Schimmel, Dr. M. Iqbal and Dr. Valiuddin and mostly modern Muslim scholars regard that it has its basis in Islam, Shariah and Prophetic model. The third group consisting of Orientalists like Goldziher and Nicholson has distinguished between the sulism of poverty, renunciation and devotion from Prophetic Islam and the Sufism of love, ecstasy, fana and illumination from external influences. The fourth group consisting of Dr. Abd’l-Qadir Mahmud, Dr. Abu’l-Wafa’l-Ghanimi’l-Taftazani and Dr. Ibrahim Madkur Buyuni have differentiated between an orthodox Sufism (*al-tasawwuf*’l-Sunni) formulated by Al-Ghazali (d.505/1111) from the heart of Islam and a philosophical Sufism (*al-tasawwuf*’l-falsafi) developed by Ibn’l-‘Arabi (d.638/1240) from foreign elements. (Ansari 2004:61)

And a fifth group of scholars like Titus Burckhardt and Frithjof Schuon regard ‘Arabi’s Sufism as the true and real Sufism and the Sufism of Ghazali and others as a religious rather than a mystical enterprise. (Ansari 2004:62)
On the other hand Sufi's they are not unanimous in defining Tasawwuf. Earliest sufi writers like al-Sarraj (d.378/988), al-Kalabadhi (d.390/1000), Abu Nu’aym (d.430/1038) and al-Qushayri (d.465/1072) claimed Sufism to be consistent with Quran, Sunnah, theological formulations and even juristic work. They interpreted and reconciled sufi sayings which appeared to be inconsistent and disowned those which were discordant. (Ansari 2004:62) Ghazali instead of interpreting Sufism and reconciling it with the Prophetic Islam as his predecessors did interpreted the Prophetic religion itself in the light of sufi ideas, experiences and practices and demonstrated that Islam when properly understood was not different from Sufism. Further ‘Abd’l-Qadir’l-Jilani (d.561/1166), Shihab’l-Din’l-Shrawardi (d.632/1234) strengthen it except the speculative aspect of his work. A similar effort was made by Ibn’l-Arabi (d.638/1240) where he emphasizes sufi experiences and institutions. However, Ibn Taymiyah (d.728/1327-8) distinguished Prophetic piety from sufi piety and criticize the sufi ideas and ways that were incompatible with Prophetic religion. (Ansari2004:63) Later for the first time Sirhindi looked at the whole tradition of Sufism in the light of Prophetic Islam. He differentiated between the Prophet’s way (tariq-I-nubuwat) to God and the sufi way (tariq-I-wilayat). A century later Shah Wali Allah too differentiated between sufi way and the prophetic way. (Ansari 2004:66)
endeavour was further elaborated by Shah Ismail (d.1246/1830) in his work *Sirat-I-Mastaqim*.

Taswwuf or mysticism in Islam has been dealt by various scholars. These discussions are based on several sources like Quranic verses, Prophetic traditions as well as Persian and Urdu poetry of various Sufis. The responses are varied and at times contradictory, for example, many have tried to prove that Sufism was a borrowing from Vedanta, while others prove that it was Sufism, which influenced Bhakti Movement in India. A few writers in order to synthesize the Islamic and Hindu beliefs have tried to prove beliefs such as human incarnation, transmigration of souls etc. in Islam. This discussion includes the comments of K.D.Bhargava, Ramashanker Srivastava, B. N. Pande, S, Radhakrishnan, Pandit Sunderlal, Bhagwan Das, Tarachand, Swami Vivekanada, Suhas Majumdar, M. A. Karandikar, Ram Swarup and Champat Rai Jain.

K. D. Bhargava asserts that,

"Islam recognizes the capacity of everyone to attain perfection, as each person is potentially God's lieutenant on earth." (Bhargava 1961:4)

He supports his claim by quoting pieces of poetry from the work of Claud Field, titled 'The Mystic and Saints of Islam', and also, from the Mathnavi of Jalal-ud-din Rumi.

Claud Field writes: "In each human spirit is a Christ concealed,
To be helped or hindered, to be hurt or healed,

If for any human soul you lift the veil,

You will find a Christ there hidden without fail."

Jalal-ud-din Rumi writes:

"From the inorganic we developed into the vegetable kingdom,

Dying to the vegetable we rose to animal,

And leaving the animal we became men,

Then what fear that death will lower us?

The next transition will make us an angel,

Thus shall we rise from angels and merge in the nameless,

All existence proclaims, "Unto Him, shall we return."

Author explains quoting instances of various writings that,

"to Muslim Saints and Sufis union with God is the ultimate end of existence, and a long line of Muslim Sufis, whose brilliant work has illumined Muslim faith, regard absorption in God as the goal of a Sufi's perfection." (Bhargava 1961:4)

He quotes a Muslim Mystic:

"when a man becomes annihilated from his attributes he attains to perfect subsistence, he is neither near, nor far, neither stranger nor intimate, neither sober nor intoxicated, neither separated nor united, he has no name or sign or brand."

He gives Quranic verse: "Oh, thou soul which art at rest, return unto thy Lord, pleased and pleasing Him, enter thou among my servants, and enter
thou my garden of felicity."

The author also quotes the saying of Caliph Ali: "Say not that man is compelled, for that is the attribution of tyranny to God, nor say that man has absolute discretion-rather that we are furthered by His help and grace in our endeavor to act righteously and We transgress because of our neglect of His commands."

He notes that, there were no less than 175 sufi orders but

"there were some which produced a profound effect on the community by their saintly lives and missionary fervour."

(Bhargava 1961:171)

Amongst the list of most famous orders, he includes: (1) Qadriya (2) Naqshbandiya (3) Sanusiya Order. The author gives an account of Sufism in India, listing various prominent Sufis from India. Although he did not mention Chishtiya order in the above list, he mentions the place and importance of Moin-ud-din-Chishti. He claims that,

"Bengal was converted mainly by a succession of peers and maulvis from Jaunpur in U.P." (Bhargava 1961:173)

The author discusses the decline of Sufism, listing out two main reasons for it. Firstly that

"through the ages, Sufism had lost its pristine purity and had degenerated into formalism and ceremonialism."

Also, that the most powerful centers of sufism were subjected by the

"advance of Europe in Asia, and the progress of Russia in Bukhara and Khiva." (Bhargava 1961:174)
The author enumerates several theories of the origin of Sufism. He gives Ibn-Khaldun's account of Sufism as mentioned in Prologomena:

"This is one of the religious sciences which were born in Islam. The way of Sufis was regarded by ancient Moslems and their illustrious men the companion of the Prophet (al-sahaba), the successors (al-Tabun), and the generation which came after them as the way of Truth and salvation. To be assiduous in piety, to give up all else for God's sake, to turn away from worldly goods and vanities, to renounce pleasure, wealth and power, which are the general objects of human ambition to abandon society, and to lead in seclusion a life devoted solely to the service of God these were the fundamental principles of Sufism, which prevailed among the companions and other Muslims of old time. When, however, in the second generation and afterwards worldly tastes became widely spread, and men no longer shrank from such contamination, those who made piety their aim were distinguished by the title of Sufis or Mutasawwifa (aspirants to sufism)"

He negates the idea that Sufism originated through Indian system specially Vedanta Sara. He argues that there were little intercourse between Persians and Indians. Moreover, Muslims were introduced to the Vedanta system only by the accounts of Al-Beruni. Whereas by this time the ideas of Sufism had crystallized into powerful school.

Nevertheless, the author agrees with Von Kremer that...

"later developments of Sufism was influenced by the
Vedanta system and that the Bhakti movement greatly influenced Indian Sufism." (Bhargava 1961:176)

He asserts that, sufism is more indebted to Neo-platonism than to any other system. He notes that,

"leaders of orthodoxy both shia and sunni, were opposed to Sufism because of its eclectic doctrines, and it was only Ghazali's powerful personality and brilliant intellect which induced the orthodox to accept Sufism within its fold." (Bhargava 1961:176)

He notes that,

"Sufism regard love as the sovereign alchemy, which transmutes humanity's mortal clay into divine essence." (Bhargava 1961:178)

He asserts that there were women Sufis as well. He cites the example of Rabia (d.135A.H), Aisha daughter of Jafar-as-Sadiq (d.145A.H), Fatima of Nusaybur (d.332A.H), and Lady Nafisa, the contemporary of Ashshafi. The author remarks that,

"The distinction in Roman Christendom that a woman cannot be a priest falls away for in Islam there is neither priest nor laymen. They lived either as solitaries or in conventional life exactly as did the men." (Bhargava 1961:179).

Ramashanker Srivastava's idea of sufism is that,

"the sufi cult developed the way of love or devotion to God. The name sufi is attributed to the mystics of Islam who spread the movement of deep devotion. The sufi give
importance to ecstasy in which the human self falls in the love of God. (Srivastava 1974:174)

He quotes an Arabic Mystic:

"the pronouns of the second person has gone out of use. Both of us are a single worshipper..............None prayed to me but myself." He further describes the thought of Jalal-ud-din Rumi that according to his philosophy: "God resides in Iblis, Pharaoh, Satan, Hindus, Jews, Christians and Zorastrians. Though the lamp differs the light within them is one and the same. Love is the secret of all religions. The religions have nothing else than the love of God."

He although criticizes that,

"the sufis attached formalism and rigidity..............their order degenerated into superstition. The sufi mystic lacks social and political principles of reform", but acknowledges that, "it exercises great influence and spiritual guidance to the modern materialism of today." (Srivastava 1974:175)

He discusses the sufi thought that,

"God is real and the world is a reflection of Him." (Srivastava 1974:155)

He quotes verses from the Quran:(i) "Everything is perishing except the face (reality) of Allah."(28:88). (ii) "Everyone on the earth is passing away (fani) but the glorious and honoured face of thy Lord abideth forever."(55:26) (iii) "Wherever ye turn there is the face of Allah."(2:109)

He deduces that,

"the union of the self with God is the highest goal of each
He explains the various stations of Sufi's perfection, borrowing heavily from Nicholson's passages in "Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics." The author notes that,

"the mystics have universal love for mankind. From the love of God to love of humanity manifests one's inner perfection." (Srivastava 1974:160)

He quotes Sheikh Nizamuddin Aulia:

"O Muslims! I swear by God that He holds dear those who love Him for the sake of God. This is the only way to love and adore God. (sujaarul aulia).

He opines

"the sufi mystics show that communion of man with God is possible by following its methods of asceticism, renunciation, contemplation, effacement of the ego and other practices common to the Buddhist, Christian and Hindu Mysticism." (Srivastava 1974:162)

The author elucidates the sufi views and describes it to be "absolutistic and pantheistic."

Also that,

"sufism conceives salvation is a condition of absorption of the soul in God. The utter surrender of the soul in God. The utter surrender of the soul to God brings its identity and oneness with Him. The duality of soul to God ceases forever and the former merges in the latter in the state of its salvation." (Srivastava 1974:136)
He asserts that this sufi view is not indigenous to the Islamic religious faith.

He notes that,

"the sufi mystic break the boundaries of Islam and make it an open religion. The spiritualism and humanism, piety and renunciation, devotion and music, song and dance, and union with God characterize the sufi method of self-realisation." (Srivastava 1974:162)

B. N. Pande opines that,

"the sufi doctrine of Fana is the Nirvana of the Buddhists. The whole sufi system of spiritual *maqamat* (stations) or *chakras*, that the seekers after illumination realizes on his way to extinction is Buddhistic." (Pande 1987:8)

He opines that Hindu mystics influenced the Islamic mysticism. He writes that the mystic centers of Islam viz.

"Khurasan was studded with Buddhist monasteries and Hindu temples at the time of the Muslim conquest as is testified by Hiun Tsiang who had passed through these lands barely seventy years earlier." (Pande 1987:10)

He stresses that,

"the mystic teachings of Vedanta on the one hand, inspired Islamic mysticism and on the other, gave birth to the movements of Bhakti in India." (Pande 1987:10)

He notes,

"the Indian *Advaita* had become the Muslim *wahdat-ul-wujud." (Pande 1987:13)
For S. Radhakrishnan,

"spirituality is the core of religion and its inward essence and mysticism emphasizes this side of religion." (Radhakrishnan 1940:61)

He advocates that,

"the Sufis combine Mohammed's prophetic faith in God with the wisdom of Vedanta and the spiritual discipline of the Yoga." (Radhakrishnan 1940:244)

He notes that,

"sufism is akin to Advaita Vedanta." (Radhakrishnan 1940:339)

Pandit Sunderlal tries to prove the similarity between the sufi literature and work of Gita. He elucidates that,

"what is called 'vibhuti' in the Gita is called 'mazhar' or manifestation of God in Sufi literature."

The sufi work Gulshan-e-Raz states:

"all phenomenal objects in the universe are each a manifestation of Allah.

"What in Gita is called 'Viswa-Rupam' or 'Virat-Rupam' is called in Islamic literature 'shakle-Mohit'. Believing God in this way is called by the, Murqaba-i-Ihata-i-Kulli or total comprehension." (Sunderlal 1957:14)

He quotes from the Mathnawi of Maulana Rumi,

"I was the sweetness in the sugar, the oil in the almond-sometimes I become the crown of Kings-Sometimes the consciousness of the conscious and sometimes the indigence
of the indigent."

and compares it with Gita (4:24):

"The (sacrificial) presentation is Brahman, Brahman is the oblation, In the (sacrificial) fire of Brahman it is poured by Brahman; Just to Brahman must he go. Being concentrated upon the (sacrificial) action that is Brahman."

He asserts that

"it is 'the concept of God' which gave rise to the Twin theories of 'Dvaita' and 'Advaita' in India, similar to the 'Vahadat al shuhud' and 'vahadat-ul-wujud' point of view." (Sunderlal 1957:15)

Bhagwan Das notes that,

"the well-known Kalema of faith, the Mahavakya, the Logos-word of Islam is in terms of the third person.............sufi declare that it is meant only for the younger souls who are not yet ready for the inner teaching: and that the real Kalema is in terms of the first person." (Das 1939:98)

He asserts that the

"sayings of Vedanta and Tasawwuf are so similar as to be almost indistinguishable when translated into a third language." (Das 1939:110)

He then cites the passages of the works of Shams Tabrez and compares it with quotes from Shiva Purana, and Yoga Vasistha.

The author opines,

"the Bible and the Quran does not contain any explicit affirmation of rebirth. But they nowhere deny it either." (Das
1939:164)
He quotes a tradition of the Prophet where he said, "O Man! Thou hast to go back unto God, thy God, thy self with labour and with pain, ascending stage by stage, plane after plane." The author asserts that,

"there are texts in the Quran which may be interpreted as meaning that man lives and dies repeatedly even as worlds are created and destroyed repeatedly." (Das 1939:166)

He then quotes verses of the Quran along with Arabic texts:

1) "He makes a world-creation; then again He reproduces it, so that He may with justice recompense those who believe in God’s word and do good to fellow beings. God sayeth"........as we did originate the first creation, so we reproduce ............He in your mother’s womb createth you, creation yet again."

2)"from out the earth have I now given birth to you and I will send you into it again, and bring you from it again, repeatedly until the end.

3)"I gave you birth again after you died, that you may think of Me with gratitude."

4)"He made us live again after our death. He made you live before and can again. He makes the living dead, the dead alive."

5)"How can you make denial of your God who made you live again when you had died, will make you dead again, again alive, until you go back finally to Him."

Tarachand asserts that
"influence of Islam in India was not the result of a study of Muslim literature, but of the teaching from the mouth of religious ascetics or of observation of their rites and customs." (Tarachand 1946:108)

He posits that,

"Sufism is a complex phenomenon, it is like a stream which gathers volume by the joining of tributaries from many lands. Its original source is the Quran and the life of Muhammad. Christianity and Neo-Platonism swelled it by a large contribution. Hinduism and Buddhism supplied a number of ideas, and the religions of ancient Persia, Zoroastrianism, Manuism etc. brought to it their share." (Tarachand 1946:63)

He concludes that:

"every avenue of thought.................led to Sufism, whether it was Mutazalah dialectics, Orthodox Scholasticism or pure philosophy." (Tarachand 1946:63)

He declares that

"for a student of mysticism and of verities of religious experiences no richer mine of information exists than the lives of Muslim saints and the poetry of Muslim mysticism." (Tarachand 1946:80)

He finds 'dhikr' i.e. Remembrance of God, which is regarded as the discipline of the seeker,

"very similar to the meditation and the breathing exercises (pranayama) of the Indian Yoga." (Tarachand 1946:82)

For its support, he quotes Shibli's definition of Sufism-"Tasawwuf
(sufism) is control of the faculties and observance of the breaths."

The author emphasizes that,

"Sufism indeed was a religion of intense devotion, love was its passion; poetry, song and dance its worship; and passing away in God its ideal" (Tarachand 1946:83)

Swami Vivekananda occasionally made references of Sufis in his addresses, which is the only source available for analyzing his idea of Sufis and Sufism. Once he remarked in his address at 'the Social Conference' about monks in various religions. At this juncture he notes,

"even Islam had to yield its religious denial and take in whole orders of mendicant monks", (Vivekananda 1994:IV,303)

Who he identifies as "the blue-clad Musalman."

In one of his recorded talks he said,

"there are sixty-five million Mohammedan in India, some of them sufis. Sufis identify man with God, and through them this idea came into Europe. They say, 'I am the Truth', but they have no esoteric as well as the exoteric doctrine, although Muhammad himself did not hold it." (Vivekananda 1994:VII,40)

M.A.Karandikar notes that,

"there were many intermediary Sufi orders ranging between extreme of pure monotheism combined with orthodoxy and pure monism inherent in Buddhist and Hindu philosophy....in the early Sultanate period in India, the Ulama and the Sufi were, many a times, indistinguishable.
Sufi saints proved a great asset for paving the way for the conquering armies and for conversions. Many stayed with the marching armies and also took part in the fighting.” (Karandikar 1968:57)

Suhas Majumdar notes that,

"the sufis emphasize self-control rather than war against infidels in their conception of Jihad.

He asserts that,

"it is not known that Sufis in any country under Islam have made the slightest impact on their co-religionist in unsettling the deep-seated convictions regarding the blood-thirsty business that is jihad." (Majumdar 2001: 63)

Ram Swarup while discussing Sufism, remarks that, it is only Hindu spirituality, which is deeply introspective. He elucidates further, that,

"Hindu spirituality has developed a great discipline of inward looking which is called Yoga" (Swarup 1992:97)

He asserts that,

"Christianity and Islam.........had borrowed certain elements from this source but these could not fit into their system of belief. So these were soon either banished or treated peripherally. The elements that survived were subordinated to prophetic ideologies." (Swarup 1992:97)

He remarks that

"today Sufism in Islam has no independent role."

He notes that,

"sufism is more of a graft than a natural flowering." (Swarup
He cites the examples from history:

"Rabia who belongs to the second century of Islam represents an old pagan-Arab tradition. Al-Hallaj and Abu Yazid Bistani who belong to the third century of the Islamic era represent mainly Hindu-Buddhist tradition. Abu Yazid's grandfather was a zorastrian and his teacher was Abu Ali of Sindh." (Swarup 1992:99)

He quotes from 'Dictionary of Islam', "Sufism is but a Muslim adaptation of the Vedanta school of Hindu philosophers."

He asserts that,

"Prophetic Islam would have died from its own formalism and importing it some principle of warmth and internality." (Swarup 1992:99)

According to his assessment,

"higher mysticism was incompatible with prophetic Islam and it disappeared soon enough. The sufism thus survived and even prospered was tame and promised to sub serve prophetism." (Swarup 1992:99)

He notes that,

"Rumi and Attar convey a wrong impression of Islamic Sufism in general, they have been its show-pieces, not its representative figures. Mainstream sufism has been represented by its Silsilas like the Naqshbandiya, Qadriya, Chishtiya, Dervish, Marbout, Ribat etc. They had no independent ideology of their own and they only served the spiritual intellectual categories (mansha) of prophetic Islam,"
in fact, they became its most willing spokesman." (Swarup 1992:99)

He asserts that,

"in India, the sufis have been an important limb of Islamic Imperialism and expansion. The spiritual dimension was for them only a secondary concern." (Swarup 1992:100)

The evidence of this claim, according to him is that,

"they never questioned....barbaric ideas about the Kafirs, the jihad, the zimmis, the dar-al-harb. There is nothing to show that they ever spoke against Islamic wars and oppression. On the other hand, as their history shows they were part and parcel of Islamic Imperialism, its enthusiastic sapers and miners and also its beneficiaries." (Swarup 1992:99)

He quotes Encyclopedia Britannica for evidence: Darvishes and Sufis have fought against the unbelievers in time of war. The devotees have accompanied the Shaikh or Murshid or Pir to the threatened frontiers.

He cites the examples of Algeria and al-murabitun for their role in the Moorish annexation of Spain, but not a single incident from Indian history.

Champat Rai Jain claims to have ascertain the truth about the teaching of Islam, and to have separate its valuable gems from valueless stones and also from glittering pebbles, in order to bring its beauty in the limelight of public. He claimed to have appraised the philosophy of Islam from a scientific point of view.
He extensively quotes poetry from Mathnavi of Jalalud din Rumi in Persian as well as few other poets. The Quranic verses are in nought; whereas only a few hadiths are given in the entire book.

The author elucidates that his motive in writing this book is

"to remove the differences prevailing amongst various religions, especially those between Hinduism and Islam."

(Jain 1975:1,181)

He deduces that,

"the soul and God are homogenous and one in respect of the substance of their being," (Jain 1975:1,1) from the hadith:

"whosoever knoweth his soul knoweth God."

He claims that

"Gnosis is esoteric science...........in a majority of cases men have understood it wrongly." (Jain 1975:1,2)

This in consequence made the knowers of Truth to teach their doctrine secretly as is said by Jalal-ud-din Rumi:

"The wise keep the Gnosis secret;
The foolish gave utterances to it in their speech!"

He asserts that,

"Gnostic Mysticism was not a new invention." (Jain 1975:1,5)

He observes that in the hadith; Prophet of Islam describes himself as the city of Gnosis, with Ali as its solitary gate!

The author from the couplets of Rumi, deduces that,
"religion is the Path of the obtainment of Immortal life, all embracing knowledge and unfailing (spiritual) joy!" (Jain 1975:1,7)

He argues that simple (non compound) objects cannot be destroyed; its beginning also is not possible. He notes that, soul is a simple thing and body is the prison of the soul, and to obtain the immortal life, soul must be liberated from the bodily imprisonment. He does not substantiate this claim with any evidence.

Similarly, he argues that,

"soul and knowledge are not two things." (Jain 1975:1,14)

He quotes Ibn-Khaldun:

"in the spiritual nature is present the knowledge of all things, and that the spiritual nature can be obtained on complete separation from matter and on the destruction of the bodily sense."

The author asserts that,

"spiritual joy is not the same thing as the sensual pleasure, it is not produced from the senses; but it is immediately experienced whenever the soul is freed from the burdens of worries. It is not dependent on the senses." (Jain 1975:1,30)

He quotes the verses: "If thou wilt open the eye of thy interior

Thou will soon obtain the collyrium of distinction."

He notes that,

"the soul is a thing which cannot be created or destroyed because it is a simple..........non-compound element.........we
are ourselves by nature immortal, omniscient and the storehouse of eternal happiness." (Jain 1975:1,37)

He further asserts that,

"physical body is the poison of the soul." (Jain 1975:1,62)

He recommends to,

"treat the body as an enemy. Kindness and love are not meant for it. It has to be destroyed in such a way that it should not 'grow' again." (Jain 1975:1,64)

He opines that,

"the lovely things of this visible, perishable world are seducers of the human heart, it is difficult to escape from their seduction. Only he who has completely killed out his nafs can protect himself against them." (Jain 1975:1,71)

He asserts,

"Self-denial indeed is the path to salvation." (Jain 1975:1,75)

He deduces that,

"Jehad (the war of extermination against infidels) also meant only this that one should fight with one's nafs." (Jain 1975:1,83)

The author opines that,

"the perfect soul has neither any kind of desires nor the agitation of desires in it, nor can it fall into the net of desires again." (Jain 1975:1,120)

He opines that

"the doctrine of unity only means this that you should not associate another with the Divine Godhead of the soul." (Jain
He notes that many Muslim philosophers like, Abu Muslim of Khurasan, Ahmad b.Sabit and Baktashee order, have believed in the transmigration of the soul. Its only 'nowaday' according to him that Mohammadans don't approve of it.

He quotes Rumi and reminds

"the authority of Maulana Rumi is very high in the Muslim world. The Mathnavi ranks third, that is, immediately after the Quran and Hadis in point of importance." (Jain 1975:1,156)

He opines that cow slaughter refers to the

"curbing of the desiring nafs and not with the slaughter of a cow or any other animal." (Jain 1975:1,167)

The author has tried to prove the Hindu doctrines from the works of Muslim Sufis.

The author in his work: Gems of Islam, part 2, opines that,

"mysticism a fascinating body of men and are much admired for their Mysticism, which gives vast scope for the exercise of one's imagination to understand precisely what they mean when they say anything about their tenets and creed. So mystifying are their utterances generally that even men accustomed to solve the biggest problems of life have found themselves unable to get at the basis of truth at the back of their thought." (Jain 1975:II,i)

He asserts that
"the Rinds are not bound down to any creed, they regard Islam and infidelity as alike. The search for Truth is their religion in reality." (Jain 1975:II,6)

He clarifies that

"the wine of the Rind is not a drink in reality, but only the experience and the excitement of Love." (Jain 1975:II,24)

He deduces from the Sufi works that,

"the lover does not desire paradise, nor greatness and prosperity in this World." (Jain 1975:II,55)

He is of the opinion that religious scriptures contain the teachings of the saintly knower, but it is difficult to understand them as it has become obscured by the multiplicity of parable and allegory. He asserts that,

"the tenet that the soul is God himself is most revealed in a secret manner in religious books. It can only be understood with knowledge of the secret method of their interpretation. The apparent meaning of the words used is sufficient to misled the unenlightened readers." (Jain 1975:II,95)

He opines that,

"this body of matter is the enemy of the soul. It is the duty of the wise man to destroy it root and branch. Those who are able to annihilate the body are alone qualified to attain to immortal life." (Jain 1975:II,99)

He quotes several works of Sufi poetry to explain, 'The Nafs'-he quotes Keemiya-e-sa'adat:

"It is not possible that a man may go unto the affairs of the world and remain unsullied.................O dear friend! Thou
shouldst know this, that the world is the most puzzling of all puzzling things and that its love is the root of all sin. And what can be more evil than that which is the enemy of God, the enemy of his friends, and also the enemy of his enemies?"

He asserts that,

"it is not the teaching of Islam that man should abandon himself to destiny and refrain from action altogether. But it says this that he should exert himself to the fullest extent to root out the seed of evil from his heart and to obtain salvation." (Jain 1975:II,138)

He suggests that,

"it should be the ambition of every layman that he becomes a saint one day. He is advised to retire from the world at least at the end of youth." (Jain 1975:II,189)

He opines,

"Sainthood is a stage farther than that of morality. The saint is an embodiment of abstinence." (Jain 1975:II,223)

He concludes that,

"the gnostics dervish wipes out his apparent ego that is bodily existence completely. He wants solitude and detachment from one's being as most essential."

Reflections:

At the outset it is essential to know a few important features of Tasawwuf. Firstly, Tasawwuf is not equivalent to Shariah. In Islam, Tasawwuf is not compulsory to be followed, but Shariah must be
adopted. Secondly, it has through time acquired many shades and opinions, and then too it is not possible to synthesize the Hindu mystic ideas with Islamic Tasawwuf.

Bhargava’s research carries inputs from diverse sources. He includes Rumi’s poetry, Field’s work, statements of various Sufis and ibn-e-khaldun’s view. This approach of analyzing Tasawwuf appears praiseworthy as compared to other authors. Nonetheless, his division too refracts from the original Tasawwuf. For e.g. he has used Rumi’s idea of human evolution to prove the Darwin’s theory. A clear deflection from the Islamic Tasawwuf. According to this Islamic concept, one species cannot develop into another species i.e. a human cannot turn into a stone etc. He even misunderstood union with God to be an Islamic notion. The highest stage according to Islamic Tasawwuf is Wisal-e-Haqq i.e. to be absorbed into it. Since humans have higher faculties than other creation of God, as God breathed into them something of His own spirit, hence the highest attainment of spirituality would come by complete absorption in it. Every sufi believes God to be farther from fartherest, hence when it is not possible to know Him completely as he is transcendent the idea of uniting with Him is unimaginable. Although sufi implies returning back to Him finally.

He did not mention the Chishtiya Silsila in the list of famous sufi orders in India, even though Chistiya were more famous than others in Indian
context. However in later part he acknowledges the role of Moinuddin Chishti in India. Bhakti movement emerged as a reaction to the Tasawwuf and not what he suggested. His opinion about Ghazali as the originator of Tasawwuf is historically erroneous too. Ghazali was born in the 6th century and long before him prominent Sufis such as Talib Makki, Bistami had popularized and developed it. Though later Ghazali also contributed to the lore of Tasawwuf. In 3rd century Junaid Baghdadi had already developed it as a new science and had introduced it as a new discipline. Ghazali himself had learned Tasawwuf from his predecessors. In his famous work ‘Ihya-al-ulum’ he has borrowed ideas from works of Isfahani as well as Makki.

Bhargava has rightly highlighted the contribution and participation of women in Tasawwuf. Srivastava has quoted Quran, Sufi works of Rumi, Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya and Nicholson’s work. He is partly correct in his conclusion that certain Sufi works carries ideas resembling to Pantheism but this pantheism has never been accepted and acknowledged into the fold of Islam. No worthwhile Sufi can claim to cross the boundaries of shariah. Pande’s assertion that the entire Tasawwuf is Buddhistic is flawed. Islamic Tasawwuf is drawn from Quran and Hadith, however certain practices were affected by the norms of region in which it flourished. The reason according to him for the above assertion is because Khurasan had Buddhist and Hindu temples during Muslim rule.
However he skipped that neither Tasawwuf as a whole nor the basic of it emerge in Khurasan. Only a few writers are from this place, otherwise the writers who wrote extensively on Tasawwuf like Makki, Baghdadi were not from Khurasan. Only a surface reader can assume wahdat-al-wujud and Advaita as similar. This notion is difficult to be anticipated from Radhakrishnan. Dvaita and Advaita philosophies are generally equated to be similar to wahdat-ul-wujud and wahdat-ul-shuhud, on the mere basis of apparent similarities, which is not correct. Das consulted Quranic verses along with sufi works of Shams Tabrez. It is erroneous for him to insist that Islam does not deny rebirth when according to his own findings Islam never affirms it either. He misunderstood the verses of Quran for life cycle but forgot that creation does not mean creation again but implies a different creation on a different form or plain. This misunderstanding arises due to the ignorance of Arabic language and style. As stated earlier, the Quran gives the details of Akhira in past tense to employ element of certainty in it. Tarachand rightly observed the influence of Muslim ascetics in the propagation of Islam. He quotes Shibli’s definition of Tasawwuf out of context. He wrongly translated nafs-self to be nafas-breathing and hence erroneously concluded it to be control of breath instead of self-control. His opinions on Tasawwuf is similar to popular idea about it, he did not make any new contribution. Swarup is right in his assertion that Rumi and Attar conveyed a wrong
impression of Tasawwuf that is the reason they have been criticized by Islamic scholars. His analysis that sufi in India took part in jihad is in opposition to Majumdar’s finding. Karandikar’s opinion is creditable than these two. Jain utilized works of Ibn-e-Khaldun and the book *Keemya-e-Saa’dat*. He misquoted the hadith that soul and God are one. Similarly he wrongly translated the hadith, which described Prophet as the city of knowledge and not as city of Gnosis. Contrary to his contentions physical body is never presented as the prison of soul by the accepted sufi thoughts, however a few Sufis impressed with Hindu philosophy have regarded the body as prison. However he has correctly concluded the concept of perfect soul as mentioned in sufi works. His insistence that Mathnavi is third in rank in the Islamic sources is not correct. His notion that Sufis aim to destroy the body is flawed. Their aim is to subdue the physical and not destroy it altogether. He beautifully explained the role of action in the winning of salvation.