1. Origin and Early Interpretation of Sufism

Al-Hujwiri, born in Ghazna in Afghanistan, visited almost every leading Sufi of his time and then settled in Lahore where he died in 1071 A.D. He was popularly known as Data Ganj Bakhsh and his shrine is still a place of pilgrimage. He wrote a very scholarly work on Sufism; called Kashf-al-Mahjub (unveiling of the Hidden) in Persian. In this great Sufi classic he says, "Some assert that the Sufi is so called because he wears a woollen garment (Jama-i-Suf); others that he is so called because he is in the first rank (Saff-i-awwal); others say it is because the Sufis claim to be Ashab-i-Saffa, with whom may God be well-pleased! others, again, declare that the name is derived from Safa (Purity)."

Amongst the early imitators of the simple and devout life of Prophet Muhammad were people of the bench (Ahl-al-Suffa). They were about three hundred in number. They were homeless, poorly dressed, and given to much weeping for their sins. Many of these ascetics never married and did not eat meat. They were known as ascetics (Zuhad), devout men, readers of Koran, and popular preachers. Out of such devotees those who meditated on inner life, began to be called Sufis or mystics. Jami writes, "The elect of the people of Sunna, whose souls were set on God, and who kept
their hearts from the misfortunes of headlessness became known by the name of Sufis, and this name became generally applied to these great souls a little before the end of the second century of the Hijra.2

The historian Ibn Khaldun also says, "The way of life adopted by the Sufis was in force from the beginnings of Islam and the most eminent of the Companions and their disciples considered it to be the way of Truth and Guidance. Nothing was more common among the Companions and others of the Faithful in the earliest times, and when the love of the world was widespread in the second century (of the Islamic era), and later, and most men allowed themselves to be dragged into the whirlpool of the world, those consecrated to piety were called Sufis."3

These early Sufis led a life of poverty and abstinence which were practised by the Prophet himself. "These ascetic ideals showed themselves in the usual external forms. The white woollen robe worn by the earliest Sufis as a sign of simplicity was later replaced by the patched frock (khīrqa) which became their characteristic attire, and with which the novice was invested by his Shaykh when admitted into the circle of his disciples. Fasting and abstinence were practised: the Sufis ate only from "lawful" food - that is, food earned by the labours of their own hands, or provided by a fellow-Sufi, who had earned it."4

The name "Sufi" was thus taken from the garments of wool (Ṣūf), which was probably borrowed from the Christian monks. The Prophet and his companions wore robes of cotton. Professor A.J. Arberry informs us: "Ibn Sirin (d. 110/728), a celebrated scholar, contemporary with Al-Hasan, who attacked the latter's teachings and
habits on many accounts, in particular, he condemned the wearing of wool (Suf), which was already being affected by certain devotees, as being an imitation of Jesus, saying that "he preferred to follow the example of our Prophet who clothed himself in cotton." The nickname Sufi, which is undoubtedly derived from the Arabic word for wool, appears to have been applied in the first place to a certain Abu Hasham Uthman b. Sharik of Kufa, who died about the year 160/776; by the middle of the third/ninth century it had become the regular appellation of those who practised austerity; in the fourth/tenth century, it also acquired a theosophical connotation.

Thereafter, many definitions of Sufism began to be given. Some were farfetched and untenable. Some scholars linked the word Suf with the Greek word for divine wisdom (Sophia) and also with the Hebrew Cabbalistic term Ainsof: This has been totally rejected by Muslims and non-Muslim scholars of Sufism.

Eminent Sufis of the later period began to give definitions of Sufism not on the basis of their robes of poverty but on the basis of their character and moral or spiritual practices. We give below some of these definitions.

1. Hujwiri (d. 1072 A.D.): "To Sufis the meaning of Sufism is clearer than the sun and does not need any explanation or indication. The perfect, then, among them are called Sufis, and the inferior aspirants (tālibān) among them are called Mutasawwif.

2. Kalabadhī (d. 995 A.D.): "Those who relate them to the Bench and to the wool express the outward aspect of their conditions; for they were people who had left this world, departed from their homes, fled from their companions."
The Prophet stated that, if a man shuns this world, God will illuminate his heart. Because of their clothes and manner of dressing they were called Sufis; for they did not put on raiment soft to touch or beautiful to behold, to give delight to the soul; they only clothed themselves in order to hide their nakedness.  

3. Sari Saqati (867 A.D.) (Teacher of Junayd): "Sufism meant three things for the Sufi: that, the light of his gnosis did not extinguish the light of his abstinence; that his inward speculations did not make him opposed to the outward conduct taught by the Quran and the Sunna, and that the favours of God bestowed on him did not lead him to tear aside the veil from what God had made unlawful to him."  

4. Dhu'n-Nun (d. 891): The Sufi is he, whose language, when he speaks, is the reality of his state, i.e. he says nothing which he is not, and when he is silent his conduct explains his state, and his state proclaims that he has cut all worldly ties.  

5. Junayd (d. 910) Master of the Sufis of Baghdad: Junayd was asked what Sufism is? He replied, "It is the purification of heart from associating with created beings, separation from natural characteristics, suppression of human qualities, avoiding the temptations of the carnal soul, taking up the qualities of the spirit, attachment to the sciences of reality, using what is more proper to the eternal, counselling all the community, being truly faithful to God, and following the Prophet according to the Law."  

"Sufism means that God makes thee to die to thyself and to become alive in Him. It is to purify the heart from the recurrence of creaturely temptations, to bid farewell to all natural inclinations, to subdue the qualities which belong to human nature, to
keep far from the claims of the senses, to adhere to spiritual qualities, to ascend by means of Divine knowledge, to be occupied with that which is eternally the best, to give wise counsel to all people, faithfully to observe the truth, and to follow the Prophet in respect of the religious law."  

6. Abu al-Hasan Nuri (d. 907 A.D.): The mark of the true Sufi (faqir) is that when he receives nothing he is content, and when he receives something he regards another person as better entitled to it than himself and, therefore, gives it away. "Sufism is enmity to this world and friendship with the Lord", Sufism means the renunciation of what belongs to the self, for the sake of what belongs to God - the Sufis are those whose spirits have been of humanity freed from pollution, purified from carnal taint, and released from concupiscence, so that they have found rest with God in the first rank and the highest degree, and have fled from all save Him." "Sufi is he that has nothing in his possession nor is himself possessed by anything."

7. Shibli (d. 945 A.D.): "The Sufi is he that sees nothing except God in the two worlds."

8. Sayrafi of Nishapur: "Sufism is this, that the Sufi should not regard his own exterior and interior, but should regard all as belonging to God."

9. Abu Sa' id al-Khayar (d. 1049): gives the following definitions of Sufism:
   (i) "Sufism is two things: to look in one direction and to live in one way."
   (ii) Sufism is a name attached to its object; when it reaches its ultimate perfection, it is God, i.e. the end of Sufism is that,
for the Sufi, nothing should exist except God.

(iii) It is glory in wretchedness and riches in poverty and lordship in servitude and satiety in hunger and clothedness in nakedness and freedom in slavery and life in death and sweetness in bitterness.

(iv) The Sufi is he who is pleased with all that God does, in order that God may be pleased with all that he does.

(v) Sufism is patience under God's commanding and forbidding, and acquiescence and resignation in the events determined by divine providence.

(vi) To be a Sufi is to cease from taking trouble, and there is no greater trouble for thee than thine own self, for when thou art occupied with thyself, thou remainest away from God.\(^7\)

10. Sheikh Al-Islam Zakari Ansari (1089 A.D.): "Sufism teaches how to purify one's self, improve one's morale and build up one's inner and outer life in order to attain perpetual bliss. Its subject matter is the purification of the soul and its end or aim is the attainment of eternal felicity and blessedness."\(^8\)

11. Al-Ghazali (d. 111 A.D.): Al-Ghazali has given his intellectual and spiritual experiences of Sufism thus: "I next turned with set purpose to the method of Sufism (Islamic mysticism). I know that the complete mystic 'way' includes both intellectual belief and practical activity; the letter consists in getting rid of the obstacles in the self and in stripping off its base characteristics and vicious morals, so that, the heart may attain to freedom from what is not God and to constant recollection of Him (122). It became clear to me, however, that what is most distinctive of mysticism is something which cannot be apprehended by
study, but only by immediate experience (Zauq, literally 'testing') by ecstasy and by a moral change (125).

I left Baghdad, then, I distributed what wealth I had, retaining only as much as would suffice myself and provide sustenance for my children. At length I made my way from Damascus to the Holy House (Jerusalem). There I used to enter into the precincts of the Rock every day and shut myself in. I continued at this stage for the space of ten years, and during these periods of solitude there were revealed to me things innumerable and unfathomable."

"I learnt with certainty that it is above all the mystics who walk on the road to God; their life is the best life, their method the soundest method, their character the purest character; indeed, were in intellect of the intellectuals and the learning of the learned and the scholarship of the scholars, who are versed in the profundities of revealed truth, brought together in the attempt to improve the life and character of the mystics, they would find no way of doing so; for to the mystics all movements and all rest, whether external or internal, brings illumination from the light of the lamp of prophetic revelation; and behind the light of prophetic revelation there is no other light on the face of the earth from which illumination may be received." 20

12. Reynold Nicholson : One of the greatest modern authority on Sufism, R.A. Nicholson says, "Sufism, the religious philosophy of Islam, is described in the oldest extant definition as 'The apprehension of divine realities', and Mohammedan Mystics are fond of calling themselves Ahl-al-Haqq, 'The followers of the Real'. 21

Nicholson gives a number of definitions of Sufism from classical
scholars, though he does not quote the authors. Each of these following definitions give certain aspects and characteristics of Sufism:

(i) "Sufism is this: that actions should be passing over the Sufi which are known to God only, and that he should always be in a way that is known to God only."

(ii) "Sufism is wholly self-discipline."

(iii) "Sufism is, to possess nothing and to be possessed by nothing."

(iv) "Sufism is not a system composed of rules or sciences but a moral disposition; i.e. if it were a rule, it could be made one's own by strenuous exertion, and if it were a science, it could be acquired by instruction; but on the contrary it is a disposition, according to the saying, "Form yourselves on the moral nature of God; and the moral nature of God cannot be attained either by means of rules or by means of sciences."

(v) "Sufism is freedom and generosity and absence of self-constraint."

(vi) "It is this: that God should make thee die to thyself and should make thee live in Him."

(vii) "To behold the imperfection of phenomenal world, nay, to close the eye to everything imperfect in contemplation of Him who is remote from all imperfection that is Sufism."

(viii) "Sufism is control of the faculties and observance of the breaths."

(ix) "It is Sufism to put away what thou hast in thy head to give what thou hast in thy hand, and not to recoil from whatsoever befalls thee."
Thus definitions of Sufism have developed out of the spiritual and mystical experiences of great Sufis.

2. Relations of Sufism to the Personality of Muhammad and Koran

2:1 Sufism and Personality of Muhammad

Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, was born in A.D. 570 in Mecca. No one is quite certain about the year and date of his birth. His father's name was Abdullah and his mother's Amina. Mecca was a great religious centre. The small building in Mecca was called Kaaba, which in Arabic means cube. There were many idols in the temple at that time. In the corner was a stone which is supposed to have falled from Heaven and was originally white. The devotees kiss it and this white stone had become blackhead by the kisses of the sinners. There is a well in Mecca which is called Zem Zem built by Abraham. Mecca became a great trading centre for caravans moving between Indian ocean and Mediterranean.

Muhammad's father died a few months before his birth. His mother Amina died when he was five years old. His foster mother Halima looked after him. For two years his rich grandfather looked after him. When the grandfather died, his uncle, Abu Talib, elder brother of his father looked after him.

Muhammad remained illiterate all his life, but as a shepherd, and Arab youth belonging to the Koraishi clan, which kept the keys and control of the holy temple, he learnt riding, the use of arms and the methods of good trading in the company of merchants.

"Then, when he was twenty-five he had a stroke of great good fortune. A wealthy widow named Khadijah was looking for a
thoroughly reliable and capable man to take charge of the trading caravans that she despatched once a year to Aleppo and Damascus in Syria, and his uncle Abu Talib recommended him for the job. He jumped at the chance, and he carried out his duties to the widow's complete satisfaction. So impressed was she, indeed, that she resolved to make him her husband. She had been twice widowed, and both her husband had been rich men and had left their all to her and by her skillful trading she had greatly increased her estate. She was, therefore, one of the richest ladies in Mecca."23

Khadija expressed her willingness to marry Muhammad who eagerly agreed. She was forty and Muhammad was twenty-five when they were married. "Khadija gave several children. There were four daughters, Zaynab, Ruggayya, Fatima and Umm Kulthum. But what for an Arab was then, and still is a great misfortune, all her sons died at an early age."24

Now that Muhammad had luxury and comfort he took to a meditative life. "He withdrew from Mecca whenever he could, and retired to the desert where he spent days and nights out there in the great open spaces, alone with himself and the stars. Sometimes, however, Khadija went with him, and Muhammad was glad."

"In the course of his lonely rambles he had come across a cave on Mount Hira, about nine miles north of Mecca, and there he went whenever he could get away from business and would spend days and nights together, engaged in prayer and meditation. For days he would go without food and drink, and at night instead of sleeping he would roam about the sands, look up at the stars, and wonder. He heard mysterious voices, he had strange visions. Sometimes
he was seized with a violent trembling."25

One day he saw the angel Gabriel (Jabiril in Arabic) standing before him who pointed to certain words written in light and said, "Read". Muhammad said, he could not read as he was illiterate. "The voice again said "Read", He said : "I cannot read. A third time the voice, more terrible commanded. "Read". He said, "What can I read?

"In the name of thy Lord who Createth.
Createth man from a clot,
"Read : And it is Thy Lord the Most Bountiful who teacheth by the pen.
"Teacheth man that which he knows not."

"When he awoke the words remained "as if inscribed upon his heart." He went out of the cave on to the hillside and heard the same awe-inspiring voice say! "O Muhammad! Thou art Allah's messenger, and I am Gabriel." Then he raised his eyes and saw the angel, in the likeness of a man, standing in the sky above the horizon. And again the dreadful voice said : "O Muhammad! Thou art Allah's messenger, and I am Gabriel:" Muhammad (God bless and keep him) stood quite still, turning away his face from the brightness of the vision, but wheresoever he might turn his face, there always stood the angel confronting him. He remained thus a long while till at length the angel vanished, when he returned in great distress of mind to his wife Khadijah."26

Muhammad had received the call. He was made conscious that he was a Prophet and a messenger of God. Khadijah listened to him understandingly. She never doubted for a moment the truth of what he told her. "Of course you are the Prophet of God", she
assured him. Khadijah was the first convert. Abu Bakr and Ali were the next to accept him. During the first three years of the Prophet's mission the number of converts did not exceed forty.

When Muhammad declared himself a Prophet and announced his intention of destroying idolotary and removing idols from Mecca, the idol worshipping tribes of Mecca turned so violently against him that there was a plot to murder him. On the night of the proposed murder Muhammad escaped along with his companion Abu Bakr and they hid themselves in a desert cave. From there they went to Medina where they were welcomed with joy by a small circle of friends. The escape was known as Hejira. The new Muslim era of Hejira or Flight had begun in that month of Muharram in A.D. 622. For seven years (A.D. 622-629) the Prophet struggled to capture Mecca through a series of battles.

H.R. Gibb says, "At Medina he sat astride Mecca's vital trade route to the north. All his expeditions against the Bedouin tribes seem to be part of a master plan, elaborated with great skill and insight, to take advantage of this position and to blockade Mecca into surrendering that this would provoke an armed conflict must have been foreseen, but the three major battles of Badr, Ohod, and the 'Ditch' fought in the second, third and fifth years of the Hijra, have little more than episodic value, large as they may loom in Muslim tradition. It was essential for Muhammad's purpose that Mecca should come in eventually of its own volition, and his outstanding political genius is shown by the way in which Mecca was finally incorporated, after seven years of struggle, not as a beaten and resentful enemy but as a willing, if not enthusiastic partner. And when, two years later, Islam
had to face its first great crisis on the death of Muhammad, Mecca was in fact foremost in lending its support to the re-establishment of the Islamic supremacy in Arabia."

When his dear wife Khadijah died Muhammad first married Abu Bakr's nine year old daughter A'isha. He then married other women as wives, the most beautiful was Mariya an Egyptian girl. He loved A'isha most but he had a passionate attachment for Mariya. He spent a night with every wife by turn. Before he died he declared nine of his wives were to be respected as mothers of the Muslims." He fell seriously ill and he spent the last month of his life with A'isha. He died in the year 632 A.D. at the age of 61.

On the marriage Dr Seyyed Hossein Nasr comments: "During the period of youth when the passions are most strong the Prophet lived with only one wife who was much older than he and also underwent long periods of abstinence. And as a Prophet many of his marriages were political ones which, in the prevalent social structure of Arabia, guaranteed the consolidation of the newly founded Muslim community. Multiple marriage, for him, as is true of Islam in general, was not so much enjoyment as responsibility and a means of integration of the newly founded society."29

According to the belief of the Muslims, Sufism, or, to give it its proper appellation, Tassawwuf, has its origin in the teachings of and in the personality of the Prophet Muhammad. It may have begun in a state of ecstasy; and that phase of mind always has remained the sublime mystery of all mysteries.

In such a state the Prophet is said to have asked his spouse Ayesha: "Man Anti" (who art thou?). She replied, says the author
of Kunsul Assar il Qidam: "Ana Ayesha", (I am Ayesha). Again he asked: "Man Ayesha" (Who is Ayesha?), the reply being: "Ibinnatus Sādīq (daughter of Siddiq, the first Khalifa)". Again did the Prophet ask: "Who is Siddiq?". He received the reply: "The father-in-law of Muhammad", but when she was asked who Muhammad was, the wife of the Prophet remained silent for now she knew that the Prophet was in another state: in that state, indeed, when the philosophy of Ḥama-oust (All is He) is the index of life: When the mystery of all that is exists through divine radiance, into whom all shall be absorbed. The Prophet Muhammad thus ranks as the first Sufi of Islam.  

"Sufism traces its origin back to the Prophet himself. He is described in the Koran as Ummī, "illiterate", a quality that is central to the understanding of Islamic religioity."  

"Muhammad is the first link in the spiritual chain of Sufism, and his ascension through the heavens into the divine Presence, to which the first lines of Sura alludes, became the prototype of the mystic's spiritual ascension into the intimate presence of God. According to the tradition, esoteric wisdom was transmitted from Muhammad to his cousin and son-in-law 'Ali ibn Abu Talib, the fourth of the righteous Caliphs (d. 661). Other members of his family and his friends, according to legend, were endowed with mystical insight or pursued mystical practices. The tradition (hadith) that go back to the Prophet, or at least are attributed to him, served the Sufis when they elaborated their own definitions of the various stages and states. Every tendency within Islam, and so within Sufism, found material to support its claims
from Prophetic traditions. In later times a considerable number of hadith that are not found in the official collection as they were compiled in the second half of the ninth century were used by the Sufis. In a comparatively short time, Muhammad's personality gained great importance for the spiritual life of his community. He was the ideal leader, and the duty of every Muslim was to imitate him. His veneration soon reached mythical heights, until he was conceived by the medieval mystics as the Perfect Man par excellence, the cause and goal of creation, the friend of God and the intercessor on behalf of his community."

2:2 Relation of Koran to Sufism

"The Koran is divided into chapters or Suras, 114 in number and very unequal in length. The early Meccan Suras are among the shortest; as time goes on, they become longer. The verses in the Suras are charged with an extraordinarily deep and powerful 'psychological moment'. They have the character of brief but violent volcanic eruptions. A voice is crying from the very depths of life and impinging forcefully on the Prophet's mind in order to make itself explicit at the level of consciousness."

The word 'Koran' comes from the Arabic quran, meaning, reading, lecture, or recitation, or perhaps 'that which ought to be read and recited'. Sometimes it is called al-Kitāb, 'The Book, to emphasize its superiority over every other book. In length it is about two quarter the length of the New Testament in Arabic and about one-fifth the length of Guru Granth Sahib or perhaps less. "There are 6,236 verses."

"The Koran is the record of those formal utterances and
discourses which Muhammad and his followers accepted as directly inspired. Muslim orthodoxy, therefore, regards them as the literal word of God mediated through the angel Gabriel. They are quoted with the prefix 'God has said; the phrase 'The Prophet said' is applied only to the sayings of Muhammad preserved in the Traditions. Muhammad's own belief, which is still held without question by his followers, was that these discourses were portions of a 'Heavenly Book' sent down to or upon Him in an Arabic version, not as a whole, but in sections of manageable length and in relation to the circumstances of the moment."

The Koran gives a fairly good account of the doctrines and rituals of Islam. We find verses on God, angels, paradise, hell, alms, fasting, Jihad and prayers. In it Islam is called the last religion or the Seal of Religions and Muhammad the last Prophet.

Pickthall says, "All the Surahs of the Koran had been recorded in writing before the Prophet's death, and many Muslims had committed the whole Koran to memory. But the written Surahs were dispersed among the people; and when, in a battle which took place during the Caliphate of Abu Bakr that is to say, within two years of the Prophet's death - a large number of those who knew the whole Koran by heart were killed, a collection of the whole Koran was made and put in writing. In the Caliphate of Osman, all existing copies of Surahs were called in, and an authoritative version, based on Abu Bakr's collection and the testimony of those who had the whole Koran by heart, was compiled exactly in the present form and order, which is regarded as traditional and as the arrangement of the Prophet himself. The inspiration of the Prophet progressed from inmost things to outward things, whereas
most people find their way through outward things to things within."36

The French scholar Louis Massignon states, "For everything concerning worldly and spiritual affairs can be found in this book, and its interpretation in different ages shows how the self-understanding of the Muslim community grew and changed. The mystics have played a decisive role in the development of the Koranic sciences; their hermeneutical methods range from a simple verbal interpretation to symbolical and allegorical exegesis, without, however, denying the value of the exterior meaning of the Koranic words. For the devout some of whom could find up to seven thousand meanings in a single Koranic verse - the holy book was "the resurrection", for, as Hallaj had claimed, "in it there are the signs of Divine Lordship, information of the resurrection, and news about the future till the eternity of eternities. Whosoever knows the Koran is, so to speak, in the Resurrection."37 The recitation of Koran was another important duty of the mystic. "A disciple who does not know the Koran by heart", says Jami, is like a lemon without scent.

The scholastics, the legalists who were generally backed by mullas and the kings never accepted the mystical interpretation of any Koranic verses. They explained them literally. Arberry quotes some of the mystical verses which the Sufis mentioned frequently and taught to their followers as the corner-stone of Sufism : "If My servants enquire of these concerning Me", God charges Muhammad, "lo, I am near; indeed, He is "nearer to him than his own jugular vein. If a man would see the marvellous works of God, he is bidden to "Journey through the earth, and see
how He hath brought forth created beings" - a command which the wandering friars of Islam took to heart, and quoted in support of their way of life. "Whithersoever ye turn, there is the Face of God" : this most beloved of all texts has been the inspiration of many fine sayings and poems." The most important text is the verse of Light (Nūr) in Koran Sura 24, 34.

"God is the Light of the Heavens and of the Earth. His Light is like a niche wherein is a lamp, the lamp encased in glass, the glass as it were a glistening star. From a blessed tree it is lighted, the olive neither of the East nor of the West, whose oil would well nigh shine out, even though fire touches it not. It is light upon light. God guideth whom He will to His light, and God setteth forth parables to men, for God knoweth all things.  

Al-Ghazzali was the first Sufi mystic and scholar who gave a mystical interpretation of this verse in his Mishkat Al-Anwar translated into English as "The Niche For Lights". He explains the mystical symbolism of the "Light with Niche, and Glass, and Lamps and oil and Tree." He explains it in the well known tradition. "Allah hath seventy thousand veils of Light and Darkness; were He to withdraw their curtains, then would the splendours of His Aspect surely consume everyone who apprehend Him with his sight. Al-Ghazzali explains, "Allah is the Highest and ultimate
Light, Allah alone is the Real, the True Light and besides Him there is no light at all. The light of physical sight has many defects. The eye does not behold itself and it cannot see things which are very far; it also cannot see what is infinite: Allah is the source of all grades of Light. Al-Ghazzali gives an exposition of symbolism.

Al-Hallaj Mansur and Suhrawardi Maqtul had to suffer imprisonment and death because they talked openly about (Abu Hasan) these mystical experiences, Nuri who spoke of the stations of love and Light was considered a heretic. Al-Hallaj Mansur was a great scholar of Koran. But he was brutally tortured to death because he described his genuine mystical experiences too loudly. His last words were, "Kill me, my trustworthy friends, for in my being killed is my life". About Muhammad he writes in his book "The Tawasin" "all the lights of the Prophets proceed from his light; he was before all, his name the first in the book of Fate; he was known before all things, all being, and will endure after the end of all."  

As Nicholson puts it, "According to a mystical interpretation of the famous passage in the Koran where the light of Allah is compared to a candle burning in a lantern of transparent glass, which is placed in a niche in the wall, the niche is the true believer's heart; therefore his speech is Light and his works are Light and he moves in Light. "He who discourses of eternity", said Bayazid, "must have within him the lamp of eternity."  

Suhrawardi Maqtul is the Shaykh al-ishraq, the master of the philosophy of illumination. "What is conceived metaphysically as existence (wujud) coincides with what is grasped in terms of the
root experience as Light (nur). In this context existence is Light."

The legalists and mullahs gave literal interpretation of Koran. The Sufis practised contemplation of God and led a seriously inward life and gave esoteric and mystical interpretation of the Koran. The fundamentalists and kings who loved wealth and power generally came into conflict with the Sufis who led saintly life and caused them a lot of suffering. Writing on the Koranic basis of Islamic mysticism Khaliq Ahmed Nizami writes: "The Koran contains a number of verses in which the Sufis have found justification for many of their ideas and institutions; some Sufi scholars have attempted commentaries on the Koran from a purely mystical point of view. For some of the basic concepts of mysticism the following verses of the Koran are often cited:

**Divine Love**: (Mahabbat)

"He loveth them and they love Him".

(Koran 5:59)

**Unity of Being**: (Wahadat-ul-wujud)

"He is the first and the Last, the Appearance and Reality and He is Knower of all things"

(Koran 57:3)

**Gnosis**: (ma'rifat)

"Indeed, He is nearer to him than his own jugular vein."

(Koran 50:15)
Remembrance : (Zikr)

"Then do Ye remember Me, I will remember you."

(Koran 2:152)

Need of a spiritual guide : (Pir)

"O Ye who believe : be careful of your duty."

3. Is Sufism Mystical Islam or Islamic Mysticism?

The question is hypothetical. Islam first came into existence and Sufi mysticism took shape some hundred years later. "The author of Awarif-ul-Ma'arif, Shaikh Shahabuddin Suhrawardi (632 A.H.) thinks that this name did not come into existence for two hundred years after the Prophet's death. This statement is borne out by the fact that the word Tasawwuf does not find a place either in the Sittah compiled in 392 A.H. or even in the Qamus, the standard Arabic Dictionary compiled in 817 A.H."

The life of early ascetics was like the Sufis. It is believed that Prophet Muhammad confided his mystical experiences to very few of his companions and most of these experiences were revealed through tradition, called Hadis (Hadith). So Sufism cannot be called the original Islam or Mystical Islam. Sufism is one aspect of Islam and it is concerned mainly with inner life and mystical experiences. So Sufism is rightly called Islamic mysticism. We give some quotations from leading authorities on Sufism.

"Islamic mysticism is the attempt to reach individual salvation through attaining the true tauhid, says one of the leading western orientalists Heinrich Schaeder. In fact, the quintessence of the
long history of Sufism is to express a new, in different formulations, the overwhelming truth that "there is no deity but Allah" and to realize that He alone can be the object of worship." Gibb says, "This change in the character of Islamic mysticism is associated also with a change in its leadership." 47

Reynold Nicholson has given the title, "Islamic mysticism to his book on four eminent Sufis: Abu Said al Khayr, Jili's "The Perfect Men, Ibn Arabi, Ibn Farid. In the introduction to "The Mystics of Islam", he writes, I have collected during the last twenty years for a general history of Islamic mysticism - a subject so vast and many-sided that several large volumes would be required to do it anything like justice." 48 The ninth chapter of A. J. Arberry's book "Sufism", bears the title, "The Theosophy of Islamic Mysticism." 49

Thus Islamic mysticism is the proper word for Sufism and it is used by all leading scholars and exponents of Sufism.

4. Four Essentials of Sufi Path: Shari'at, Tariqat, Ma'rifat, Haqiqat

Sufism is considered a spiritual journey, which has four essential elements as its pillars. There is a wrong impression in the minds of many scholars of Punjabi literature that these are stages and whoever goes from the first stage of Shari'at to the second or third or even fourth stage of Haqiqat gives up the first stage of Shari'at. These notions are based on a very superficial study of Sufism, and there is no substance in them. These ideas are based on utterly wrong notions of Shari'at and Haqiqat.

4.1 Shari'at (The Divine Law)

Dr. Seyyed Hossein Nasr writes, "The Shari'ah is the Divine Law
by virtue of accepting which a person becomes a Muslim, only he who accepts the injunctions of the Shari'ah as binding upon him is a Muslim although he may not be able to realize all of its teachings or follow all of its commands in life. The Shari'ah is the ideal pattern for the individual's life and the Law which binds the Muslim people into a single community. It is the embodiment of the Divine Will in terms of specific teachings whose acceptance and application guarantees man a harmonious life in this world and felicity in the hereafter. The word Shari'ah itself is derived etymologically from a root meaning 'road'.

"It is the Law according to which God wants a Muslim to live. It is, therefore, the guide of human action and encompasses every facet of human life. By living according to the Shari'ah man places his whole existence in God's hand'. The Shari'ah by considering every aspect of human actions thus sanctifies the whole of his life and gives a religious significance to what may appear as the most mundane of activities."

Shari'at covers all laws governing the religious, social, cultural and political duties of a Muslim. The religious laws cover their duties and beliefs in God, prayer, alms, pilgrimage. Briefly these laws are:

4:1 God

Muslims must believe that there is no God besides the one God. In the Throne-verse of Koran this article of faith is clearly stated:

"Say He is one God, that He is the Resource, that He begets not, and is not begotten, nor is there any one like unto Him."
"And your God is one God exclusive of any other. He is merciful and compassionate." 52

Prophet Muhammad had to fight a bitter battle against idolatory. He acquired victory over Mecca temple by invading it and breaking all its idols. Subsequently breaking idols in temples and thus launching a political battle against idolators became an article of faith with the Muslim rulers who showed their zeal by openly displaying their intolerance and hatred for religions believing in idolatory.

4:1:ii Muhammad is the Seal of Prophets and the last one sent by God. This has been discussed.

4:1:iii Belief in Angels and the Devils

4:1:iv Belief in Last Day: "The place occupied by the Last Judgement in the mind of Muhammad and imagination of his immediate followers is very important. It is vigorously present in the Koran:

"O ye men, fear your Lord! The cataclysm of the end of the world will be a terrible thing. On the day you shall see it, every suckling mother shall forsake the child she suckles, every pregnant female will miscarry and men will appear to these drunken, though they be not drunken, so dreadful shall be the punishment of God."

"On the day when the blast of the trumpet will resound, man shall flee from his brother, his mother, his father, his consort, his children, everyone of them at the moment having enough to keep himself busy." 53

4:1:v Prayer: Observance of ritual prayer (Salat) is repeatedly emphasized in the Koran. Although neither the ceremonies nor the
five set times of prayer are precisely stated in the Koran. It is certain that they were well established before Muhammad's death. Each consists of a fixed number of 'Bowing' called rakāh. The five times of prayer are (1) day break, (2) noon, (3) mid-afternoon, (4) after sun-set, and (5) early part of night. "Celebrate the religious service of prayer at the two ends of the day, and a part of the night. Good works repel evil works. That is a reminder to the mindful."54.

The Koran mentions the noon-prayer of Friday, the principal congregational prayer of the week and enjoins the suspension of work during the day. Ablution before prayer is strictly enjoined, and the ritual is defined in the Koran, "when ye rise up to prayer, wash your faces, and wipe your hands and your feet to the ankles". This is the lesser ablution' (wazū). The greater ablution (ghusel) is a complete washing of the body after major pollutions."55

4:1:vi Alms with the observance of prayer the Koran regularly enjoins the giving of alms (Zakāt).

"Alms are set apart for the poor and needy for those who collect them, for the neophytes, the redemption of slaves, insolvent debtors, for the cause of God, and for the wayfarer. This is an ordinance from God. God is all-knowing and wise."56

4:1:vii Fasting: The Koran says,

"O ye believers! There is prescribed for you the fast during a definite number of days as it was prescribed for those before you so that may fear God. Those among you who, ill or on a journey, are hindered, let them fast an additional number of days. But those who break the fast
redeem it by the distribution of food to the poor."  

4:1:viii Pilgrimage: Hajj to the sacred mosque at Mecca and Medina was also definitely regulated. Koran says:

"For the love of God, fulfill the pilgrimage to Mecca, with and without the sacrifice of a sheep. If insecurity prevents you from fulfilling the pilgrimage, offer a sheep according to your means, and shave not your heads until your offering shall reach the place of sacrifice. He amongst you who, being sick or affected with disease upon his head, should be obliged to shave he will have to fast, give alms or offer a sacrifice to God."  

4:1:ix Jehad is the way to God. "Fight in the way of God against those who fight against you, but do not commit aggression.

The Shari'at prescribes duties towards parents, children, women. It also gives a civil code on marriage, divorce, widows and other social matters. According to Hujwiri Shari'at (Knowledge of Laws) has three pillars:

(1) The Koran, (2) The Sunna, and (3) The Consensus (Ijma) of the Muslim community. All enlightened Sufis gave great importance to Shari'at, "To kiss the threshold of the Shari'ah was the first duty of anyone who wanted to enter the mystic path", says Dr. Hossein Nasr.

"In the Islamic perspective God has revealed the Shari'at to man so that through it he can reform himself and his society. It is man who is in need of reform not divinity revealed religion. The presence of the Shari'ah in the world is due to the compassion of God for his creatures so that he has sent an all encompassing Law for them to follow and thereby to gain felicity in both this
world and the next. The Shari'ah is thus the ideal for human society and the individual. It provides meaning for all human activities and integrates human life. It is the norm for the perfect social and human life and the necessary basis for all flights of the spirit from the periphery to the centre. To live according to the Shari'ah is to live according to the Divine will, according to a norm which God has willed for man.\textsuperscript{59}

4:2 \textit{Tariqat : The Path}

Cyprian Rice says, "The Sufis spoke of themselves as travellers or wayfarers, faring upon a way (rāh, tariqā) which was staked out, but on which, nevertheless, a guide, in the person of an experienced spiritual man, a pīr or Murshid, was indispensable. This way led the traveller away from self to begin with, from the carnal, self-indulgent self, and then, more and more, from any assertion of self or conscious regard of self. The goal or destination is defined in various ways: as ma'rifat or gnosis, or as union with God (vusūl, visāl, ittiḥād) as vision of Him, in His unveiled Beauty and glory, or again, as utter consumption in the fire of love, or, simply, as perfection.\textsuperscript{60}

The tariqā, the "Path" on which the mystics walk, has been defined as "the path which comes out of the Shari'ah, for the main road is called Shari'a, the path, tariqā". This derivation shows that the Sufis considered the path of mystical education a branch of that highway that consists of the God-given law, on which every Muslim is supposed to walk. No path can exist without a main road from which it branches out; no mystical experience can be realized if the binding injunctions of the Shari'a are not
followed faithfully first. The path, tarīqā, however, is narrower and more difficult to walk and leads the adept — called Sālik, "wayfarer" — in his Suluk, "wandering", through different stations (maqam) until he perhaps reaches, more or less slowly, his goal, the perfect tauhīd, the existential confession that God is one. The tripartite way to God is explained by a tradition attributed to the Prophet: "The Shari'a are my words (aqwali), the tarīqā are my actions (a'mali) and the haqiqa is my interior state (ahwali) shari'a, tariqa and haqiqa are mutually interdependent."^{61}

According to Hossein Nasr, "The Tariqāh or spiritual path which is usually known as Tasawwuf or Sufism is the inner and esoteric dimension of Islam and like the Shari'ah has its roots in the Quran and prophetic practice. Being the heart of the Islamic message, it, like the physical heart, is hidden from external view, although again like the heart it is inner sources of life and the centre which coordinates inwardly the whole religious organism of Islam. The Tariqāh is the most subtle and difficult aspect of Islam to understand at the same time that its external effect is to be seen in many manifestations of Islamic society and civilization."^{62} The Shari'ah is the Divine Law by virtue of whose acceptance man becomes a Muslim. Only by living according to it can man gain that equilibrium which is the necessary basis for entering upon the Path or Tariqah. Only a man who can walk on flat ground can hope to climb a mountain. Without participation in the Shari'ah, the life of the Tariqāh would be impossible and in fact the latter is interwoven in the practices and attitudes with the practices prescribed by the Shari'ah."^{63}

A number of prominent Sufi saints organized their own Tariqas,
each of which had its own institutional rules and principles which were strictly followed by them. We will discuss these towards the end of this chapter.

4:3 Ma'rifat : Gnosis : Divine Knowledge

Nicholson says, "While ordinary knowledge is denoted by the term 'ilm', the mystic knowledge peculiar to the Sufis is called ma'rifat. Ma'rifat is fundamentally different from 'ilm, and a different word must be used to translate it. We need not look far for a suitable equivalent. The ma'rifat of the Sufis is the 'gnosis' of Hellenistic theosophy, i.e. direct knowledge of God based on revelation or apocalyptic vision. It is not the result of any mental process, but depends entirely on the will and favour of God, who bestows it as a gift from Himself upon those whom He has created with the capacity for receiving flashes into the heart and overwhelms every human faculty in its dazzling beams. "He who knows God is dumb."66

"In Sikhism Ma'rifat is called Adhyātam-gīān or Anubhāvī-gīān. It is not derived from books although inspiration for it comes from sacred books. It is not acquired through the intellect but through intuition. It is not stored in the brain but is revealed in the heart.

It is by intense love of God the mystics achieve this spiritual knowledge called ma'rifat. Says Margaret Smith, "By pure love, then the mystic is guided from one station to another until he comes to the end of the first stage of the Way, when the mirror of the soul has become as pure from self as flame from smoke, and is fitted to reflect the Light of God, by which it is illuminated in the second
stage, that of ecstasy; and now the mystic enters upon that third stage, of attainment, which is indeed the end of his journey. There he receives that mystic knowledge of the Divine, the gnosis (ma'rifa), which will enable him to see God face to face, and in seeing Him, to become one with Him. Love it is which leads to gnosis, and is bound up with it, for none loves God worthily, who does not know Him, and who knows Him loves Him. This gnosis is an utterly different thing from the earthly knowledge (ilm), which can be acquired by human effort, and from human teachers.  

"All that the eyes behold", says Dhu al-nun, "belongs to earthly knowledge, but that which the heart learns, belongs to certainty (the true knowledge)", and another of the Sufis said of it, "Ecstasy (which belongs to an earlier stage of the way) is but transient, while gnosis does not pass away, Al-Nuri was asked by what means he had come to know God, and he said : "By means of God. The intellect (aqal) is weak, it has no power except over what is as weak as itself."  

Kalabadi gives the following exposition of Ma'rifat (Gnosis) : "Ibn Ata said : "The intellect is an instrument of servanthood, not a means of approaching lordship." They quote the following verses written by a great Sufi; Hallaj :  

Whoso seeks God, and takes the intellect for guide.
God drives him forth, in vain distraction to abide,
With wild confusion He confounds his inmost heat,
So that distraught, he cries, "I know not it thou art."  

Junayd said : "Gnosis (ma'rifa) is of two sorts : gnosis of self-revelation (ta'arruf) and gnosis of instruction. The meaning of "Self-revelation" is, that He causes them to know Him, and to
know things through Him." Muhammad ibn Wasi said: "I never saw a single thing without seeing God before it." "God has revealed Himself to the commoners through His creation, for He says, Do not look at the camel, how she is created? To the elect, He has revealed Himself through His speech and attributes, for He says, 'Do they not meditate on the Koran. To the Prophets He has revealed Himself through Himself, for He says, 'And thus we have inspired thee by a spirit at our bidding.'

Shaikh Hamid-ud-din the eminent Chisti saint wrote, "A man who talks of union with God without purifying his inner self from infirmities, talks non-sense. When a man raises himself above both the worlds and abstains from sensuous pleasures and desires, he attains gnosis (Ma'rifat) with the result that wherever he is, he is with God; and whatever he seeks, he seeks Him and Him alone."

Another eminent Indian Sufi saint Shaikh Sharf-ud-din says, "Gnosis (Ma'rifat) is the essence of man's soul; salvation and immortality of man lie in its attainment. Love of God, the supreme end in this life, and the vision of God, summum Bonum, are the direct consequences of it. It is attained by the purification of heart from human infirmities. Thus purification leads to love and love begets complete vision. The heart of the individual is just like a mirror. A mystic perceives the grandeur, magnificence and the beauty of God in his own heart. Thus the perfection of gnosis is based on the purification of the heart. Purification is of two kinds: One is external and the other is internal. Just as prayer (salāt) cannot be performed without purity of the body, in like manner, without the purification of the heart from human
infirmities gnosis cannot be attained." Gnosis (Ma'rifat) is not acquired. It is based absolutely on the grace of God. It is not the fruit of one's search but it is bestowed on man by God.

Imam Al-Ghazzali quotes the Koranic verse, "That is the bounty of Allah; which He giveth unto whom He will."72

Nicholson emphasizes on two aspects of Sufi Gnosis (Ma'rifat). All the mystical knowledge of God is revealed within the heart of man and it always comes from within. All the Sufis are not Gnostics. He says, (1) it is an axiom of the Sufis that what is not in a man, he cannot know. The gnostic - Man par-excellence - could not know God and all the mysteries of the universe, unless he found them in himself. He is the microcosm, a copy made in the image of God', 'the eye of the world whereby God sees His own works'. In knowing himself as he really is, he knows God, and he knows himself through God, who is never to everything than its knowledge of itself."73

(2) Not all Sufis are gnostics; and, as I have mentioned before, those who are not yet ripe for the gnosis receive from their gnostic teachers the ethical instruction suitable to their needs."74

In Turkish literature the relation between Shariat, Tariqat and Ma'rifa is explained as follows:

Shari'a : your is yours, mine is mine.
Tariqa : Yours is yours, mine is yours too.
Ma'rifat : There is neither mine nor thine.75

Jalaludin Rumi describes the Sufi who has been illumined by mystical knowledge (ma'rifat) thus:

"The man of God is made wise by the Truth,
The man of God is not learned from book."
The man of God is beyond infidelity and faith,
To the man of God right and wrong are alike." 

4:4 Haqīqat: Experience of Truth

The highest experience of divine Reality is called Haqīqat or experience of Truth about God. It is the fourth and the last grade of Sufi path.

On relation between Shari'at and Haqīqat Shaikh Sharf-ud-din says, "Again, some misguided people (heretics) separate Shari'at from Haqīqat. They assert that man who attains reality becomes free from the obligations of Shari'at. But this belief is also condemned by Sheikh Sharf-ud-din. He believes that what has remained constant from the time of Adam is Haqīqat, i.e. the gnosis of God. But what has kept changing from time to time is Shari'at. In other words, Haqīqat refers to the ultimate goal and Shari'at refers to the means of attaining it. Shari'at is the body and Haqīqat is the soul. Just as a living man cannot exist without body and soul. Similarly, for the completion of faith both Shari'at and Haqīqat are essential."  

Theologians and some writers on Sufism have created considerable confusion between Shari'at and Haqīqat. This confusion is cleared by Hujwiri who gives a detailed analysis of their relation thus. He writes, "These terms are used by the Sufis to denote soundness of the outward state and maintenance of the inward state. Two parties err in this matter: firstly, the formal theologians, who assert that there is no distinction between Shari'at (law) and Haqīqat (truth), since the Law is the Truth and the Truth is the Law; secondly, some heretics, who hold that it is possible for one
of these things to subsist without the other, and declare that when the Truth is revealed the Law is abolished. This is the doctrine of the Carmathians. (Quaramita) and the Shi'ities and their satanically inspired followers (muwaswisam). The proof that the Law is virtually separate from the Truth lies in the fact that in faith, belief is separate from profession, and the proof that the Law and the Truth are not fundamentally separate; but are one, lies in the fact that belief without profession is not faith, and conversely profession without belief is not faith; and there is a manifest difference between profession and belief. Haqiqat, then, signifies a reality which does not admit of abrogation and remains in equal force from the time of Adam to the end of the world, like knowledge of God and like religious practice, which is made perfect by sincere intention; and Shari'at signifies a reality which admits of abrogation and alteration, like ordinances and commandments. Therefore, Shari'at is Man's act, while Haqiqat is God's keeping and preservation and protection, whence it follows that Shari'at cannot possibly be maintained without the existence of haqiqat and haqiqat cannot be maintained without observance of Shari'at. Their mutual relation may be compared to that of body and spirit; when the spirit departs from the body the living body becomes a corpse and the spirit vanishes like wind, for their value depends on their conjunction with one another. Similarly, the Law without the Truth is ostentation, and the Truth without the Law is hypocrisy. God hath said: "Whosoever mortify themselves for our sake, we will assuredly guide them in our ways" (Kor. XXIX, 69): Mortification is Law, guidance is Truth; the former consists in a man's observance of the external ordinance,
while the latter consists in God's maintenance of a man's spiritual feelings. Hence the Law is one of the acts acquired by Man, but the Truth is one of the gifts bestowed by God."78

John A. Subhan describes the experience of Haqiqat thus:

Haqîqat, "Reality"....... the heart is now illumined with the true nature of God. The aspirant, as he learns the true nature of God, learns to exercise tawakkul, dependence upon God. According to Al-Ghazali tawhid and tawakkul are inseparably related. To put one's trust in secondary causes is to associate these with God as the object or devotion and this is Shirk (pantheism)."79

5. The Seven Stages of Sufi Path: Muqâmât

Kitab-ul-Luma of Abu Nasr al-Sarraj, in common with the majority of the subject, enumerates seven of these stages: conversion or repentence; fear of the Lord; renunciation; poverty; endurance; trust in God, contentment (rida); the state of one who pleases God and always is pleased with Him and His ways. These seven stages are to be reached by the personal endeavours of the disciple, although the constant need of divine grace is presupposed in each case."80

Hujwiri says, "Maqâm" (station) denotes the perseverance of the seeker in fulfilling his obligations towards the object of his search with strenuous exertion and flawless intention. Everyone who desires God has a station (maqâm), which, in the beginning of his search, is a means whereby he seeks God. You must know that the way to God is of three kinds: (1) maqâm, (2) hâl, and (3) tamkîn. 81

"These stages are(1) Repentance, (2) abstinence, (3) Renunciat-
tion, (4) Poverty, (5) Patience, (6) Trust in God, (7) Satisfaction. The 'Stages' constitute the ascetic and ethical discipline of the Sufi, and must be carefully distinguished from the so-called 'states' (ahwāl, Plural of ḥāl), which form a similar psychological chain. The writer whom I have just quoted enumerates ten 'States' - Meditation, nearness to God, love, fear, hope, longing, intimacy, tranquillity, contemplation, and certainty. While the 'stages' can be acquired and mastered by one's own efforts, the 'states' are spiritual feelings and dispositions over which a man has no control. 'They descend from God into his heart, without his being able to repel them when they come or to retain them when they go'.

"The Sufi's path' is not finished until he has traversed all the 'stages', making himself perfect in everyone of them before advancing to the next, and has also experienced whatever 'States' it pleases God to bestow upon him. Then, and only then, is he permanently raised to the highest planes of consciousness which the Sufis call Gnosis (ma'rifat and Truth (haqiqat).

5:1 First Stage : Repentence (Tawbā)

"You must know", says Hujwiri, "that repentence (tawbāt) is the first station of pilgrims on the way to the Truth, just as purification (tāherat) is the first step of those who desire to serve God. Hence God hath said: "O believers, repent unto God with a sincere repentence" (Kor. LXXVI 8). And the Apostle said, "There is nothing that God loves more than a youth who repents"; and he also said, "He who repents of sin is even as one who has no sin," "then he added, when God loves a man, sin shall not
hurt him', i.e. he will not become an infidel on account of sin."

Repentance (tawbā) can be awakened in a soul by any outward event and a sinner or worldly men can turn to virtuous and spiritual life suddenly; that is why it is also called "conversion". "When the disciple leaves this world in his act of repentance, the problem arises as to whether or not he should remember his former sins. Sahl at-Tustari demand that even after repentance sins should never be forgotten, for remembrance constitutes a remedy against possible spiritual pride. However, Junayd, his contemporary, defined true repentance as "the forgetting of one's sins."

Junayd's idea is taken up by Hujwiri: "The penitent is a lover of God, and the lover of God is in contemplation of God, and in contemplation it is wrong to remember sin, for recollection of sin is a veil between God and the contemplators."

Dhu'l-Nun said: "The repentance of the common is from sin; the repentance of the elect is from forgetfulness; the repentance of Prophets is from seeking that they are unable to reach what others have attained." Al-Nuri said, "Repentence means, that thou shouldst turn from everything but God." Ibrahim al-Daqqaq said: "Repentance means, that thou shouldst be unto God a face without a back, even as thou hast formerly been unto Him a back without a face."

Margaret Smith giving Al-Muhasibi's views on repentance says: "Man cannot be purified from sin except by the gift of God's grace, and the attitude of mind and heart which admits his guilt, his need of purification and his readiness to respond to the Divine mercy, and to accept the Divine gift of forgiveness, its repen-
But to al-Muhasibi, repentance is most necessary as the first step towards spiritual progress and the possibility of receiving that gnosis which is the goal of the seeker, and that which incites to repentance of compunction, godly sorrow (huzn) and Shame (hayâ)." 90

The beginning of repentance, like the end, is due to the grace of God; but when God has stirred the conscience, then it is for man to examine and discipline himself, and to keep continually before him the remembrance of death and the hereafter, and so, by attaining mastery over the lower soul, and keeping his eyes fixed upon higher things, he will make continual progress in the path of God, and having relinquished the pleasures and temptations of all that would hinder him from the service of his Lord, will attain to fellowship with Him." 91

Hujwiri says, "Repentance is of three kinds: (1) from what is wrong to what is right, (2) from what is right to what is more right, (3) from selfhood to God. The first kind is the repentance of ordinary men; the second kind is the repentance of the elect; and the third kind of repentance belongs to the degree of Divine love (mahabbat)." 92

Dhu'l-Nun the Egyptian says: "Ordinary men repent of their sins, but the elect repent of their heedlessness", because ordinary men shall be questioned concerning their outward behaviour, but the elect shall be questioned concerning the real nature of their conduct. Heedlessness (ghaflat) which to ordinary men is a pleasure is a veil to the elect." 93

5:2 Second Stage: Abstinence (Wara')

Fear of God which leads to scrupulous observance is called Wara'.
It is this fear connected with hope which leads to self-examin­ation and pious life. This fear led to abstinance which we call sanjam in Punjabi. A devout Sufi tries to prove that he is God fearing by his scrupulous abstinance from all that is abhorent to God. Corruption of religion arises when a person has a presumpto­uous attitude towards God, due to the abandonment of this scrupulous abstinance, and the transgression of Divine Law.

"In regard to wara', the scrupulous abstinance which refrains from all that is unlawful and all that is doubtful, al-Muhasibi quotes the words of Hasan al-Basri, who said, "Abstinence is the most excellent part of the service of God", and also, "The founda­tion of the faith is abstinence." This abstinence involves the avoidance of everything which is displeasing to God, in the way of speech, or action on the part of the heart or the members, and the refusal of all that God disapproves in heart or members." 94

Al-Junayd said: "Abstinence is when the hands are void of possess­ions, and the heart of acquisitiveness." 95

Fasting is a type of asceticism which is enjoined by the law of God and is, therefore, incumbent upon the true believer. "Hunger breaks the power of the self", says al-Muhasibi, "and satiety increases insolence, and hunger strengthens concern and grief in concern, and concern and grief destroy sensual lusts and desire." It is a means of mortifying the appetites and of preventing gluttony and excess in eating and drinking, for the one who is accustomed to fast has gained the mastery over his natural appetites; but, to al-Muhasibi, fasting from food and drink is of no value unless there is also abstinence from sin. "He who fasts", the Prophet said, "must guard against deceitful
and lying speech and slander and calumny and ignorance and obscenity, and must take every care, and must walk with downcast eyes, and unless he does that God says concerning him that there is no need for him to abandon food and drink." The Prophet also said, "Even if you were to pray until you were (bent double) like the bow, and to fast until you were (as thin) as the bow-string, that would not be accepted from you, except through sincere abstinence. Through such fasting, the heart is illuminated and the soul purified and the spirit is led into the presence of God."96

5:3 Third Stage : Renunciation (Zuhd)

Cyprian Rice explaining Zuhd says, "Fear of the Lord leads necessarily to the third stage, Zuhd, which can be translated as detachment or renouncement of the world in order to give oneself to God. The Sufi regards attachment to this world as the source of all sin and quitting the world as the source of every good. This detachment must not be a merely external thing. It must be a genuine detachment of the heart. The Sufi warns against the danger of hypocrisy, of becoming a worshipper of outward appearances (Zāhid-i-Zāhirparast). But the Zāhid whose actions are guided by the great principles of the way is one who has passed through the seven cities of love beyond every consideration of being and non-being."97

Zuhud means renunciation. It led some to asceticism but those who were travelling on the path of Sufism associated it with the Tarīqā. "The Bektashis speak of the four gateways: divine law, Shari'a, whose adherent is the 'abid, "worshipper"; the mystical
path: tariqa, travelled by the Zahid, "ascetic"; the ma'rifā, "gnosis"; held by the 'arif, "gnostic"; and the haqīqa, "reality", which the muhibb, "lover" reaches. Each of these four gateways is founded upon ten obligations (very much like those taught in other orders, and the sacred number of forty is attained once more.

Margaret Smith commenting on Zuhd (asceticism and detachment) says, "closely connected with abstinence as a means of mortification is asceticism (Zuhd), the renunciation of this world and its good, of the pleasure of life, sensual and even spiritual, the preference of hunger to satiety, of wakefulness to sleep, of poverty to riches; indeed for the sake of God, is prepared to renounce all save Him.

"The believer who is seeking for godliness", writes al-Muhasibi, "renounces all that is destructive to him in this world and the next, and leanness is manifest in him, and mortification and solitude and separatism from the companionship of the pious, and the appearance of grief and absence of joy, and he chooses all that, hating to indulge in pleasure which may incur the wrath of his Lord and make him worthy of His chastisement, and the hopes that his Lord will be well pleased with what he does, and that he will be saved from chastisement, and will be permitted to come into His presence and to taste of the joys of Paradise, unalloyed and unabated, and to abide therein to eternity, enjoying the good pleasure of his Lord, the All-Gracious and all Glorious." Therefore, for the joy that is set before him, the seeker will renounce all that may hinder his spiritual progress, for in his renunciation he will have the continual aid of Him who never withdraws His help.
from those who ask it, and continually has compassion on them, and to that one who practises asceticism with effort and struggle, in the search for what is pleasing to his Lord, who strives against the self and fights against his lusts for His sake, God will lighten the task and will mortify his lusts and will help him to go forward on his way."\textsuperscript{99}

Al-Sarraj states that love of the world is the root of all sins, and that renunciation of the world is the root of all good and obedience to God.\textsuperscript{100} "Zuhd leads ultimately to intimacy with God. Piety in the servants leads on to Zuhd and Zuhd to love of God, and these two states are the aim of those who seek to love God and to be intimate with Him and he is not truly a Zahid who does not attain to the station of love or the mystic state of intimacy (uns)."\textsuperscript{101}

Thus in Sufism asceticism (Zuhd) is only a stage on the spiritual path of highest love and spiritual enlightenment. It is quite different from the loveless asceticism of yogis and Jains well known for their exclusiveness in religious life.

Fasting is an important practice in Sufi asceticism which we will discuss in a section of this chapter.

5:4 Fourth Stage: Poverty (Faqr)

The Salik (traveller) now reaches the fourth stage of poverty (faqr), which is considered basically very important. Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said, "O God make me live lowly and die lowly and rise from the dead amongst the lowly." Poverty has a form (rasm) and an essence (haqiqat). Its form is destitution and indigence, but its essence is fortune and free choice. He who
regards the form rests in the form and, failing to attain his object, flees from the essence, but he who has found the essence averts his gaze from all created things, and, in complete annihilation, seeing only the All-One he hastens towards the fullness of external life."  

Hujwiri further states: The Prophet said: "Poverty is glorious to those who are worthy of it." Its glory consists in this, that the poor man's body is divinely preserved from base and sinful acts, and his heart from evil and contaminating thoughts, because his outward parts are absorbed in (contemplation) of the manifest blessings of God, while his inward parts are protected by invisible grace, so that his body is spiritual (ruhānī) and his heart divine (rabbanī)."  

Margaret Smith explains, "Poverty is also a form of asceticism to be sought after by the servant of God, and in this he has before him the example of Prophet and make me to die in Poverty, and raise me up at the Last Day among those who are poor and not among the rich." He said also, "What have I to do with this world, and what is my relation to it save that a traveller on horse-back, who seeks to rest under the shade of a tree, and then leaves it and goes on his way."  

Jami tells how Sufyan once asked Rabi'a, "What is the best thing for the servant to do, who desires proximity to his Lord?" She said, "That the servant should possess nothing in this world or the next, save Him." In the same strain she once said, "If a man possessed the whole world, he would not be wealthy thereby." They said to her "why"? She said, "Because it perishes and passes away."
Al-Kattani said: "When a man is truly in need of God, then he is truly rich in God: neither of these states is complete without the other." Al-Nuri said: "The description of the poor man is, that he should be quiet when he possesses nothing, and generous and unselfish when he possesses something." 106

The faqir differs from the malāmatī (one who defies opinion) and from the self-styled Sufi (mutasawwif) in that they seek for paradise and their own soul's pleasure, whereas he seeks God alone and a closer walk with Him." 107

5:5 Fifth Stage : Patience (Sabr)

"The stage that follows immediately and logically upon the stage of poverty is sabr, which can be translated as patience, steadfulness or perseverance. This virtue, without which the depths of poverty could not be borne, is said to be the better part of faith, if not the whole of it. Where true love of God is found and the sense of His providential ways understood, the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune are not merely borne, but are accepted with ease and pleasure, as manifesting the will of God. The secret of perfect patience is this, that is trials and afflictions of life are met, not merely in God and with God, but actually by means of God Himself." 108

Hujwiri quotes Hasan as saying: "Patience is of two sorts: firstly, patience in misfortune and affliction; and secondly, patience to refrain from the things which God has commanded us to renounce and has forbidden us to pursue. 109 Sahl said: "Patience it is expectation of consolation from God: It is the noblest and highest of services." 110
"Patience (sabr) is dealt with at length by the Sufi writers as an essential stage in the progress of the spiritual life, or perhaps rather as an essential quality to be acquired by the saint. Abu Talib gives us the view of the Sufis that patience has three stages, first to leave off complaining, and this is the stage of repentant; second, to be satisfied with what is decreed and this is the rank of ascetics; third, to love whatever his Lord does with him, and this is the stage of the true features of God. Al-Qushayri speaks of patience as being as necessary to faith as the head of the body. Al-Ghazali in dealing with Sabr, regards it as a necessity for the saint, whose spiritual life must be a militant one, making war upon the passions and seeking after victory. Through the fire of affliction, the faith of the saint may shine more brightly. By patient endurance the saint may cease to feel the effects of adversity, and in the end, for his patience, he will win the greater reward." 111

Annemarie Schimmel writes: "The old Arabic saying, "Patience is the key to happiness," has been repeated thousands of times by mystics and poets, who never tire of inventing new parables to show the necessity of patience: only through patience does the fruit become sweet; only through patience can the seed survive the long winter and develop into grain, which, in turn, brings strength to the people, who patiently wait for it to be turned into flour and bread. Patience is required to cross the endless deserts that stretch before the traveller on the Path and to cross the mountains that stand, with stone-hearted breasts, between him and his divine beloved." 112
Patience, O father, is an iron shield, on which God has written "victory has come."

Jalal-ud-din Rumi

Yet Patience, indispensable as it is, is only "a messenger from the divine beloved" - Patience always says: "I give glad tidings from union with Him." Gratitude always says: "I am the possessor of a whole store from Him. Patience is an important milestone on the Path, but a person who has reached the station of gratitude (Shukr) is always blessed by divine grace."

5:6 Sixth Stage: Trust in God: Tawakkul

"Tawakkul" says Cyprian Rice, is the attitude of one who entrusts himself and all his ways and works to God, in a spirit of complete and unreserved trust. This is an attitude which springs naturally from the fundamental Islamic position. 'Islam' itself means self-surrender to God and the Muslim is he who has, once and for all, performed this act of submission and surrender. The religion of Islam is deeply marked with the sense of God's transcendance and man's insignificance and impotence.

Nicholson says, "Trust in God", in its extreme form, involves the renunciation of every personal initiative and volition, total passivity like that of a corpse in the hands of the washer who prepares it for burial; perfect indifference towards anything that is even remotely connected with one's self. A special class of the ancient Sufis took their name from this 'trust' which they applied, so far as they were able, in matters of everyday life. For instance, they would not seek food, work for hire, practise any trade, or allow medicine to be given them when they were ill.
Quietly they committed themselves to God's care, never doubting that He, to whom belong the treasures of earth and heaven, would provide for their wants, and that their allotted portion would come to them as surely as it comes to the birds, which neither sow and reap, and to the fish in the sea, and to the child in the womb.\textsuperscript{115}

A.J. Arberry in his translation of Kalabadhi's \textit{Kittab al Tasawwuf} quotes the opinions of many eminent Sufis, "Abu al-Qurashi said: "Trust is abandoning every refuse except God." Al-Junayd said: "The reality of trust is, that a man should be God's in a way he has never been, and that God should be his as He has ever been." Sahl said: "All the stations have a face and a back, with the exception of trust: trust is a face without a back." One Sufi said: "Trust is a secret shared only by the servant and God."\textsuperscript{116}

Annemarie Schimmel says, "This attitude has been a source of strength for millions of Muslims, but it is not to be confused with the stoic acceptance of a blind fate, as it is usually understood in terms of predestinarian ideas. The faith in the rizq that will reach man was certainly carried too far by an early mystic who forbade his disciple to stretch out his hand to grasp a dried-up melon skin." \textit{Tawakkul} in its interiorized sense means to realize \textit{tauhid}, for it would be \textit{shirk Khafī}, "hidden associationism", to rely upon or be afraid of any created being. This aspect of \textit{tawakkul} is one of the basic truth in Sufi psychology: as soon as every feeling and thought is directed is perfect sincerity toward God, without any secondary causes, neither humans nor animals can any longer harm the mystic. Thus \textit{tawakkul} results in perfect inner peace."\textsuperscript{117}
Al-Muhasibi holds more realistic opinion about Trust in God (tawakkul). He says: "Faith, since it enables men to feel their need, and to take God at His word, leads to reliance on Him and dependence on Him (tawakkul), for through assured faith doubts and suspicions are removed and certainty (yaqin) is perfected, and the true meaning of action (amal), i.e. as seen in the world around, is established, and it is that God is the creator, the provider, the Lord of life and death, the Giver, the Benefactor, "Rely on Him, my brother," writes al-Muhasibi, "with the reliance of one who thinks rightly of Him, who has confidence in His promises and relies upon His fulfilment of them, whose heart has rest from anxiety, because he trusts in His word." But this dependence upon God, al-Muhasibi is careful to point out, does not mean the abdication of work and the means of earning a livelihood. God provides His children with their daily bread, but He expects them to work for that which He provides." 118

5:7 Seventh Stage : Satisfaction : Riza

Nicholson says, "The Sufi who has eradicated self-will is said, in technical language, to have reached the 'Stages' of 'acquiescence' or 'satisfaction' (riza) and 'trust in God'." 119

Arberry in his "The Doctrine of the Sufis", gives the following definitions: Al-Junayd said: "Satisfaction is the relinquishing of free will". Al-Muhasibi said: "Satisfaction is quietness of heart under the course of destiny." Dhu'l Nun said, "Satisfaction is the heart's delight in the passage of fate". Ibn Ata said: "Satisfaction is heart's regard for what God chose for His servant at the beginning of time, for what He chose for him in best. Sahl
said: "When satisfaction is united with (divine) pleasure, the contentment is constant."  

This state of quiet contentment with God and all His ways, when the soul, convinced that destiny (Qismet) is never at fault, and that 'the creator's pen never slipped', is always happy and well-pleased, is the fruit of perfect love of God."  

Margaret Smith writes, "Al-Qushayri quotes the saying of a Sufi: 'If my heart is satisfied with God Most High (i.e. acquiescences in His Will) I know that He is satisfied with me.' Ruwaym gives a striking illustration of his conception of riza, "Satisfaction means that if God were to put Hell on His right side, (the servant) should not ask Him to change it to His left," and Ibn Khafif defines satisfaction as "the acquiescence of the heart in God's decision and the agreement of the heart with what He Wills and chooses", and again "Satisfaction is the acceptance of God's decisions with joy."  

Hujwiri describes two kinds of riza (satisfaction): (a) the satisfaction of God with Man and (b) the satisfaction of Man with God. Divine satisfaction really consists in, God's willing that Man should be recompensed (for his good works) and in His bestowing grace (karamāt) upon him. Human satisfaction really consists in Man's performing the command of God and submitting of His degree. Accordingly, the satisfaction of God precedes that of Man, for until Man is divinely aided he does not submit to God's decree and does not perform His command, because Man's satisfaction is connected with God's satisfaction and subsists thereby. In short, human satisfaction is equanimity (istiwa-yi-dil) towards Fate, whether it withholds or bestows, and spiritual steadfastness
(istiqāmat) in regarding events, whether they may be the manifestation of Divine Beauty (Jama'āl) or of Divine Majesty (Jalāl), so that it is all one to a man whether he is consumed in the fire of wrath or illumined in the light of mercy, because both wrath and mercy are evidences of God, and whatever proceeds from God is good in His eyes."\textsuperscript{123}

Those who live in rizā satisfaction are called quietists, Hujwiri says, "There are four classes of Quietists: (1) those who are satisfied with God's gift (\textquote{ata'}), which is gnosis (ma\textquote{'}rifat), (2) those who are satisfied with happiness (nu\textquote{'}ma'), which is this world, (3) those who are satisfied with affliction (balā'), which consists of diverse probations; and (4) those who are satisfied with being chosen (istifā), which is love (mahabbat). He who looks away from the Giver to the gift accepts it with his soul, and when he has so accepted it, trouble and grief vanish from his heart. He who looks away from the gift to the Giver loses the gift and treads the path of satisfaction by his own efforts."\textsuperscript{124}

Rizā (contentment) has rightly been described as "the joy of the heart in the bitterness of life. In perfect riza (rida'), says Annemarie Schimmel, "the mystic should not think about whether or not God has accepted his act of resignation and contentment; he should accept every divine decree, be it wrath or grace, with equanimity and joy. This interior joy, this perfect agreement with God's degrees, transforms the beggar into a king and opens the way toward participation in the divine will, toward love and "higher predestinarianism."\textsuperscript{125}
6. Ten Mystical States (Hāl) of Sufi Path

We have seen, the muqāmāt are the stages of the Sufi path. After passing through these stages and even on the journey the Sufi mystic experiences mystical states known as 'Hāl' (plural ahwāl).

"Jurjānī in his book of definitions defines Hāl thus: "The dictionary meaning of hāl is the end of the past and the beginning of the future (in other words, it is the present moment). But among the people of God (i.e. the Sufis), it is an experience of the soul (or heart), not artificially produced, not induced or acquired, of joy or sorrow, contraction or expansion; and so on. It passes away on the emergence of the attributes of the self. If it lasts and becomes a habitus, or fixed quality, it is called a maqām."126

Some Sufis believe that mystical states are permanent, but others hold that they are temporary and only the highest state of mystical union is permanent. Comparing state (hāl) with station (muqām) Hujwiri says, "State (hāl) is achieved through effort and discipline but state on the other hand is something that descend from God into a man's heart, without his being able to repel it when it comes or to attract when it goes, by his own effort. Accordingly, while the term "station" denotes the way of the seeker, and his progress in the field of exertion, and his rank before God in proportion to his merit, the term "State" denotes the favour and grace which God bestows upon the heart of His servant, and which are not connected with any mortification on the latter's part. "Station" belongs to the category of acts, "State" to the
category of gifts. Hence the man that has a "Station" stands by his own self-mortification, whereas the man that has a "State" is dead to "self" and stands by a "State" which God creates in him." 127 These mystical states are also called graces.

Abu al-Sarraj, in his 'Kitab ul-Luma', mentions the following mystical phases or graces:

1. Marāqaba (literally, watching or observation in this case, of one's own inner consciousness).
2. Qurb (or realization of the nearness of God)
3. Mahabbat (or love)
4. Fear (Khauf)
5. Hope
6. Shauq (longing, yearning)
7. Uns (a state of loving familiarity with God)
8. Itminān (a sense of security and serene dependence)
9. Contemplation (Mushāhada)
10. Yaqīn (certainty)" 128

6:1 Muraqaba : Meditation : Watching One's Own inner Consciousness

"If the soul is to receive", says Margaret Smith, "if it is to hear the answer to its beseeching, it must wait upon God, and enter into the "heart of silence", where God is. The means by which it can be prepared for this close intercourse with God, and be freed from all distractions which might hinder or mar that intercourse, is meditation (murāqaba, lit., watchfulness, awareness), the orientation of the whole of the faculties, feeling, mind, and will towards God. Not only must the members be stilled and the eyes closed, the attention of the mind fixed upon God, and
the ear attentive to His voice, but the heart and soul must be altogether "present" (hāzir), preoccupied with God and with Him alone."¹²⁹

Margaret Smith then quotes the opinion of Al-Muḥāsibi: "If you fear distraction, first cut off from yourself evil thought and then exercise and accustom your mind in meditation. As long as you are in the state of watchfulness, instruct your soul in meditation upon Divine things, so that when it feels against its will from the recitation (of your prayers), it may by necessity wander in the spiritual things in which it was trained."¹³⁰

Cyprian Rice, quoting Al-Sarraj says, three categories are distinguished of the mystical state of Murāqaba:

(i) Those, who, because of this knowledge of God's presence and awareness, instinctively ward off all evil thoughts.

(ii) Those who are so intensely aware of His presence that they become oblivious to all created things.

(iii) Those who have abandoned themselves and their state, whatever it is, to God as their trustee and protector. These then foregoing the veil of selfhood, are alone with God alone."¹³¹

"Someone said to Junayd of Baghdad, 'you say, do you not, that there are three veils (between the soul and God): self, folk and world (nafs, khalq, duniya)'. He replied, 'These are the veils of the common folk. The veils of God's intimates are: the sight of their good deeds, the right of their merits, the right of their charisma(karamat)'. He meant that one must strive after a stage where one loses right of one's own state of muraqaba, so entirely and utterly has it taken possession of one's whole being."¹³²
6:2 Qurb : Nearness of God

Qurb, the sense of God's nearness, is induced by practice of the state of murāqaba or concentration. The Sufis often quote texts from the Quran such as: 'If my worshipper ask thee about me, well, I am near' (Sura 2, verse 182); 'we are nearer to him than his own neck-vein' (Sura 50, v. 15); and 'we are nearer to Him than you, but you do not perceive' (Sura 56, verse 84). 133

"Sarraj says that this state consists in beholding one's nearness to God so that one seeks ever to draw nearer to Him by means of good deeds and constant remembrance (zikr). He divides the 'people of nearness' (ahl-i-qurb) into three categories:

6:2:i Those whose efforts to draw nigh to Him are prompted by their knowledge that He is all-knowing, that He is close to them and dominates them: (clearly, these are still in the realm of mujahada and kasb, virtuous effort).

6:2:ii Those deep investigators who, whatever they see, see God nearer to it that they themselves.

6:2:iii Men of ultimates (Ultimate realization, men who go the whole way). These are so completely lost (fāni) in Him that they are no longer conscious of their own state of nearness. (It is this third group that is touched by the mystical attraction). 134

A.J. Arberry in his "The Doctrine of the Sufis", gives the following opinions of eminent Sufis: Sari-al-Saqti was asked: "What is nearness?" He replied: "It is obedience". Another said: "Nearness means that thou art at the same time presumptuous towards Him, and submissive before Him: for God says, 'Adore and draw nigh'." Ruwaym was asked concerning nearness, and he said: "It puts to an end every obstacle." Al-Nuri wrote the following poem:
"I had supposed that, having passed away. From self in concentration, I should blaze
A path to Thee: but ah! no creature may
Draw nigh Thee, save on Thy appointed ways.
I cannot longer live, Lord, without Thee;
Thy hand is everywhere: I may not flee."\^{135}
As Sarraj quotes a tradition translated by Annemarie Schimmel thus:
"My servant ceases not to draw nigh
unto Me by works of devotion, until
I love him, and when I love him I
am the eye by which he sees and the
ear by which he hears. And when he
approaches a span I approach a cubit,
and when he comes walking I come running."\^{136}

6:3 Muhabbat (Love)

Al-Junayd said: "Love is the inclination of the heart, "meaning that the heart then inclines towards God and what is of God, without any effort. Another said: "Love is concord, "that is obedience in what God commands, refraining from what He forbids, and satisfaction with what He has decreed and ordained."\^{137}

"The love of man for God is a reverence in dwelling in his heart, and notcountenancing the love of any other than God. The love of God for man is, that He afflicts him, and so renders him improper for any but Him."\^{138}

"Love is the true religion of the spiritual elite, and its subtlety and depth cannot be conveyed by words. The metaphors
that summon the lover used to express the ineffable experience
this love, of which he was only a fragile vessel, are not taken
from the vocabulary of worldly love. Rather, they are perfectly
chaste, lucid, almost immaterial:

I have separated my heart from this world.
My heart and Thou are not separate.
And when slumber closes my eyes,
I find Thee between the eye and the lid."

Many Sufis consider Love to be the last station, others
consider it to be a mystical state. "Love, consummated in vision
or in union, as it is the final goal of the wayfarer, is likewise
the propelling and sustaining power of his life and journey. To
that extent, all other stages are but preludes or consequences
and effects of Love. For the Sufi God is one beloved, the Jānān
the supremely beautiful and desirable object of the soul's passionate love, as it strives with unutterable longing to reach Him and
lose itself in Him. In reality, it is the supreme beloved who
draws the soul towards Himself with compulsive magnetism, whether
by his own incomparable love or by His scarcely concealed beauty
(Jamāl)."

This mysterious love is rightly put among the mystical, infused
states. It cannot be acquired at will. Its birth and growth are
both the work of divine, prevenient grace. Bayazid Bistami once
said: 'I thought I loved Him but on second thoughts, I saw that
His love preceded mine'. In another passage of his we find:
'Lovers of God, whether asleep or awake, seek and are sought. Still,
they are not concerned with their own seeking and loving but are
lost in their own contemplation of the beloved, in rapt attention
"The only means of drawing near to the divine beloved is by constant purification and, in exchange, qualification with God's attributes. Junayd has defined this change brought forth by love: "Love is the annihilation of the lover in His attributes and the confirmation of the Beloved in His essence." ¹⁴²

"But love as experienced by the early Sufis is a strong personal and existential commitment. Hallaj did not even hesitate to place it higher than faith: "It is a primordial divine grace without which you would not have learned what the Book is not what Faith is. "The mystics felt that the love they experienced was not their own work but was called into existence by God's activity. Did not the Koran attest: "He loves them, and they love Him." (Sura 51:59) a word that shows that God's love precedes human love? Only when God loves His servant can he love Him, and on the other hand, he cannot refuse to love God, since the initiative comes from God. Love cannot be learned; it is the result of divine grace - "If a world would draw love into it, it could not do it, for it is a gift, not an acquisition. It is divine." The Sufis, deepening the general Muslim knowledge that the divine greatness overpowers everything, have always felt that man is far too seek God.

Not a single lover would seek union if the beloved were not seeking it."¹⁴³

"Love" says Jalaludin Rumi, "is the remedy of our pride and self-conceit, the physician of all our infirmities. Only he whose garment is rent by love becomes entirely unselfish." Nuri, Raqqam, and other Sufis were accused of heresy and sentenced to death.
"When the executioner approached Raqqam, Nuri rose and offered himself in his friend's place with the utmost cheerfulness and submission. All the spectators were astounded. The executioner said, "Young man, the sword is not a thing that people are so eager to meet; and your turn has not yet arrived." Nuri answered, 'My religion is founded on unselfishness. Life is the most precious thing in the world: I wish to sacrifice for my brethren's sake the few moments which remain'."  

Hallaj Mansur demonstrates the consequences of perfect love and the meaning of submission to the unity of the divine beloved - not with the aim of gaining and sort of private sanctity but in order to preach this mystery to love in it and to die for it. "Hallaj describes the fate of the moth that approaches the flame and eventually gets burned in it, thus realizing the Reality of Realities. He does not want the light or the heat but casts himself into the flame, never to return and never to give any information about the Reality, for he has reached perfection."  

"The Pathans know Hallaj Mansur as the martyr of love (who is even mentioned in their proverbs), as did the Punjabis. His name occurs in most of the mystical Punjabi songs as the representative of love, contrasted with the dry asceticism of the theologians and the bookishness of the Mullahs. Hallaj is mentioned just as frequently in Sindhi poetry: One can scarcely find any book of mystical verses in Sindhi or its northern dialect, Sirai, that does not contain allusions to him or his fate. He is the great lover."  

"Jami maintains that the world owes its existence to love. For, God found His Being abounding with all the attributes of perfec-"
tion, viz. Being, Necessity, Holiness, Eternity, complete Freedom from need. These are the attributes of God alone and in here and in Him alone. The Sufis have called this state the 'Perfection of the Essence'. This was the state when God alone existed and none else was there." 147

6:4 The Fear of the Lord (Khawf)

Al-Muhasibi says, "The foundation of obedience is abstinence, and the foundation abstinence is godliness, and the foundation of that is self-examination, and self-examination is based on fear and hope, and that which guides to self-examination is the knowledge which enables God's creatures to serve Him with their hearts and members." 148

Muhasibi further analyses fear and distinguishes the emotional fear of a devotee from the holy fear of an enlightened saint. Muhasibi writes: "But the one who is most hopeful is the one who fears most, and the emotion of fear which is instrumental in inciting the sinner to repentance, in the believer becomes the virtue of holy fear, which is a continued attitude of mind. "It is perpetual fear", said Hasan of Basra. Fear and hope increase together in the heart, implanted there by the grace of God, "for it is He who first aroused fear and hope in the heart, and these two are His two commanders (i.e. those by whom He makes His will known), to those to whom He sends them, and they act within the heart to drive away temptation, and by means of them God increases His fellowship with the believer and His joy in right thoughts of him." This supernatural fear is given by the grace of God to that believing servant whose realization of his sins and the punish-
ment due to them has filled him with natural fear for himself, and because he seeks to have that grace bestowed on him, God has infused it into his heart as a free gift, without effort on his part, except that of preparing himself to receive it."149

The eminent Sufi al-Fuzayl said about Fear: "He who knows God by way of love without Fear perishes through pleasure and ease. He who knows Him by way of Fear (only) is separated from Him by the spirit of servitude and avoidance, but he who loves Him, and is near to Him, and is a matter of concern to Him, and has knowledge of Him, and he who knows God in reality, is far from error."150

Al-Sarraj speaks of three kinds of Fear, the commonest being fear of punishment. Others fear being cut off from God, or anything that might hinder their attainment of gnosis. But there is a higher type of Fear even than this and the holy fear of the elect is the fear of God alone. Al-Qushayri calls Fear "the scourge of God" where - with He corrects those who would feel from His door. Terror of the common sort makes a man run away, but holy dread brings him near to God. Fear is as a lamp to the heart, making it see what is good and what is evil; and godly fear leads a man to turn his back on what is feared, because it is evil." He who truly fears a thing flees from it, but he who truly fears God, flees unto Him."151

6:5 The State of Hope (Rija)

Cyprian Rice says, "The Sufi holds that to worship God in the hope of His grace and bounty is better than to worship Him in fear of punishment. But hope, as it exists in the heart of the
adept, is based neither on his own merits nor even on his conviction of the infinite broadness of God's mercy. It is concerned with God Himself and Him alone:—hope in God—rija fillah—he asks from God nothing but Himself, caring nothing for paradise.¹⁵²

Yahya ar-Razi said, "One mustard seed of love is better than seventy years of worship without love." Religion is, for him, hope in God, whose mercy is infinite and who listens to the prayer of human heart."¹⁵³

Al-Qushayri, with his gift for going to the heart of the matter, defines Hope as, "vision of God in His perfect Beauty" and al-Sarraj says that the true servant's hope is in God alone, and he hopes for nothing from God except God Himself. Such hope will lead the saint onward and upward."¹⁵⁴

Al-Muhasibi links the concept of hope with the doctrine of trust in God. This trust means a confident hope, and hope is another of the gifts of the Divine grace arising out of faith, and, in the believers, it is not simply a temporary emotion affecting the soul, but a continual attitude of mind, to be reckoned among the virtues. This virtue of hope is a movement of the will towards a desired good, and that object of hope is God Himself and fellowship with Him, that for which the soul was created. Hope sets the course of the soul towards God, and directs its desires towards its true goal, which is union with Him, and the will towards its real aim, which is the fulfilment of His will. So the effect of hope is to produce a fruitful and purposeful activity in the will, and it is the source of that energy and courage and endurance without which advance and perservance in the spiritual life would be impossible. It saves the novice on the road to God from despair,
while for those who have advanced farther on the way it has become partial realization, and complete confidence in regard to all that is to come. Hope is, therefore, the true "anchor of the soul", enabling it to hold fast to God."  

"Hope, if sincere, is in proportion to the obedience of the servant", who repents and seeks henceforth to do the Will of his Lord. In all he does he looks only to God and serves only for His sake, hoping that what he does will be well pleasing in His sight, and this is the hope of the righteous man who is sincere in his service to God."  

6:6 Shauq : Longing or Intense Desire

"Fear and desire (Shauq) are the two pillars of faith, when faith is settled in the heart, praise and contentment accompany it, not covetousness and heedlessness."  

"Among the different stages of love, the Sufis have mentioned Uns, "intimacy"; qurb, "proximity", Shauq, "longing", and others. The sequence differs according to their personal experiences. The ascending steps are charmingly described in the saying : "The hearts of the gnostics are the nests of love, and the hearts of the lovers are the nests of longing, and the hearts of the longing are the nests of intimacy."  

The "inward striving" after selfishness is identical with the state which Abu Sa'id calls "Want". There is no way nearer to God than this. It is described as a living and luminous fire placed by God in the breasts of His servants in order that their "self" (nafs) may be burned; and when it has been burned, the fire of "want" becomes the fire of "longing" (Shauq) which never dies,
neither in this world nor in the next, and is only increased by vision." 159

A dervish once asked Shaykh Abu said, "What is this tumult within our breasts"? The Shaykh replied: This is the fire of supplication, and God Almighty has created two fires, one unto life and one unto death. The living fire is the fire of supplication which He has placed in the breasts of His servants in this world, so that their carnal self may be consumed; that fire burns brightly and when the Self is consumed away, suddenly that fire of supplication becomes the fire of longing and that fire of longing will never die either in this world or the next, and this is that flame of which the apostle of God spoke when he said, 'When God willed good to His servant He kindled a light in his heart'." 160

6:7 Uns: State of loving familiarity with God

Uns has been described as intimate fellowship with God. Al-Junayd was asked: "What is intimacy (uns):" He replied: "Intimacy is the removal of nervousness, together with the persistence of awe." Dhu'l-Nun being asked the same question, said: "Intimacy is the lover's boldness with the Beloved." He further said, "The lowest station of intimacy is, that a man should be cast into the fire, and yet not be made absent thereby from Him with Whom he has been familiar." A certain Sufi said: "Intimacy means that a man should be so familiar with recollection that he is absent from the vision of all others." 161

Zuhd (asceticism or renunciation) leads ultimately to intimacy with God. Piety in the servants leads on to Zuhd and Zuhd to love of God, and these two states are the aim of those who seek to love
God and to be intimate with Him and he is not truly a Zahid who does not attain to the station of love or the mystic state of intimacy (Uns)."162

"Bound up with mahabba, too, is uns: where the worshipper feels awe, the lover feels the sense of intimacy: Al-Sarraj described it as the heart's joy in the Beloved and he defines the highest degree of uns, like that of Shawq as becoming Conscious of Uns, in the sense of reverence (in the presence of God) and proximity to Him, and of His greatness, all combined with intimacy with Him."163

6:8 Itminān (Sense of Security and Serene Dependence)

Itminān is a state intimately connected with Tawakkul or dependence on God. It is a mystical state of inner peace and lasting sense of security. It is a station which creates inner peace, a sense of security and complete confidence and trust in God. The seeker is deeply absorbed in the love and presence of God.

6:9 Mushāhada: Meditation and Contemplation leading to Vision

Cyprian Rice says, "Although the ten mystical states are not necessarily arranged in progressive order of importance or sequence in time, it is not for nothing that the great themes of contemplation and yakin (certainty) form the culmination of the series."

Hujwiri in his chapter on "Contemplation", writes, "By 'contemplation' the Sufis mean spiritual vision of God in public and private, without asking how or in what manner. There are two kinds
of contemplations. The former is the result of perfect faith, the latter of raptures of love, for in the rapture of love a man attains to such a degree that his whole being is absorbed in the thought of his Beloved and he sees nothing else. Shibli says: "I never saw anything except God", i.e. in the rapture of love and the fervour of contemplation. One sees the act with his bodily eye and, as he looks, beholds the Agent with his spiritual eye, another is rapt by love of the Agent from all things else; so that he sees only the Agent." 

Commenting on the relation of self-mortification and contemplation Hujwiri writes: "He who is most sincere in self-mortification is most firmly grounded in contemplation for inward contemplation is connected with outward mortification." Shibli cried in his prayer: "O God, hide, Paradise and Hell in Thy unseen places, that Thou mayest be worshipped disinterestedly." One who is forgetful of God nevertheless worships Him, through faith, because human nature has an interest in Paradise; but in as much as the heart has no interest in loving God, one who is forgetful of God is debarred from contemplating Him. When self-will vanishes in this world, contemplation is attained, and when contemplation is firmly established, there is difference between this world and the next. He sustains them with perpetual contemplation and keeps them alive with the life of love. Therefore, contemplation in this world resembles vision of God in the next world and since the companions of the Apostle are unanimously agreed that vision is possible hereafter, contemplation is possible here." 

About the highest contemplation Margaret Smith states, "By means
then of love and all the stages which have passed before, the Sufi attains to the mystic gnosis and "the heart becomes filled with its grace." That knowledge comes indirectly as a gift from the Lord and from it the gnostic proceeds to contemplation of the unveiled Essence of God."

Abu Sa'id says, "The saint lost in contemplation of God knows no religion, and it is often his fate to be classed with the free-thinkers, who, from the Moslem point of view, are wholly irreligious, though some of them acknowledge the moral law". Commenting on this spiritual state Nicholson writes: "His first state was self-mortification and asceticism. His last state was contemplation, a state in which the fruit of self-mortification is gathered and the complete unveiling comes to pass; accordingly, eminent mystics have said that state of contemplation are the heritage of acts of self-mortification.".

Ibn Atu'illah gives the following comments on meditation and contemplation: "Meditation is the voyage of the heart in the domains of alterities, Meditation is the lamp of the heart, so when it goes away, the heart has no illumination. Meditation is of two kinds: the meditation of belief and faith, and the meditation of contemplation and vision. The first is for the adepts of reflective thought, the second is for the adepts of contemplation and intellectual vision.".

6:10  
Cyprian Rice writes, "In the enumeration found in the 'Kitāb ul Luma' of Sarraj, the state of contemplation is followed by that of yaqīn or certainty, the state of one who has become firmly
rooted in divine contemplation and the process of fana and baqa. It may be said, therefore, to be the term or goal of all the states or ahwal. In this state all doubt has vanished and 'joy over good news' takes its place. Yaqin, indeed, is not only the culmination, but the pith and marrow of all the mystical states. It is unquestionable faith of the Sufis that eventually becomes deeply rooted in the soul and turns into unshakable certitude.

One day one of the disciples of Junayd came to test him. Junayd was aware of this and asked, "Do you want a formal or a spiritual answer?" The disciple said: "Both". Junayd said: "The formal answer is that if you had tested yourself you would not have needed to test me. The spiritual answer is that I depose you from your saintship." The disciple's face immediately turned black. He cried, "The delight of certainty is gone from my heart", and earnestly begged to be forgiven, and abandoned his foolish self-conceit.

According to another eminent Sufi, "Presence is better than certainty, because presence is an abiding state, whereas certainty is a transient one" i.e., presence makes its abode in the heart and does not admit forgetfulness, while certainty is a feeling that comes and goes, hence those who are "present" are in the sanctuary, and those who have certainty are only at the gate.

"There are", writes Hujwiri in another context, "really two kinds of contemplation. The former is the result of perfect faith, the latter of rapturous love, for in the rapture of love a man attains to such a degree that his whole being is absorbed in the thought of his Beloved and he sees nothing else."
7. Religious and Mystical Practices of Sufis and Their Goal of Unification and Vision of God

The Sufi path is based on sincere religious and spiritual practices, with the sole object of reaching the highest mystical enlightenment. Sufi mystics have distinct methods and techniques of prayer and contemplation for which they have well defined terms. We will discuss these briefly and end this chapter with the Sufi concept of "vision of God" or unification with God.

7:1 Free prayer or mystical prayer

The mystical prayer of the Sufis is different from the ritual five prayers. Ritual prayer is called namaz while free prayer is called (duā). For the Sufis free prayer is a conversation with God. Night prayer is considered far more fruitful than day prayer.

"True prayer is constant. It cannot be limited to a number of rak'as and portions of the Koran, but permeates man's whole being an idea that in our day has been expressed once more by Mohammed Iqbal, who follows Rumi example." But Sufis pray to God not for worldly goods but only for spiritual bounty. For the advanced mystics, only the love and presence of God should be the object of the prayer.

7:2 Zikr (Also spelt Dhikr)

The word "Simrin" or 'Namjap' which is used in Sikh Scriptures is the exact explanation of Zikr. Both the words Zikr and Simrin are translated as "remembrance" or "recollection" or recitation of God's Name. Zikr as a form of meditation is permitted in any
place, and at any time, its practice is not restricted to the
exact hours of day and night. God can be remembered anywhere and
at any time in the world. Zikr is the first step on the Sufi
path of mystic love. When one loves anyone he remembers and
repeats the name of Beloved.

The name of God and the technique of repeating it was acquired
from the spiritual guide, the Pir. "Only a Zikr properly inspired
by the spiritual director and constantly controlled by him, was
effective. Rosary (tasbih) has been used by many Sufis, but those
who reached advanced stages of spiritual perfection generally gave
up the use of rosary.

An eminent Sufi was asked: "Tell me a lawful thing in which
there is nothing unlawful." He replied: "Praise of God is a
lawful thing in which there is nothing unlawful, and praise of
aught else is an unlawful thing in which there is nothing unlaw­
ful", because your salvation lies in the former and your perdi­
tion in the latter." 175

John A. Subhan says: (Zikr) Dhikr, 'remembering', is a term
applied to special acts of devotion by means of certain breathing
exercises and also by controlling respiration. There are many
ways of performing dhikr; some of the more important one's may be
noted here." 176

7:2(i) Zikr-i-Jali : "The worshipper sits in the usual posture
and shouts the word Allah, drawing his voice as from his left
side and then from his throat."

7:2(ii) Zikr-i-Khafi : Closing his eyes and his lips, the wor­
shipper says, "With the tongue of his heart, Allahu Sami'un : The
first being drawn, as it were, from the navel to the breast: the
second, from the breast to the brain; the third, from the brain up to the heavens; and then again repeated stage by stage backwards and forwards.

7:2(iii) Sultanu'1-Adhkar, The dhikr of all dhikrs: Occasionally, of set purpose the worshipper centres his mind on the exact position in the body of the various lata'if, and by concentrated thinking he endeavours to make them 'active with remembrance' of God. In this effort he is greatly helped by the tawajjuh of his Pir, when at length he realises that all his lata'if are active with the remembrance of God he is said to have accomplished the Sultanu'1-Adhkar.

7:2(iv) Habs-i-dam, restraining breathing: In this case the devotee holds his breath and conceives of his galb, repeating the first part of the creed La-ilaha-illallah as many times as possible in one breath. Gradually his powers of control are so increased that he is able to repeat the creed, in one breath, several thousand times.

7:2(v) Pas-i-anfas, guarding the respirations: In their particular exercise the worshipper summons before his mind a picture of his heart situated within his left breast, and imagines that he sees the word Allah engraved on it in luminous Arabic characters. At the same time, he brings himself to believe that while inhaling his breath he is producing the sound Allah, and that while exhaling he makes the sound hu. This practice may be developed to such an extent that the Sufi imagines that the syllables Allah and hu accompany every act of inhalation and exhalation.

7:2(vi) Maḥmūda and naṣira: In the former of these two the eyes are made to converge on the tip of the nose, and in the latter
towards the middle of the forehead. While doing so the worshipper meditates on the thought that God is present and sees him.

7:2(vii) Nafi-athbāt, negation and affirmation: The worshipper sits in the posture of namāz and faces Mecca. He so breathes as to imagine that he is bringing up the phrase La ilāha from his navel, and then expels it by a Jerk in the direction of his right shoulder. He then utters illa' Ilah and jerks his head towards his heart as though to imprint these words on it."177

Reynold Nicholson writes: "The term dhikr (Zikr) - 'recollec-
tion' seems to me the most appropriate equivalent in English signifies 'mentioning', 'remembering', or simply 'thinking', of ............ Recollection may be either spoken or silent, but it is best, according to the usual opinion, that tongue and mind should co-operate. Sahl ibn 'Abdallah bade one of his disciples endeavour to say "Allah! Allah!" the whole day without intermission. When he had acquired the habit of doing so, Sahl instructed him to repeat the same words during the night, until they came forth from his lips even while he was asleep. "Now", said he, "be silent and occupy yourself with recollecting them." At last the disciple's whole being was absorbed by the thought of Allah."178

Al-Ghazali describes the method and effects of dhikr (Zikr) in a passage which Macdonald has summarised as follows:

"Let him reduce his heart to a state in which the existence of anything and its non-existence are the same to him. Then let him sit alone in some corner, limiting his religious duties to what is absolutely necessary, and not occupying himself either with reciting the Koran or considering its meaning or with books of religious traditions or with
anything of the sort. And let him see to it that nothing save God most High enters his mind. Then as he sits in solitude, let him not cease saying continuously with his tongue, 'Allah, Allah', keeping his thought on it. At last he will reach a state when the motion of his tongue will cease, and it will seem as though the word flowed from it. If he follows the above course, he may be sure that the light of the Real will shine out in his heart."  

7:3 Sam'a : Audition

Sam'a (music, dancing and singing) : The literal meaning of Sam'a is Audition or hearing. Inspiration received on hearing music, singing leading to dancing is now called Sam'a. Sufis are sharply divided on this issue. Some are deadly against it, while others support it. Orthodox Muslims are strongly critical of it. Qasam al-Baghdad says : "Audition is of two kinds. One class of man listens to discourse, and derives therefrom an admonition. Such a man only listens discriminately with his heart present. The other class listens to music, which is the food of the spirit, and when the spirit obtains its food, it attains its proper station, and turns aside from the government of the body; and there appears in the listener a commotion and a movement."  

Al-Junayd said : "The mercy of God descends upon the poor man on three occasions : when he is eating, for he only eats when he is in need to do so; when he speaks, for he only speaks when he is compelled; and during audition, for he only listens in a state of ecstasy."  

Hujwiri divides the auditioners to two classes : (1) those who hear the material sound, (2) those who hear the
spiritual sound. Zhu'l-Nun, the Egyptian Sufi mystic says, "Audition is a divine influence, which stirs the heart, to seek God: those who listen to it spiritually attain unto God, and those who listen to it sensually fall into heresy."  

Audition (Sam'a) has different effect in different kinds of people. "Whatever is heard by longing levels increases their longing for vision, whatever is heard by those who have certain faith confirms their certainty; whatever is heard by novices verifies their elucidation (of matters which perplex them), whatever is heard by lovers impels them to cut off all worldly connections; and whatever is heard by the spiritually poor forms a foundation for hopelessness. Audition is like the sun, which shines on all things but affects them differently according to their degree! it burns or illumines or dissolves or nurtures."  

Abu Hafs Suhrawardi has given a beautiful expression to the place of music in earthly and spiritual life. He says: "Music does not give rise, in the heart, to anything which is not already there. So he whose inner self is attached to anything else than God is stirred by music to sensual desire, but the one who is inwardly attached to the love of God is moved, by hearing music, to do His will."  

Dancing in Sam'a was made popular by the great mystic Jalal-ud-din Rumi who wrote:

The Truth we have not found,  
So, dancing, we beat the ground,  
Is dancing reproved in me,  
Who wander distraught for Thee?  
In Thy valley we go around,
And therefore we beat the ground."^186

For Rumi Sam'a was to die to this world and to be revived in the eternal dance of the free spirits around a sun that neither rises nor sets.

We will now discuss the important states of spiritual ascent and mystical perfection which are frequently used by most of the Sufis in their writings along with reverence for saints which is an important part of Sufi spiritual life.

7:4 Tamkîn (Residence of Sufi mystics in the State of Perfection)

Hujwiri says: "You must know that the way to God is of three kinds: (1) maqâm, (2) hâl, (3) tamkîn. Tamkîn denotes the residence of spiritual adepts in the abode of perfection and in the highest grade. Those in stations can pass on from their stations, but it is impossible to pass beyond the grade of tamkîn, because maqâm is the grade of beginners, whereas tamkîn is the resting-place of adepts, and maqâmât (stations) are stages on the way, whereas tamkîn is repose within the shrine."^187

7:5 Saints and Miracles

Hujwiri says: "You must know that the principle and foundation of Sufism and knowledge of God rest on saintship."^188 The saints are called 'wali', Wali Allah or Auliya which means Friend of God. The highest spiritual authority among saints is called Qutb.

Nicholson says, "Neither deep learning is divinity, nor devotion to good works, nor asceticism, nor moral purity makes the Mohammedan a saint; he may have all or none of these things, but the only indispensable qualification is that ecstasy and rapture
which is the outward sign of 'Passing away' from the phenomenal self."\textsuperscript{189}

"A miracle performed by a saint is termed Karamāt, i.e. a 'favour' which God bestows upon him, whereas a miracle performed by a Prophet is called mu'jizāt, i.e. an act which cannot be imitated by anyone, they declare, moreover, that the saints are the Prophet's witnesses, and that all their miracles (like a drop trickling from a full skin of honey') are in reality derived from him.\textsuperscript{190}

7:6 Firāq (Homesickness)

For the pilgrim on the path to Sufi goal human life is a time of separation from the beloved. His sighs and pangs for union after separation are called Firāq.

"Listen to the reed how it tells a tale, complaining of separations.
'Saying, "Ever since I was parted from the reed-bed, my lament has caused man and woman to moan."

\textbf{Rumi}

"The lament of the reed", says Cyprian Rice, "torn from its reed-bed, the soul's yearning for reunion with its divine. Source, the grieves and glooms of this vale of reverence set the heart in a state of turmoil and bewilderment."\textsuperscript{191} This is what the Sufis call Firāq and in Punjabi literature it is known as Birhā.

7:7 Fanā and Baqā: (Annihilation and Absorption in God)

Fanā has often been defined as 'passing away' or annihilation of the attributes of nafs. Nafs is defined as the lower self or
the animal spirit, closely connected with the concept of \textit{fanā} is the theory of \textit{baqā} which means "everlasting" life duration in God. It is believed that Abu Bakr Kharraz, author of Kitab as Sidq : translated by Arberry as "The Book of Truthfulness", was the first to discuss the theory of \textit{fanā} (annihilation) and \textit{baqā} permanent life in God, or persistence in God.

Kalabadhi writes, "Passing away is a state in which all passions pass away, so that the mystic experiences no feelings towards anything whatsoever, and loses all sense of discrimination he has passed away from all things, and is wholly absorbed with that through which he has passed away. So 'Amir ibn Abdillah said: "I do not care whether I saw a woman or a wall." Then God Himself undertakes to control him, and controls him so that he performs his duties to God, and accords with His will: he is wholly preserved in paying God His due, and is withdrawn from all opposition to God, so that he has not even the means to oppose Him."\textsuperscript{192}

"Persistence, which follows passing-away, means that the mystic passes away from what belongs to himself, and persists through what is God's. One of the great Sufis said: "Persistence is the station of Prophet of the Prophets." They were clad in the peace of God, and whatever comes to them cannot prevent them from doing their duty to God, and receiving His bounty; for "that is God's grace; He gives it unto whom He pleases." It means simply that whatever occurs to him occurs in agreement with God's command and pleasure, nothing that displeases God. Similarly, the mystic who persists through God, and passes away from self, does what he does not to derive personal advantage."\textsuperscript{193}
Nicholson giving the views of Abu Sa'd writes, "innumerable are the ways to God, yet the way is but a single step: "take one step out of thyself, that thou mayst arrive at God." To pass away from self is to realise that self does not exist, and that nothing exists except God."\(^{194}\)

Hujwiri sums up by saying, "Their real gist is this, that annihilation comes to a man through vision of the majesty of God and through the revelation of Divine omnipotence to his heart, so that in the overwhelming sense of His majesty this world and the next world are obliterated from his mind, and "states" and "stations" appear contemptible in the sight of his aspiring thought."\(^{195}\)

Shaikh Shahabud-din in his famous classic Awārif-ul- Ma'arif used as a Sufi Bible by Shaikh Farid, writes "Fana signifies the end of travelling to God. Baqā signifies the beginning of travelling in God. Travelling to God (fanā) endeth when, with the foot of sincerity, the holy traveller travelleth the desert of existence. Travelling in God (baqā) becometh verified when, after absolute fanā, they give to the slave an existence purified from the pollution of impurities, so that, in the world of description (the material world), he advanceth in Divine qualities."\(^{196}\)

7:8 **Tawḥīd : Unification and the Vision of God**

Annemarie Schimmel writes, "Just as the mystics have constantly invented new symbols to describe the state of fanā and baqā, they have also attempted to show what tawḥīd is. Tawḥīd, "to declare that God is one", is the goal of religious life for the Muslim in general and for the Sufi in particular."\(^{197}\)
three kinds of tawhid: "God's unification of His creatures, i.e. His decree that a man shall pronounce Him to be one, and the creation of unification in his heart, man's unification of God, i.e. their knowledge of the Unity of God."\(^{198}\)

The greatest exponent of the doctrine of Tawhid is Junayd. His Sufi group were known as "People of Tawhid". Dr. Ali Hassan Abdel Kadar explaining Junayd's views says: Junayd believed in three types of Tawhid:

\(7:8: (i) \) **Tawhid of ordinary people**: As for the Tawhid of ordinary people, it consists in the assertion of the unity of God, in the discarding of any conception of God, Companions, opposites, equals, likenesses to God."

\(7:8: (ii) \) **Second stage of Tawhid**: "As for the Tawhid of those who are well versed in formal religious knowledge, it consists in the assertion of the unity of God, in the discarding of any conception of gods, companions, opposites, equals, likenesses to God, combined with the performance of the positive commands and the avoidance of that which is forbidden so far as external action is concerned.

\(7:8: (iii) \) **Third Stage of Tawhid Unification**: "It is a state where the devotee has achieved the true realization of the oneness of God in the proximity to Him. He is lost to sense and action because God fulfils in him what He hath willed of him." That is, he is in the will of God and has no more a will of his own."\(^{199}\)

The main aim of Sufi Path and all the efforts they make to reach the goal is to have a Beatific Vision of God. Quoting Al-Ghazzali, Margaret Smith says, "If a man reaches this high know-
ledge, he will be stoned, because his worlds have passed beyond the limits of their minds (the minds of those who lack enlightenment) and they will consider his speech mad and unbelieving)."  

Many Sufis attained this beatific vision, some remained silent about it, others like All-Hallaj Mansur and Ibn al-Farid gave open expression to it. In this state of union Hallaj says:

"Thy will be done. 0 my Lord and Master
Thy will be done, 0 my purpose and meaning
0 essence of my being, 0 goal of my desire,
0 my speech and my hints and my gestures,
0 all of my all, 0 my hearing and my sight,
0 my whole and my element and my particle."  

In this state of mystical union and beatific vision Hallaj cried out Anal Haqq : I am God, I am Truth or Truth is in me."  

It is this state of mystical union and vision, the Arabic mystic proclaimed:

"With my Beloved I alone have been,
Whom secrets tendered than evening airs
Passed, and the Vision blest
Was granted to my prayers,
That crowned me, else obscure, with endless fame,
That while amazed between
His Beauty and His Majesty
I stood in silent ecstasy.
Revealing that which over my spirit went and came.
Lo, in His face commingled
Is every charm and grace;
The whole of Beauty singled
Into a perfect face
Beholding Him would cry,
"There is no God but He,
and He is the most High." 202

This is the highest mystical experience which the Sufis seek in their search for Truth and God, and many Sufis have given expression to this revelation of God's Light and soul within the heart and soul. Sufi mystics talk boldly of conversing with God, and of God speaking to them. Such is the nearness, intimacy attained by them that they have given expression to it in the symbolic language of poetry and mysticism.

Al-Hallaj dared to declare that his direct awareness of God was for him a clearer proof than both revelation and reason:

"Now stands no more betwen the Truth and me
Or reasoned demonstration,
Or proof, or revelation;
Now, brightly blazing forth, Truth's luminary,
Hath driven out of sight
Each flickering, lesser light." 203

Hallaj-Mansur paid with his life for giving open expression to this highest mystical experience and beatific vision of God but this sublime experience has been shared, explained by all leading Sufi saints and mystics.
References and Notes


2. Jami, Nafarat al-uns, p. 31, Quoted by Margaret Smith, "Studies in Early Mysticism" p. 158.

3. Ibn Khaldun : Prologomene, Quoted by Margaret Smith, Studies in early Mysticism, P. 158.


7. A fifth derivation is from the Greek, Sophron wisdom; in which case they become sophists, an origin and a significance which they emphatically repudiak hence giving it a Neoplatonic origin. The Moslem authorities sharply contest the point."

8. Hujwiri : Kashf Al-Mahjub, P. 34.


15. Ibid, P. 37.


17. Ibid. P. 41.


19. Idries Shah : They way of the Sufi, P. 263.


22. Ibid. P. 26-27.
While Khadijah was alive, he was the faithful husband of one wife, but when she died he fell into polygamous ways: this is true enough; about a store of women are said to have become his wives, and thirteen of them are remembered by name. At his death there were nine wives in his harm, who were henceforth styled 'mothers of the Believers' and forbidden to marry again. He declared as the will of Allah that Moslems should be allowed to have four wives at a time, and no more than four." E. Royston Pike; Mohammed, Prophet of the Religion of Islam, P. 58.
51. Ibid. P. 94.
53. Ibid, P. 51, Sura 22, V. 1,2, Sura 80, V. 33-37.
54. Ibid. P. 63.
56. Koran, Tr. Mercies, P. 75.
57. Ibid. P. 77.
58. Ibid. P. 81-83.
60. Cyprian Rice, *The Persian Sufis*, P. 31
63. Ibid. P. 121.
68. Ibid. P. 209.
70. Ibid. P. 52-53.
71. Mohammed Noor Naki: Development of Muslim Religious Thought in India, P. 33.
72. Ibid. P. 109-111.
74. Ibid. P. 95.
77. Mohammed, Noor Naki: Development of Muslim Religious Thought in India, P. 108.
83. Ibid. P. 29.
86. Hujwiri: Kashf al-Mahjub, P. 296.
88. Ibid. P. 92.
89. Margaret Smith: Al-Muhasibi, P. 150.
90. Ibid. P. 151.
91. Ibid. P. 54.
93. Ibid. P. 298.
96. Margaret Smith: Al-Muhasibi, P. 171.


101. Qut-al-Gulab, quoted by Margaret Smith, in "Rabi'a, The Mystic" P. 77.


104. Margaret Smith: Al-Muhasibi, P. 171.

105. Margaret Smith: Rabi'a, The Mystic, P. 84.


108. Ibid. P. 45.


113. Ibid. P. 125.

114. Cyprian Rice: The Persian Sufis, P. 47.


121. Cyprian Rice: The Persian Sufis, P. 103:

122. Margaret Smith: Rabi'a, The Mystic, P. 89.

123. Hujwiri: Kashf al-Mahjub, P. 177.

124. Ibid. P. 178.
129. Margaret Smith: Al-Muhasibi, P. 207.
130. Ibid. P. 207.
132. Ibid. P. 57.
133. Ibid. P. 58.
134. Ibid. P. 59.
138. Ibid. P. 113.
141. Ibid. P. 60.
143. Ibid. P. 138-139.
146. Ibid. P. 75.
149. Ibid. P. 188.
150. Quoted by Margaret Smith: Rabi'a, The Mystic, P. 66.
151. Ibid. P. 67.
156. Ibid. P. 187.
163. Ibid. P. 91.
166. Ibid. P. 330-331, 332.
172. Ibid. P. 144.
173. Ibid. P. 330.
177. Ibid. P. 97-100.
179. Ibid. P. 46-47.
181. Ibid. P. 183.
183. Ibid. P. 404.
188. Ibid. P. 210.
190. Ibid. P. 129.
193. Ibid. P. 132-133.
198. Hujwiri: Kashf al-Mahjub, P. 278.
200. Margaret Smith: Rabi'a, The Mystic, P. 104.