Chapter II

The Philosophical and Mystical Aspects of Buddhism

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CHAPTER II

PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF REASON AND INTUITION

Section I: Reason and Intuition

The object of man's creation is the acquisition of the knowledge of God. The knowledge of God includes the knowledge of the Creator, of the creation of the universe and of the individual. Knowledge can be acquired through traditions (Hadith), observation, logical reasoning, contemplation and intuition. That which is gained through tradition has to be verified by intuition. Logical reasoning cannot create the feeling of certainty, when applied to super-sensory reality-God.

It is already been said that Islam has its root in the Qur'an and Prophetic Hadith in both doctrine and practice. Qur'an is the revealed books of God in which His message to men is contained. It is the word of God revealed to the Prophet through the Archangel Gabriel. Thus the Prophet is not only the recipient of the revealed message but also a Messenger (Rasul, i.e., a representative of God on earth). As Qur'an has said: "Verily in the Message of God is a fair example for those of you that set their hopes on God and the Last Day and remember God much."

It is said that Qur'an is the source of knowledge in Islam both metaphysically and religiously. It gives to the
Sufis rules and regulations adapted to the various needs and requirements of life.

The Sufis says that one can not reach the inner meaning of the Qur'an unless one can penetrate into the deeper meaning of it. That is, if we approach the Qur'an superficially, it will give us only the surface meaning. Here in lies the difference between the layman and the Sufis. The layman read the Qur'an without understanding the inner meaning of it whereas the Sufis speaks of 'seeking to be drowned' (istighfar) in the verses of the Qur'an.

Al-Hauni says in his book Fahi gahi fihi. He says, "The Koran is as a bride who does not disclose her face to you, for all that you draw aside the veil. That you should examine it, and yet not attain happiness and unveiling, is due to the fact that the act of drawing aside the veil has itself repulsed and tricked you, so that the bride has shown herself to you as ugly, as if to say, "I am not that beauty". The Koran is able to show itself in whatever form it pleases. But if you do not draw aside the veil and seek only its good pleasure, watering its own field and attending on it from a far, toiling upon that which pleases it best, it will show its face to you without your drawing aside the veil."
Thus the inner meaning of the Qurān is realized by a process known as ta'wil. It means literally to take something back to its beginning or origin. To penetrate into the inner mysteries of the Qurān is precisely to reach back to its origin, because the origin is the most inward, and the revelation or manifestation of the sacred Text is at once a descent and an exteriorization of it. Everything actually comes from within to the outside, from the interior to the exterior and we who live 'in the exterior' must return to the interior if we are to reach the origin. Everything has an interior (bātin) and an exterior (zhīr) and ta'wil is to go from the zhīr to the bātin, from the external to the inner meaning.

The two dimensions of the Qurān, the zhīr (exoteric) and bātin (esoteric) are best demonstrated in the case of the Prophet. Since he is said to be the recipient of both types of knowledge, he was both the perfection of human action and the prototype of the spiritual life, in his inner oneness with God and in his total realization in which he saw nothing except in God and through God. Sometimes the interpretation of the verses of Qurān by the Sufis differ from that of the Orthodox Muslims, for which they (Sufis) are called heretics. For example, Dr A.A. Affifi, in his book The Mystical Philosophy of Muresh al-Ibnul-Labbāb, has shown how Ballall and Ibnul Arabi differ in
their interpretations from the tradition of interpretation. He says, they interpret the Quranic verses in such a way as to fit in with their doctrines. He has quoted some Quranic verses and their interpretation which are as follows: "We will show them our signs in the quarters of the world and in themselves until it is plain to them that it is the truth." Here Ibnul Arabi understands by the "truth" the Real, i.e., God as the essence of all. Another verse "God is the light of the heaven and the earth" where Ibnul Arabi understands by light essence. "Repent unto your creator and kill your souls", for this Jallâj says, "kill your self" means pass away from it and all that is other than God. So that the non-existent should return to its non-existence and the Real alone should endure. Ibnul Arabi's interpretation is the same.

"Verily we offered the 'trust' to the heavens and the earth, etc." According to Jallâj the "trust" is the divine aspect of Man. Ibnul Arabi interprets the same verse, understanding by the "trust" the divine attributes which the "Perfect Man" manifests and on account of which Man is called Khalliga. It was the all-absorbing character of the Unity mentioned in the Quran and Tradition, which served as the basis of their doctrines. All Sufis aim at annihilating themselves in the Creator, therefore they believe in their heart that He is the only real Existence and the rest is only His manifestation,
Again 'Love' is the foundation-stone of Ṣūfism. Ṣūfis attempt to soar to the Highest on the wings of love and devotion. This love must be pure and perfect, selfless and disinterested. This is also furnished by qurān and the Tradition. God says, "Tell (thee), if you love God, follow me, God will love you". "Those who believe have exceeding love for God". The prophet says "None has belief who does not love", "Man is with his whom he loves".

From the above quotations it can safely be inferred that the seed of Ṣūfism is sown in the very beginning of Islam. The Prophet himself displayed mystical inclinations and frequently resorted to some hidden place, for meditation and devotion.

Thus the Ṣūfis accept qurān as the repository of the law recapitulating all necessary tents revealed before the Prophet and for the explanations of the Law they unanimously look only to the Prophet and no one else in whose actions and sayings they (Ṣūfis) read the qurān. The 'sacred sayings' of the Prophet is called Ḥadīth-qudsi. They are not the part of the qurān but God Himself speaks in the first person through the Prophet. These sayings though small in number but along with certain verses of the qurān form a basis for the spiritual life in him. Ṣūfism is based on these sayings and many Ṣūfis know them by heart and lives in constant remembrance of their
message. These sayings deal with man's direct relation with God. One of the sayings follows: "My slave ceaseth not to draw nigh unto Me through devotions of free-will until I love him, and when I love him, I see the hearing with which he heareth and the sight with which he seeth and the hand in which he fighteth and the foot with which he walk".

The Sufis believe that Prophet is an intermediate agency, though they trace the cause to attain the Absolute. As Prophet has said, "He who has seen me has seen God". (al-Inbaq, 'The Truth'); again he says "I am He and He is I, save that I am He who I am the He is He who He is". "I was a Prophet when Adam was still between water and clay". These sayings of the Prophet make the Sufis to believe that the Prophet is same as God in essence.

Hence they propounded three doctrines viz., Idea of Nūr-i-Mashhārd of Ibn Faris, Saintship of Ibn Arabi and Insan-Kamil (Perfect Man) of Jili. All the three propound the same view. They tried to divinise those elves and present them as equal to the Prophet.

According to Ibn Faris, idea of Nūr-i-Mashhārd is that, one should know God by achieving union with the Idea of Mohammed projected by God in pre-eternity to be His likeness and to lead mankind back to him.
Ibnal Arabi says that knowledge of the laws of Islam which was revealed to the Prophet is revealed in a similar manner and 'from the same source' to some Ṣūfīs. Nominaly, such Ṣūfīs are called followers of Mohammed; actually they are the followers of their own laws which are identical with those of Mohammed and which are revealed to them directly from God. Thus he expounded a special doctrine of Saintship. Just as the Prophet is declared as Seal of Prophet, so also he declares of Prophet, so also he declares himself as Seal of Saints. He says that all prophets are also saints but the saintly aspect of each prophet is higher than the prophetic aspect. All prophets and saints are manifestations of the spirit of reality of Mohammed and the seal of the saints is the perfect manifestation of the spirit of Mohammed. Thus he claims 'I am the seal of the saints'.

The doctrine of Perfect Man of Jilj is nothing new, but is the same as the first two doctrines. This we shall discuss in detail in section Pathway to God Realisation of this chapter.

Hence for the Ṣūfīs, the Law is the word of the Prophet, the doctrine is the example of the Prophet and the Truth is the vision of the Prophet. Islamic philosophy was linked with religion. The Prophet began with the conception of God as pre-eminently the Power and the wise. Knowledge (ilm) or reason
(huqul) was the first thing created by Him.

Philosophers emphasised man's capacity of knowing God by virtue of reason, but according to the Sufis, Ultimate Reality cannot be known through logical reasoning and sense perception. They distinguish between the Intellect, reason and 'huqul'. According to them, Intellect is the instrument for reaching the Truth; reason is mental image and 'huqul' is at both intellect and reason. 'It is both the supernal sun that shines within man and the reflection of this sun on the plane of the mind which we call reason'. "Intellect is not ratio", says Syed Hussain Haeri. "The latter concrete and understand Philosophy in the usual meaning of the word; only the former can understand metaphysics in its true sense which lies at the heart of the doctrine. Intelligence is a divine gift which leads man to the affirmation of the doctrine of unity (al-tauhid)". According to Al-Shazzali intellectual knowledge is that knowledge which is difficult, intricate, including what is wrong and what is right.

"Reason, says Shabistari is useless. He says, "to seek God by reason is as absurd as to seek the blazing sun by the dim light of a candle". He regards God and world as two distinct entities, while in Truth, there is only one God. Reality according to him cannot be known through logical reasoning.
His essence can be known only through His own light. It is only through the complete suppression of reason that He can be known. The so-called light of reason is a pseudo-light, while the so-called darkness of the heart, when reason extinguished, is light, therefore it shows the Truth as it really is, as one, and free from all plurality. When the phenomenal self with its sense and reason is annihilated, the light of God illuminates the heart through which alone He is known.

Like išwār, and also disowns reason. He says that reason can know about things in space and time, but reality is beyond all spatial and temporal categories. According to him, logical knowledge is essentially relative in character involving assimilation and discrimination as light knows from darkness. But there is nothing outside the all-comprehending One, with which it may be contrasted. Hence the reality can neither be logically inferred nor verbally expressed, but can only be directly experienced. Further, reason fails to grasp the fundamental unity of all existence as it cannot transcend the duality of subject and object, as Kāri points out: "There is a squint in the intellect, which makes it always see double".

Ishqāzī says that senses are valid so far as they go and so is the logical reason. Hence he rejects entirely all belief in the senses. He then found it equally difficult to
be certified of the accuracy of the conclusions of reason. He thought that there may be some higher faculty than reason, through which union with God is possible. He says that there alone can man know what is true by becoming the truth itself. "I was forced, he said, to return to the admission of intellectual notions as the basis of all certitude. This however, is not by systematic reasoning, and accumulation of proofs, but by flash of light which God sent into my soul."

Hence sense and reason cannot transcend the phenomena. In addition to reason man has a certain faculty by which he can understand the hidden mysteries. It is called by Shams-i-Tabriz - 'the eye of the heart', which is constant in its desire for God, and by Maim the 'intuitive sense', and intellect by other Sufis.

The Sufis believe that reason and revelation should go together. Reason (intellect) is the instrument for reaching the Truth. It is the source of revelation and exists within man and must not be mistaken for reason alone. As Kalabadhi says, God can be known indirectly in the present world through reason and revelation. 'Reason' implies deduction from evidences as found in the world and 'revelation' implies faith in the Qur'an. "But there cannot be any direct knowledge of God here and now", says he. "Direct knowledge implies perceptual knowledge. Perceptual knowledge implies perceptual knowledge (i.e., intuitive knowledge)."
But no vision of God is possible on the part of human beings in the present world, but God, can be seen with the eye in the next world."

Seyyed Hossein Nasr says, "one can go from the reflection to the source provided the 'agl' is not dimmed by passion provided it is the wholesome balanced and harmonious intellect which in Islamic terminology is called al'amal al-sa'il. But if the 'agl' is obscured by the passions, by the 'nafs', then it becomes the veil that hides man from the Divine and leads him astray. Were this not to be so, there would be no need for revelation at all. Revelation is the macrocosmic manifestation of the Universal Intellect, the al-iman Allah, which provides a frame work for the microcosmic manifestation of the Intellect in man and a divine law which protects man from his own passions and makes it possible for the intellect to remain wholesome or wholesome. Hence, this reflection of the intellect upon the level of psyche, can then be both an instrument for reaching the divine truths, found in revelation, truths which are super-rational but not irrational and a veil which hides these very truths from men. In the latter case it becomes the means whereby man rebels God and His revealed religion."

Hence intellect and man are the two aspects of 'agl' and the Sufis use these words synonymous, with limits or binds
the Absolute in the direction of creation and also that which binds man to the truth, to God himself. Chassali, Rumi and Razi has emphasized the negative aspect of reason as well and limitation and its inability to reach the divine Razi makes a difference between reason and intellect i.e., 'al-I'Imal' and 'al-I-kulli'. He said "It is reason which has destroyed the reputation of intellect". Where as Ibn al Arabi, Ibn Sina have sought to reach the intellect through reason.

Mystic knowledge of certain/Imal-yadin is based on direct experience. Certain is simply yadin, which is gained through hearing. It leads to minu-yadin, the certain gained by seeing and is inferred to it. Transcending minu-I-yadin is the stage of baqwa-I-yadin, the certainty gained by feeling and by being one with Him. Thus man knows God, first by hearing about Him through the shaykh (guru) who taught him the inner meaning of the scripture then by seeing him in love with Him i.e., contemplating on Him and finally by being himself in love with Him. This is the highest type of knowledge in which everything is certained as one.

Shu'al-Hun distinguishes knowledge knowledge from certitude (yadin). According to him knowledge is the result of sensory perception i.e., what we received through bodily organs, while certitude is the
result of what we see through intuition. He says that the highest achievement of the mystic is to get super-intellectual knowledge, known as _nirfiq_ which involves complete unconsciousness on the part of man.

_Nirfiq_ is the direct knowledge of God and the mystical realization of oneness with God. It is the mystic knowledge gained through revelation. Revelation is a flash of lightning, wherein the divine light itself flashes into the heart of the individual.

As Nicholson says, "_Nirfiq_ open entirely on the will of God, who bestows it upon who are created with the capacity for receiving it. It flashes upon the heart and overwhelms every human faculty. The individual is completely under the control of rapture, that derives him of the consciousness of his own existence".

According to Haji, "It is the cry of the light that has returned to its own source crying:

when the king bids me fly in his way, I fly unto the heart's zenith, like His beams".

Thus illumination is a condition in which conscious esse is so sharpened and so intensified that direct contemplation of the Unseen becomes possible.
"Real knowledge, says Ishaq ibn-Butun, is God's illumination of the heart with the pure radiance of knowledge." According to Kalabashi, 
\textit{zāひfāt} is the divinely granted direct experience of God through which alone He can become known.\textsuperscript{23}

"The highest degree of Gnosis is \textit{zāひfāt-ṣubhāna}, says Abu'l-Ḥāfiẓ al-Ḍahabi. Where the aspirant is completely absorbed in the contemplation of the nature, attributes and works of God. It is achieved, when the heart is purged of evil. Those who possess this type of \textit{zāひfā}, have plunged their souls in the mysteries of God in the hope of \textit{wājl} (union)." This he believes is obtained through revelation and inspiration.

Hujwiri says, \textit{zāひfāt is not the result of inspiration. He says, "Gnosis supplies a criterion for distinguishing the truth from falsehood, whereas the inspired have no such criterion."}

Mystical experience is not the extension of sense experience. It, in fact, transcends sense-experience, where subject and object are one. "The science of the Sufis," says al-Ghazzali "aims at detaching the heart from all that is not God and at giving to it sole occupation the meditation of the Divine being."
According to Iblul Arabi, intuitive knowledge (ma'rifat) is innate, it belongs to the divine effulgence (al-fayd al i adi), which illuminates the very being of all creatures. It manifests itself in man under certain mystical conditions, e.g., perfect passivity of mind, where the mystic is advised to be so passive in his thinking that he reaches the state of inanimate thing. It is not the outcome of any practice or discipline, it lies dormant in the deepest recess of the human heart.

The Sufis themselves call it mystical knowledge as "taste" (shawa'), a term which denotes immediate experience. Sometimes they call it the divine knowledge ('ilm haduni) and knowledge of the Unseen ('ilmul asyab). Sometimes they call it Isha (love) etc.

Thus according to the Sufis this knowledge is the highest knowledge, where in he experienced oneness with God. This is known as Ima satt (Truth). In this experience the distinction between subject and object is transcended. The barrier between man and God is done away. They loses the consciousness of separate existences and merged with God. It is not merely contemplating the absolute out of religious curiosity, but an organic consummation of love of God or absolute. This consummation implies the abolition of individuality into the absolute and presupposes urge for and love of God.
It is hence "essentially a movement of the heart", which "is the inmost sanctuary of personal being, the deep root of its love and will, the very source of its energy and life".

Desire and love are essential to make one a mystic for it is the hunger of the heart that can make one feel act on such a hard scale. Mysticism is thus rooted in the very beginning of the mystic, it is in essence the concentration of all the forces of the soul upon a supernatural object, conceived and loved as a living person. "Love and desire are the fundamental necessities and where they are absent, man even though he be a visionary, cannot be called a mystic".

According to Bayazid, love, though the only means of bringing man near God, yet fails to bring him in direct contact with him. Like gnosis, love, too, rests on a dualistic distinction between the lover and the beloved. Here, we have a three-fold distinction of love, lover and beloved.

Again be says, Gnosis gives us an immediate intuition as to the divine nature, while, love brings us near to the divine beauty. Thus gnosis and love are but two sides of the same thing. Both stand for a direct realisation of God through divine revelation, only gnosis emphasises the intellectual side
but love emphasises the emotional side of the revelation.
But both are somewhat imperfect, as in both there is still
a trace of duality, remains. Hence they must be superseded by
a still higher state - viz., ecstasy or intoxication. Ecstasy
is not different from anesis and love in kind but only in
degree, that is, it is highest form and perfection, where the
duality disappears and the two become one.
Section I

God Ultimate Reality

In order to explain the conception of God in Sufism, it would be worthwhile to examine in brief, the different historic conceptions of God. Deism asserts the pure transcendence of God. According to pantheism creation is nothing but the manifestation of God and theism implies belief in personal God.

But most of the Sufis advocate an absolutistic and non-dualistic view of God, rather than a deistic or pantheistic or theistic view. The Sufis call Allah not only the only God, but also the only Reality. He is Ahad, one and has no second.

As regards God's transcendence and immanence four views have been held by the Sufis:

1. According to most Sufis, God is both transcendent and immanent. He is omnipresent. The world is not different from God, though it appears to be so, but is nothing but God in essence. Every atom reflects a divine quality, and when it puts off its limitation and phenomenal character, it becomes one with the absolute.
The author of Anwar-ul-Ma'arif expresses his view regarding the nature of Supreme Being as both transcendent and immanent. He says, "He has no limit within the infinitude are comprehended eternity without beginning and eternity without end; folded within the fold of His 1am are existence and phenomena; in His beginning are all beginning - the end; in His ending, all ending - the beginning; in His outwardness, the outward manifestations of things - the inward; in His inwardness the inward parts of worlds - the outward; in His eternity without beginning, the sum total of eternities without beginning is only an accident (hadith); in His eternity without end, all eternities, without end, only an event (mahadis). The Divine nature is free and exempted from whatever is contained in reason, in understanding, in the senses and in conjectures."

It can be explained thus: The Absolute Being though far superior in every respect is not beyond and above the world; nor is the world of finite things and minds separate from Him. There is no room for external and internal. They are co-related and inter-related. The Absolute Supreme Being evolves the world of phenomena and comprehends them within the fold of His infinitude. He is an inexhaustible self-conscious agent who works and displays His activity by shaping and manifesting the world of phenomena, yet remains above them and free from this trammels, and thus distinguishes Himself from the creation.
Thus it will be seen that the conception of God is neither wholly transcendental nor wholly immanent but it both transcendental and immanent.

(2) Some sufis hold that God is wholly transcendental and not immanent in the world at all. These sufis are mainly those who try to reconcile sufism with Orthodox Islam. According to them God is only transcendent. Kalabadih holds that "He does not resemble creation in any respect and His attributes like those of created being". Hujari says: "He does not become immanent in things for then, He must be homogeneous with them; and He is not joined to anything for then, that thing must be a part of Him". According to him, God is one, incapable of union and separation and not admitting of duality. He is not limited in space. He is Living, Forgiving, Merciful, All-merciful, All-powerful, Hearing and Seeing. The attributes of God are eternal. Ghazzali argues that God is infinitely exalted. Yet near to everything, but He is still not immanent in anything. "Neither does He exist in anything nor both anything exist in Him". He has given the examples of oil and water, and wine and water. He says, when oil and water are placed together in the same vessel, though very close to each other, never intermix, because by nature they are different. But wine and water intermix, because they are not opposed. In the same way, God, though very
near to the world, is not actually immanent in it, as He is absolutely distinct from it.

(3) Some ṣūfis hold that God is wholly immanent in the world. This view makes God co-existent with His creation and causes the Divine Essence to be exhausted in the university. It implies that Divine Being is co-existent in essence and potentiality with the world of finite things and minds and leaves no room for independent reality to finite things themselves.

(4) According to some ṣūfis God is neither immanent nor trans-cendent nor both, nor anything intermediate between the two, for all these worldly terms are altogether inadequate to give expression to God's nature. What God's real nature is can be only directly felt in mystic union, but cannot be expressed by ordinary categories of space, time, cause etc.

The central concept in ṣūfī metaphysics is the unity of God. "See but one, say but one, know but one." God is One, Supreme, without beginning and without an end, without an equal or a Superior. He is the source of all existence.

Their (ṣūfis) doctrine is built up as developed on the Islamic conception of Allah. "The real Islamic conception of Allah is monism," says Bahiddurridin, "which consists in affirming the Absolute Existence as self-existent Being, having
self-consciousness ('Ilt'), self-distinguishing and self-controlling power, and potentiality of evolving finite things in mind out of itself, directing and co-ordinating them for serving some divine purposes'.

According to Dr Romu Chaudhuri, Ṣūfīsm is a monistic system of thought. She says "In Ṣūfīsm we find three types of Monism". She defines monism in three different ways. She says "Reality by whatever name we may it, is taken to be sole unitary principle and plurality is absolutely false. (2) reality is taken as the truth of the world of plurality, which therefore, is not an independent, second principle, thou as true as reality itself and (3) there are two sub-division and in the first unity is expressed in plurality and also exhausted in it and in the second, unity is expressed in plurality, but only partially. Hence we find all the three types of monism in Ṣūfīsm."

The idea of monism is embodied in the term Taḥqīq, which means the 'Divine Unity'. It is highly metaphysical. Their (ṣūfis) belief arises from the inner meaning and deeper significance of the term Taḥqīq. "The first step on the path of Taḥqīq is the oblivion of multiplicity".

The authors of Ṣaḥīfāt Ma'ruf and Naḥbat al-Din, point out that sincere belief in and acknowledgement and of
Iwarzad form a common feature of the sūfis and the common man, but the belief of the latter is 'Iwarzad' (customary). 41

The sūfis' understanding of Iwarzad can be seen from the following couplets:

"One who is (himself) an individual cannot describe the divine unity; when he describes the unity he denies it". 42 He who speaks of the divine unity in his individual capacity expresses an borrowed idea, he being one, destroys the idea of the unity". 43 "Her own unity is the unity of God - that is the Divine unity". 44 "The praise of his own praises, God is surely the description of unity". 45

It means, so long as a person has the idea of his own existence in his mind, he can not think of the oneness of God; for his own individuality and the existence of God become duality. He must forget his own existence before he can have a full comprehension of the divine unity. The sūfiz therefore, held that it is the Supreme Being alone who can describe His own unity and that without self-effacement, the complete realization of oneness of God is impossible.

Thus God is the only reality which is the incest essence of all things. From this standpoint, the principle of divine unity, which is fundamental to Islam is re-interpreted by the
süfis, 'There is no God but Him'. From this the süfis to hold that God is not merely the sole cause of existence and the sole agent, but that He alone has real being. Their typical name for God is as-Samad, 'The Real'.

This means that God alone is self-existence and all else is derivative. As far as anything exists at all, it exists as a ray of His light. The essence of God was considered 'light' earlier, but latter is care to be known as 'thought'. As Al-Ghazzali says, "There is no God but God, light in its reality is God. God alone has real existence." 47

The idea of God as conceived by the süfis is derived from the Qurān itself which is as follows: "It is He who is One and only one God (the one whole without any other)." 48 "There is no deity but He, who ever lives by Himself and ever sustains Himself by Himself, neither fatigue nor sleep over takes Him." 49 "The sight comprehends Him not but He comprehends the sight. He is incomprehensible and wise". 50 "And there cannot be any relative or any relation whatever to Him". 51 "He is One, incapable of division (aabad) and not dependent on anything (jaamad)". 52 "all on earth shall pass away, but the countenance of they Lord shall abide resplendent with majesty and glory". 53
From such verses of the Quran, the Sufis form the idea of God.

In Isma'il Kamili, the nature of the Supreme Reality, 'the one without a second, is expressed in the following words: "His manifestation interpenetrates all existence and he manifests his perfection in each atom and particle of the Universe. (He is not multiple by the Universe). He is not multiple by the multiplicity of the manifestation, solely by what his noble essence necessitated in its nature and so on from the attributes of perfection to his manifestation in its nature and so on from the attributes of perfection to his manifestation in every atom of his existence. The whole group is distinguished by the permeating (one) existence in the aggregate of all existence, and the mystery of this permeation is that he created the Universe out of himself." And God said, "we have not created the heaven and earth except the creative Truth, Hada." Thus, the author of Isma'il Kamili says "The Universe is like ice and God, the manifested and exalted is the water, which is the origin of this ice. The name 'ice' is but to that frozen thing and name 'water' is the right name for it. In the second verse he says, that although religion declares the ice and water to be different, 'we say mystics know that they are the same..."
Thus, according to him, God is Pure Being, who is not subject to any defect or diminution or to plurality. He is the Ultimate Ground and cause of everything but he is Himself uncaused. He is omniscient, unperceived and unknown.

The same idea is expressed by numi also. He says "the Divine Being is the only Truth (al-Mann). He is the sole reality - the reality of all realities. He is not only an Absolute Existence (dhât-i-mutlaq) but also absolute God (khâir-i-Kabâr). The Divine essence is all-purity, completely free from the accidents of form, colour, magnitude, dimension etc. He is above all names, definitions and descriptions.\(^5^5\)

"God is unsupported", says Hallâj, "He is unconditioned, eternal, without beginning and end. His existence is ancient and permanent. All other existence are accidents and transient.\(^5^6\)

The Absolute in its unmanifested aspect of Pure Being is devoid of all names and attributes and is free from all conditions and relation. He comes to have names and forms when He is manifested in the phenomenal world.

Hallâj in his book, Kitab a. Tawasín, says, that Reality is one, and all apparent multiplicity is 'more of unity' and that the phenomenal the outward manifestation of the Real. The essence of God is unknowable, therefore Pure Being has
neither name for attribute. Only when it gradually descends from its absoluteness and enters the realm of manifestation, the attributes appear imprinted in it. The distinction between the essence and attributes are apparent and the two ultimately are as ice and water. 574

Jami, also propounded the identity of essence and attributes, God’s names and attributes appear to be distinct from His essence, for there cannot be any multiplicity in Him. "There are not in Him", says Jami, "many existences, but only one sole existence and His various names and attributes are merely His modes and aspects." 575

Ibnal Arabi is also of the same opinion. According to him there is only one Reality in existence. This Reality is viewed from two different angles: Haq (the Real), when regarded as the essence of all phenomena, and Kalaq, when regarded as the phenomena manifesting the essence. Haq and Kalaq; Reality and appearance, the One and the Many are only names for two subjective aspects of One Reality. It is real in unity but empirical in diversity. This Reality is God. Multiplicity is due to the different points of view, not to an actual division of the One Essence. 576

Faridud-Din Attar, also emphasis the Unity of all existence and insists on the Unity of Being devoid of all relations. Outside of God nothing exists. He says just as
water in the boundless ocean and water in the jug is the
water, the thread is the same inspite of the multiplicity of
the knots, and just as all numbers are the repetition of the
number One, so also all multiplicity is the repetition of
Unity.

God is considered as the Universal Soul (Khul'i-Rasit),
as everything proceeds from Him and returns to Him. "From
God we are, to God we shall return", says one of the Sufis.
The Sufis hold that the soul which exists throughout is not
only from God, but of God.

The God of the Sufis is transcendental and Personal.
No doubt, they refer to the Absolute and immanent aspects of
God, but the object of their devotion is necessarily Personal.
So far as the concept of God is concerned with God Himself
only. He is Absolute, but He is personal in refer ence to His
creatures. God as the Absolute Being is unknown and unknowable.
Nothing can be indicated in connection with the essence of God.
The domains of all human senses like imagination or intellect
are limited and therefore, cannot conceive the essence of unlim-
ited God. So Absolute God cannot be the object of devotion
according to the Sufis. The object of devotion is the personal
God, with His attributes.
Swami Sivananda, in his chapter on the "Main Features of Ṣūfīsm", says that "in Sūfism God has form. The ṣūfis recognize His formless aspect too". The verses of the Qur'an and the Traditions also show the personal proximity of God. For example, the Qur'an says, "And we are nearer unto Him than ye are, but ye see not". 63 "Whither so ever ye turn there is Allah's countenance". 64 Nafis Sayed, in his book, "A Sun Nar on Saints", points out that God exists everywhere. The seat of God is not to be found in Heaven alone, you should search for Him in your own Heart. 65

Thus the personal God as the object of devotion can be imagined as consciousness, all-knowing, Merciful, and Omnipotent. Devotion implies that the object of devotion (God) listens to the prayers and the devotee is saved from the horrors of hell and other miseries. He is so merciful that He forgives their sins etc. It is through the personal proximity that the devotee gets satisfaction and love.

Thus the ṣūfīs say that He alone is Our Lord and Creator, Him alone we worship and from Him alone we seek assistance. As the Qur'an says "your God (God) is the Leity who is one and without any participator. He is alone, for there is no being which is like His - eternal and everlasting". 66
The word "Allah" used in this verse conveys the idea of the Creator, Nourisher and Sustainer. Though he is the creator, nourisher and sustainer of the world, he is unique and nothing can be compared with his essence or with his attributes.

Thus to sum up: the Sufi conception of God is as follows: with regard to the relationship of God and the Universe, the Sufis hold four views. According to most Sufis God is both transcendent and immanent. According to some God is only transcendent and some hold that God is only immanent whereas some Sufis say that God is neither immanent nor transcendent nor both. According to these Sufis God can be known only through mystic experience and nothing else.

As regards the nature of the ultimate reality their (Sufis') conception is monistic and non-dualistic. They say that Allah (God) is one, without a second. Reality, by whatever name it is called is taken to be the sole unitary principle and plurality is held to be absolutely false. They further say that he is an absolute existence. He exists by his own nature and has no cause for his existence. He is independent and unconditioned.

God of the Sufis is not confined to the body or matter. He does not resemble anything, nor does anything resemble Him. He has no shape, form, or colour. He is not confined to space
and time. He is not liable to change. He is not perfect and infinite and not subject to any limit. He is far and near and surrounds everything. The words great and small are not applicable to Him as these are the qualities of created beings and things of matter and He is neither.

The same God when viewed from the devotional point of view, becomes the personal God. Though He is absolute, but He is also personal to the sufis.
It is difficult to obtain a clear idea regarding the conception of self according to the qūfīs, because they differ in their opinion. Some qūfīs believe that the soul is pure, eternal and imperishable. It is an immaterial spiritual substance, which dwells in the body and departs from it at the time of death. For some, human soul is merely the function of the body. For some others soul exists, but dies along with the body. The confusion arises because of their usage of the term 'self' and the 'soul'.

The early qūfīs believe that the soul of man is created by God and is not emanated from God. Before creation, the soul of man was non-existent, only the idea of soul was latent in the mind of God. The relation of God with man is that of creator and creation. They are not one in essence and man cannot claim identity with God. So far as his existence is there it is contingent to God's will and its relation with God is of otherness. So any talk of oneness with God is a great sin.

But the later qūfīs could not be satisfied with the idea that the human soul was created. They asserted that there is something in man that is eternal, divine and somehow identical with God, in spite of the fact that he was created and by that reason, possesses some phenomenal aspects. This something in man is his soul. This idea has its basis in the Qurʾān because
even though, the Qur'an speaks in terms of creation, it also says that God breathed His own Spirit into Adam. It is easy for the Sufis to infer from this that the soul of man is the spirit of God. Hence uncreated. Again the Qur'an makes the Universe subservient to man, and identifies man's action with that of God. This view is developed by the Sufis, who asserted that the human and divine wills are capable of identification in such a way that the individual loses his separate existence. Some Sufis advanced a step further and maintain that there is not only the identity of will but also that of essence.

The soul is a spiritual essence. Its descent into this world is akin to the nature of its essence. It is the mirror of God. "Both God and the soul are 'mahazzah', devoid of qualities as such unimaginable and inconceivable."  

The doctrines of ḫalq and ḫulul according to which the soul is identical with God and that God indwells the soul, formulated by Hallāj, Abu Yasid Bistami and Ghazzali were plain infidel according to orthodox Muslims. Ghazzali himself said that it is very difficult to explain, because such a phenomena is against Islamic orthodoxy.

On the other hand, Junayd, uses in the Kitab al-Fama, to express God's relationship to the soul are Ṣāhīḥ and Ṣāḥīḥ, 'appropriation' and supremacy. "When once the soul has
consumed with God in the manner that God has 'appropriated' to it, it returns again to the world and experiences torment, the pang of loss which stimulates it to an intensity of effort. It now makes demands (ta`laba) on God of a kind that God alone has a right to ask, for such souls now dwell in power and have attained to the reality of His favour with God. 

The relationship between God and the soul is an eternal, one, in which God is (guzatu`) 'absolutely pre-eminent' and Nis`tibb be appropriates each elected soul to him in a manner i.e., peculiar and individual to each and every soul so elected for Junayd, each soul is unique and its relationship with God is, therefore unique too.

Quran makes a distinction between the soul (ruh) and the self (nafs). The self (nafs) is often identified with the individuality of man i.e., the sum total of his individual characteristics, but is always used in the sense of an individual man. A distinction is made between man and his 'self' as it is clear from the following verses of the Quran. For example "we created man and we know his nafs (self or ego) whispereth within him", "I swear by the nafs (self) and it who completely set it right and inspires into the same its faculty of distinguishing, and the power of choosing wickedness and piety. Now he who has purified the same (nafs) is happy and he who corrupted
it is miserable."

The use of nafs in two different senses in the above two verses shows that in the first verse nafs means the lower nature of man and in the second verse nafs means the soul. Hence the ego in its undeveloped and unpurified condition is the nafs, and the self in its purified and developed condition is referred to as the soul (ruh).

Again, the Qurān says that "we created man from fine clay, from fine matter" and then says that "when completely formed it and set it right I breathed my soul in it." At death the mortal coil falls off and perishes, while the real self (soul) of man survives and returns to God.

It is clear then that man and his self (nafs) are two distinct entities. The undeveloped and unpurified self undergoes changes and is capable of attaining to the state of moral excellence and perfection. Man is mortal and perishes but the self (in the sense of soul) is immortal and returns to God after death.

However, they do talk of some kind of evolution of the lower soul or nafs as stated in the Qurān. The Qurān refers to three different states of the self (nafs) or the stages of life through which the self (nafs) of a man passes in the process of its spiritual development, viz., the physical, the moral and the spiritual.
In the first or the physical state of nafs, the self is rebellious and impatient of moral restraint. The self in this condition is called nafs- 'ammāra i.e., the uncontrolled self, prone to evil. The Qur'an says: "The self (nafs) of a man tends towards evil except of those on whom thy Lord shall show mercy; for thy Lord is gracious and merciful". In this verse the natural tendency of the self or ego in its undeveloped condition is referred to as inclining towards evil.

Then the self passes into the second or the moral state, when man puts a restraint upon his inclinations and controls his desires and passions. His self (nafs) is then purified and becomes endowed with higher moral qualities. If he transgresses the bounds of morality, or deviates from the path of virtue, his self (nafs) now accuses him of the dereliction of his duty and upbraids him for his deviation from the virtuous path. This second state is known as nafs-i- 'awwama, i.e., the self accusing ego. It actually protects the man from sin. "I swear by the nafs (self) which accuses itself". The ego is now conscious of what is right and what is wrong, and the self (nafs) accuses itself in cases of transgression. On the one hand the self puts a restraint on lower desires, evil propensities and base passions, and on the other it strives after moral excellence and perfection.
In the third or the spiritual state of nafs, the self-rises from the moral to the spiritual plane. This stage is reached when the self has not only conquered the rebellious passions and desires but has become transfused with moral excellence. The self (nafs) in the condition is called the nafs-i-mutmaennah, i.e., the self-resting-in-peace or the soul-at-rest. This condition is referred to in the following verse of the Qur'an: "O thou nafs that art at rest, return to thy Lord (towards) his being pleased with thee, so enter into My abode of bliss." In this state of spiritual development, self being freed from human weakness rests peacefully in blissful communion with God. This is the state of absolute peace in which all desires and passions are annihilated, and there is no longer any conflict between human will and the will of God.

For the attainment of this state of bliss, the sufis lay great stress on the purification of nafs (self). He who has purified his nafs attains salvation and shall not be destroyed, but he who, hath yielded to unbridled earthly passions shall surely despair of life. Purification of the self (nafs) therefore leads to salvation and eternal life, and an impure nafs leads to despair and destruction. The sufis call this "the great holy war" (Al-Jihad al-jabbar), which forms the starting point of the sufi way of purification.
Al Ghazzali pointed out that the human soul pertains to the spiritual world, but belongs to the physical world as well. The nature of the soul can be better apprehended by a study of Al-Khala wālīn as given by the Qur'an. Khala means to create something, so that the soul although transcends space, time and measurement, it still remains one of the created things, one of the greater things. In the words of Al-Ghazzali, "those who say that the soul is from eternity are in wrong, because the soul is created and hence an accident and since an accident and since an accident cannot exist in its own right, it must be one on another thing, but the soul of man is the essence of man. It is not a body as it cannot be divided."

But Ibn Sina, on the other hand, says that the soul is immortal. For Junayd, also soul is immortal. Soul being eternal cannot directly act, but self (nafs), the whole of human psyche, operates in time. The soul's immortality follows directly from its spirituality. The dependence of the soul on the body is not essential, but accidental.

Another qâfî pointed out that the spirit is not attached to the particles of the body, nor detached from it, but it concerns itself with the body and is beneficial to it.

Al-Hassân regards the soul as a subtle physical substance. He admits that the soul is material, according to him, body
and soul are identical, the differences lies only in fineness and coarseness.

The question is raised, why the spirit comes into matter? The spirit in its essence is Divine. Dara Shikhu explains, "that the reason, why the essence of man has entered this framework of body, is that the seed of perfection, which lies latent may become patent, that which is potentially may reach the actuality and return enriched with all experiences to its original source." 78

According to the Sufis man has two souls. One is the rational soul called rūḥ and the other is animal soul called dāwā. The rational soul is considered to be the true self of man which is different from his body. It is not in the body, but effects the body with its illuminative attributes. 79 Another it Sufi says that it is spirit and is incomprehensible. Nothing can be said it than that it exists. Abu Saidal-Khanus says, "rūḥ is created and due to it the body gets existence and life, intelligence and reason are associated with it." 81 The animal soul is considered to be the element of vil in man, the seat of passion and lust. It does not mean that the Sufis have advocated the notion of two souls, but the two aspect of one soul.
Obrazali holds that the human soul was pre-existent before its attachment to the material body. It is the real essence of man, nafs in Arabic, as he calls it, and it differentiates him from the lower creation. It is divine in origin, immortal, eternal, self-subsisting and incorruptible. He explains the words, nafs, ruh, and nafs, which are names for the simplex substance, that is the seat of the intellectual processes. He distinguishes it from the animal soul, which is a refined but mortal body wherein resides the senses. The incorporeal ruh is identified with the al-nafs-al-mutlaqah and al-nafs-al-asma' of the Quran. The term nafs is also used by him for the flesh or lower nature.

According to Dara Shikhu, the soul are of two kinds, the common soul and the soul of the souls (Abul A'rab). When the pure self (Ibad-1-Ibad) becomes determined and fettered, either in respect of purity or impurity, it is known as soul (ruh) in his elegant aspect and body (Yasad) in his insufficient aspect. And the self that is determined in the eternity is known as the Supreme Soul (ruh al-amr) and is said to possess uniform identity with the Omniscient Being.

Ibnul Arabi speaks of three souls, or rather three aspects of one soul, viz., body, soul and spirit. He defines body as a material form, which is perishable and changeable.
Soul is the animal-life in the human organism and the spirit as the rational soul, which is pure and free from all sin. It is indestructible, eternal and everlasting. But according to Arabic, all the three souls are not different but ultimately one.

Nimi also holds that there is a transcendental self of man which is his real and lasting essence and that it is his soul. He also stresses the unity of souls. Souls appear to be plural, but they are all one in essence. He says, that the plurality belongs to the world of nature, the phenomenal world, but not to the soul which is beyond the phenomenal world of time and space. He compares the soul to the light, which remains the same although it is manifested differently by different lamps. "If you have in the house ten lamps, though each be different in form, the light of one cannot be distinguished from that of another. In the realm of spirit, all of us are eternal, substance. Again he compares the souls to the waves of the same sea and beams of the same sun entering through different windows. Differences are only in the animal soul, and not in the rational soul, which is one. Again be said that God has sprinkled His Light upon them and Divine Light cannot be broken up."

The soul is distinct from the phenomenal world, but when it wrongly identifies itself with the psycho-physical phenomena,
it undergoes all their states and conditions. The soul is a pure subject, while the psycho-physical complex is only its attributes. To get the pure essence of the soul, one must abstract oneself away from the not-self.

The sufis talked about five levels of consciousness.

(1) Imaat is the first sphere of which man becomes conscious of his existence. It is the physical plane. The physical body is susceptible to all changes, and is dependent in its experience and expression and so the body rules the soul dependent and limited.

(2) Ha-skut is the sphere of thought and imagination. In this sphere, there is greater freedom and less limitation.

(3) Jashut is a sphere in which the soul is at home. It is the waking state. It is a state of in which consciousness is completely transformed from nada to the lub.

The other two spheres are experienced in sleep, but they are not different sphere. They are Ihabut which is experienced in dreams, the world of mind and thought and imagination. Jashut, the state of deep sleep when even the mind is still.

The state of Ha-skut is reached by men when awake. This full experience is called Ihabut. Ihabut is a further stage, which is experienced by souls who have reached the most high
spiritual attainment, which is called Samadhi in Vedantic
term.

Hence according to the most sufis the soul is invisible,
and unitary in nature. It is indivisible and free from matter.
Reality is one although it is revealed in plurality. The soul
of man is one, inspite of its apparent multiplicity, since it
belongs to the One Soul, the One Being.
Regarding the conception of the world there are three main schools of Sufi thought. (1) The Jughdiyyah (the creationists or the transcendentalists). (2) Kuliyyah (Unityism) and (3) Shuhudiyyah (apparentism).

According to the Jughdiyyah, there was a time when the world was not in existence. God created it out of nothing at a particular point of time. The common belief of the Muslims is that God is One. He exists by His own Essence. He brought out all things from nothingness. All things are dependent on Him for their existence. He is not dependent on anything. He is unique in His Essence and in His attributes. Creating is His special attribute, for no body can create a thing out of nothing. The Jughdiyyah believe that the being of the world though created by God and dependent on Him is other than the being of God. God at first existed without any world. This was the acausal phase of His life. But since creation, there have been two realities, God, the Absolute Reality and the world of conditioned reality. Hence this phase of Divine life may be called the dualistic phase.

For example, if we place a mirror under the sun, the mirror gets heated. The heat of the mirror though derived from the heat of the sun is not the same as the heat of the sun. So also the being of the world of finite things though
created by God is not the being of God. It is other than the being of God. It depends on the being of God. But it is not the same as the being of God. Hence the duality of being is clearly recognized. This is what the 'alam-i-malik or the divines of Islam also believe.

In opposition to the jadiyyah are the sufis who believe in unity of existence. For them, there is nothing in being except God, God is all that is. He is the only reality and all finite beings have no substantial reality of their own. In the words of Mir Va'aiuddin, "He is one and all, the all-comprehensive, eternal, absolute, self-existing Being and the independent existence of finite beings is only an appearance—appearance without genuine reality". 53

According to the third school, the world is a reflection and not a manifestation. God is the Perfect Being, comprehending all attributes of perfection in His essence. Before the existence of the world there was this perfect Being alone with all His Perfect attributes and name.

The basic conception of wajdiyya and shaydiyya give rise to two important doctrines tabassat-i-wujud and wa-'asr-i-shahad respectively.
Ibn Arabi, the founder of Wahadat-ul-wujud maintains "that Being is one, it is that which exists by itself and is conceived by itself". This being is God, the Absolute. As A.E. Affifi, says that the term "Absolute Being" (al wujud al mat as) or "Universal Being" (al wujud al kulli) which Arabi and his school use to denote a reality which is the ultimate ground of all that exists, may, be taken in two senses viz., "Being" as a concept, the idea of "Being"; Existence (wujud bil mana a. madari) or it may mean that which has being, i.e., that which exists or subsists (wujud bizana saw 1d). Then he says, "we are left in doubt as to which of them is really meant. Is that ultimate "Being" an abstraction - an idea existing only in a mind and uniting in itself, as all universal concepts do, all the species - and individuals which came under it? Is it what they call "secondary concept" (mas'ul shanin)? Or is it an absolute existing reality which is identical with the All"? Arabi's language is very highly ambiguous on this subjects. Sometimes he uses the term "Being" in one sense, sometimes in another, and often mixes the two together."

The process of creation is, nothing but God's process of knowing Himself and the relation between God and the world is that between the knowing self or subject and itself as the object. In knowing Himself, God knows all things that are in Himself and distinguishes them as objects. Thus, God is at
the Satanic knowledge, knower and known, though He remains essentially a Unity. This triplicity remains inherent and the Unity is the truth of things. The world exists potentially, in God's thought from all eternity, and creation means that God brings the world from merely being in His knowledge into actual being. God is independent of the world in His second aspect as Divinity. Arabi expresses the relation between God and the world as self-unveiling over-flowing, permeating and producing an effect or impression. The phenomenal world is but a passing shadow of the reality which lies behind it. Everything that is finite and temporal is illusory and unreal.

Ibn Arabi calls the ideas of God, *ayin-al-thabita* (the latent realities) and has given them a prominent place in his mysticism. It is a technical term. God reveals Himself to Himself in a state of self-consciousness and sees in Himself for Himself as infinity of ideas or *ayin* as determinate "forms" of existence. These forms are the *ayin-a-thabita*. They are merely ideas in the mind of God. As ideas or forms in the mind of God, the *ayin-a-thabita* possess limitation or individualization. They subsist in the mind of the knower and do not possess their own independent existence and no positive attributes of life, knowledge and will. "They are passive, having no existence or existential attributes, they possess no activity of their own." But God is free from
every limitation or determination. He exists in Himself and possesses positive attributes and is active.

When God intends the creation of things, His command is "Be" and "It is" says that Qur'an. Ibn Arabi maintains that the object of God's command is the idea or 'ayan al-thabita', which subsists in the mind of God from all eternity. 'ayan al-thabita' is the essence of things, which when manifested are called external objects or created things. But this 'ayan al-thabita' themselves do not become concrete manifestations, for they are mere subjectivities and as such must always remain non-existent. As Ibn Arabi puts it, "they have not smelt the smell of existence. They never come out of the knowledge of God leaving a blank there. What happens is this and this is also the secret of creation. God manifests His being in the forms of these 'ayan al-thabita' which are to him like theatres, so that each 'ayan perceives the other when God manifests Himself in this other, a fact which is usually described as a thing having acquired existence but which is nothing other than the manifestation or appearance of God in the form of that thing. The 'ayan al-thabita' of the thing in question is non-existence (externally) and still remains in its state of latency". The 'ayan have no existence apart from the Universal Essence of God. As intelligible ideas in the mind of God, they are mere subjectivities. There is nothing in existence except God.
The question arises that if the thing was already there (it is in this sense that it could become the object of the command ('Be')), is there any sense in creating a thing which already exist? And again, if the thing which is the object of command at all is a non-entity, how can it become the object of command at all?

The view of Ibn Arabi is not left unchallenged. Shaykh alaunuddin Aalaud-Daulah disputed his position. He is founder of the Minbudiyya school. He taught of the Divine Being. This doctrine is clearly expounded by Shaykh Shams ad-Din Baribindi, who is generally called the Mujaddid-i-Alif-i-thani (the Renewer of Islam).

Like Ibn Arabi, the Mujaddid maintains that Being is one and the independent existence of finite beings is only an appearance without genuine reality. Now the world of finite things has acquired existence is explained by him in the following manner.

God is the Perfect Being, comprehending all attributes of perfection in His essence. Before the existence of the world, there was this perfect Being, alone with all His perfect attributes and names. "Now opposed to God's existence or being there is pure nothing or 'Adam-i-mahb, and opposed to His life is a form of 'adam called ignorance and so on". Thus there are two sets of things: "Perfections", which are beings
or wakjat; and imperfections, which are non-beings or adam. When God decided to create the world, He cast a reflection or shadow (jihat or zill) of His pure wajai or existence into its exact metamagible or opposed nothing, i.e., pure adam or nothing and there came, finite existence. He cast a reflection or shadow of His life into its 'opposed nothing', death and there came, finite life. Thus by reflection or jihat of the attributes of God into its opposite non-beings, there appeared realities, whose 'matter' is non-being and whose 'form' is the reflection. These realities are the essence of finite things.

Both Ibn Arabi and the Mujaddid maintain that God alone has real and actual independent being. He alone exists real existence belongs to God alone and God alone exists. The being of the world is only an appearance - appearance without genuine reality. The appearance exists independently of any fancy or imagination. "It is characterised by a superior vividness, regularity and coherence and is independent of the will or imagination of man", says Sir Valiuddin. The existence of the world is like the existence of the magic garden or the circle of fire produced by the quick rotation of the stick in flame. It is not real in itself.

Shah Waliullah, pointed out that these two doctrines are essentially the same. Both agree in assigning reality to God alone. The difference is insignificant and it is only
verbal, not real. Shal walliullah makes it clear that "to say that the essence of the contingent beings are the names and attributes (asmaa-o-sifat) of God, the necessary being, differentiated in the conceptual stage, as Ibn ARabi holds or to say that the contingent beings are the names and attributes of God reflected in their asma-i-mu'ammala or opposite non-beings, as the Muqaddid maintaining is practically the samething".

The overwhelming majority of eminent Sufis adhere to the doctrine of asma-i-mu'ammala, because it is supported by Quran.

The idea of unreality of the world of phenomena has received strength from the following Quranic texts and traditions.

(1) "All things within it (in the universe) are perishable, and what shall endure is the exalted and Beneficient existence of Thy Lord". 90

(2) "whatever exists is perishable except His existence". 91

(3) "We have created the heaven and the earth and whatever is between them - they are unreal". 92

(4) "From God we are, to God we shall return". 93

According to Shabistari, God creates the world in order that He may become known. Like other Sufis, Shabistari also accepts the famous tradition, according to which when asked by David why He (God) has created mankind, God replied, 'I was a hidden treasure, and I desired to become known'. So God
non-being but an empty name, a mere reflection that disappears on the rise of true mystic knowledge. "Non-Being to become existent - this is impossible", he points out, "but real Being in point of existence is imperishable. Neither does this become that, nor that this. All plurality proceeds from attribution.

Thus, to the divinely illumined heart, the world appears in its true colour as a real non-entity. The sole truth is God, who is reflected on this non-being, so that non-being appears to be Being, although it is not really so. In this sense, non-being is both existent and non-existent. It is existent because it appears to be real, it is non-existent, because it is not really so.

Al-Shazali pointed that the "world is an emanation proceeding from him, as sun beams proceed from the sun". All things says Shazali, are a ray of the essential light of God.

Thus according to the Sufis, creation is a process of differentiation. It is process of devolution, tanhmsa, and individualisation, khayyim, whereby the divine essence manifests itself in the form of the Universe.

Yalalj talks of the process of devolution, the descent of God from the state of true Unmanifested essence to the state of manifestation. There are three stages according to his in
the stage of Pure Being, devoid of all attributes and names; the stage, wherein there is the appearance of attributes and names through the manifestation of His Essence; and the stage wherein there is the appearance of man through the projection of His own Essence. 94

Jili calls, the Pure Being, a part from all qualities and relations, "the darkmist" or "blindness" (al-Itras). He says this simpleassen a passes through three stages which modify its purity and simplicity. The first stage is oneness (Adadiyya), the second Oneness (Karimyya) and third stage is I-ness (An yya). Through this process of descent the absolute develops consciousness and becomes the subject and object of all thought. It is revealed as divinity with distinctive attributes, embracing the whole series of existence. Hence every appearance displays some or other attributes of reality. 95

According to Jami, "God's active is manifesting the Universe is that he should be known. The Divine Nature is a living Unity containing potencies within itself. Creation is the passing forth of these potencies into existence, for God was a hidden treasure which burst forth into heaven and earth because of its fullness.

"I was a hidden treasure because of its fullness it burst forth and made the Earth more shining than the heaven". 96

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In another verse he says, from the Formless Spirit all forms come to light, like the cloud over the moon which conceals the realm of colourlessness. He explains it with the analogy of light and colour. He argues colours, like red, green etc. are seen on account of light. He see these colours and believe that only these exist. This leads them to deny the existence of light which is their source. But as soon as the sun sets they confess that light is the form that lies behind all colour. Due to its union with colour it was not perceived. The colours were the veils that obstructed man's vision of light.

"There is ray form many-colouredness to colourness ; colour is like the clouds, colourlessness is moon. Whatever light spread over you see in the clouds know that it comes from the stars and the moon and the sun".  

Bāsir-i-Khusraw says, "All created things and all creations subsist totally in the apr of God and nothing is either prior or posterior to it ; it is an effect of God, the One, just as writing is the effect of the scribe, in other words it is the creative power to God".

Ikbal Ali Shalm in his Islamic ūfīsian says that according to the ūfīs, creation is a process of successive emanation from God through which He is reflected on Non-Being. In explaining this, the ūfīs have the "Formula of Emanation", that is "All originates from Him, and that all should ultimately be absorbed
in Him, Hence the theory of emanation is a discussion of the origin of things. It has got two theoretical divisions. 

(1) Tanbih, or the greater mysteries and (2) Dānaa'a, or the lesser mysteries. It is related to the mystical side of Sufism. 

Danaa'a are the theories of ascent (Taarruq yat). These theories are several and varied. According to this existence has descents, i.e., manifestations according to limitation. These are the potentialities (Qayvat) of existence like the potentialities of a tree in a seed. No attributes or Names (nazar) are to be found in the stage. In this stage the Chat is called Kūsamatu. 

Isharat (dropping of all indications), Chat-i-Sadhaq (uncoloured Chat), Wajhul-Ashayah (the unseen even in thought), Lā-Tawīm (the unlimited), Shaybi Rutlaq (the absolute unseen), Wajh-i-yabat (Pure Existence), Yuhul-Kabir (reality of Camphor) i.e., that which falls in Camphor becomes camphor itself. Every descent has a world of its own for its manifestation. The second stage is called Yabihdiiyat. Between these there is a borderland called māqūd. It is called the Barzakh. It is the mirror through which God sees His attributes and Names. Unless the glass is coated with mercury, the seer cannot see His face in it. So also without the Barzakh, the manifestation of attributes is unthinkable. The third is the Alam-i-Ja-Rut, i.e., the world of souls. The fourth is Mīshāl, and the fifth stage is
Shahadat i.e., the external world, and sixth final stage is called Insan-ul-kamil (the perfect man), which includes all the attributes and natures.\(^{102}\)

Thus the process of creation is two-fold (1) The manifestations (jubur-ul-dhat wa-sifat) of the Divine Essence and attributes. That is what is hidden is becoming manifest. (2) The emanation, taking particular shapes and forms in the course of its ascent (tunai et al laymat). As Creation proceeds from the Divine Being, it becomes grosser as it recedes from the sources, and takes particular shape and colour as it passed through different planes. The final shape in which the emanation appears are the forms of the phenomenal world. In this view the things emanated are of and from the Divine Being. Yet it is asserted that they are not so many gods or parts of God, though they are not distinct from Him.

Thus according to the šīāhs, creation is a process of emanation, a manifestation of the Divine Essence and attributes. They hold that all things which we see are His manifestations and they proceed from Him, exist in Him and return to Him.

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan says "creation is nothing but the external manifestation of or actualization of the ideas of God or the "essence". In this manifesting Himself, God remains unchanged as He ever was, is and shall be. He manifests Himself according to the "aptitudes" of the things in which He is
manifesting. He bestows His attributes on His Ideas of forms or essences and they become things. Thus the knower (Haaq or Reality) manifests Himself in the known (Khalaq) revealing all the aptitudes of the known. Khalaq by itself is non-existent. Existence belongs to the knower alone. There is no duality of Being or existence.

Tara Chand points out that "God and the Universe (Haaq and Khalaq) and in essence, one, hence they are co-eternal. One is the transcendent and the other immanent aspect of reality. One does not create many. Creation is merely the manifestation of an already existing being, the eternal existent passes from the state of latency (Ishaf) to the state of temporal existence in external appearances (Zuhur).

To sum up, it may be noted that different and contradictory views regarding the nature and creation of the world have been held by different Sufis.

(1) Some hold that God created the Universe and in the Universe He created Man in order that He may become known to him.

(2) Some Sufis regard the world as non-eternal. They hold at the same time that the Universe is divine in essence, nothing but the manifestation and reflection of God.

(3) It is also been held that God created the Universe out of nothing.
(4) Some ṣūfīs state that God created it by an absolute act of will. He simply commands "Be" and the Universe at once becomes manifest.

(5) According to some, God did not create the world out of nothing but out of His own knowledge - the world pre-exists in God’s knowledge and from that it is brought into actual existence.

(6) According to some ṣūfīs, world is a process of devolution and individualisation.

(7) Some say that the world has no final or intrinsic reality, but it is not a mere illusion from which one must turn aside.

(8) According to some, it is shadow, an image, a reflection of truth.

(9) It is also stated, that the Universe is an effect of the creative power, ʿAllāh.
Pathway to God:

God is the real object of all search. Union with Him is perfection. It is the attainment of the higher consciousness, the final and overwhelming expression of the Highest Being through an intimate communion with the Highest Being. In it is involved an immediate awareness of relation with God, a direct consciousness of the Divine Presence. And in the multitude of men only a few reach this end. These fortunate few dwell at these higher levels of reality that lie beyond all conceptions of an ordinary man.

To reach these spiritual heights due preparation is necessary and mystic way is bound up with it. In order to attain his goal, the Sufis is obliged to follow the direction of his guide who is known as the Shaykh or Pir.

In Sufism the progress of the spiritual life has been described as journey or pilgrimage. The Sufi who undertakes this pilgrimage or journey is the Salik, traveller. The Sufis following the path, Tariqah, reach the goal of Union with Reality which is called Fana-fi-Haqiqat, absorption in Reality. Sometimes this mystical path is described as a ladder, a staircase, on which the Salik slowly and patiently climbs towards higher levels of experience. But there is another way of reaching higher experiences. It is called 4-4 ka, "attraction", by
which a person can be exalted, in one single spiritual experience, into a state of ecstasy and of perfect union.

Under the care and guidance of the guide (Shaykh), the novice advances stage by stage towards perfection, till he realizes his own essential oneness with God. The disciple first receives only the reflections of the Divine nature, that shines in the guide’s heart. This is Τακιди or imitation and this imitation of the Shaykh by the disciple is necessary in the early stages of the mystical life, therefore the disciple has to make the beginning by imitating the spiritual guide and by accepting whatever he says and does as authoritative.

And Τακίδ, imitation develops into Τακίδιا, the finding of the truth. The reflections of the Divine Light received by the disciple gradually instills pure knowledge of God into his heart, through constant repetition of these reflections accompanied by the disciple’s own advancement of the path.

The Sufis believe that the heart of a man is a mirror in which he can see the vision of God, but it is a mirror which is covered with the dust of worldly desires. To see the vision of reality it is essential to clean it completely. The worldly desires are identified with nafs. It is not easy to kill the
and to lead the novice to the realization of God. The practice is twofold: (1) Practice of detachment from worldliness and (2) to develop love of God through Murāshī (self-examination) and Murāshī (meditation). The stages of spiritual attainment one described as Kān and Kāl i.e. stations and stages. 106

The twofold practice i.e., detachment from worldliness and attachment to God is started simultaneously. The practice which are helpful for detachment are Ta’uba (repentance), Zuhd (abstinence), Ḥirād (renunciation), Yaqūn (poverty), Sāḥr (patience), Zid (satisfaction), Tawākku (trust in God).

The first stage on the Path is Ta’uba. According to Dhu’l Nun, ta’uba for ordinary man is to repent for their sins and for Sufis it means to repent for their "headdness". 107 Abu Hāfa Fadād believes that repentance is God’s gift and cannot be acquired by human effort. 108 K.A. Nicholson describes repentance, "as the awakening of the soul from the slumber of heedlessness, so that the sinner becomes aware of his evil ways and feels contrition for past disobedience". 109 Mir Valimadin says in his Murāshī Sūfīsan, "repentance and penitence purify the heart of wickedness and ultimately this penitent person becomes the beloved of God". 110 "The penitent says, al-Jurjānī, "is a love of God and the lover of God is in contemplation of God; in contemplation it is wrong to remember sin, for recollection
of sin is a well between God and the contemplative”. Thus the Sufis say that sin appertains to self-existence, which itself is the greatest of all sin. To forget sin is to forget self.

The next stage is abstinence (ṣawm) caused by fear of God, and this is followed by renunciation (zhuhā). Worldly wealth and power is destructive to spiritual life and man’s love and attachment to these is another tie and attachment to those is another tie to be broken. The seeker must endeavour to do away with all his worldly attachment and pre-occupations and his endeavour lies in self-mortification that is founded on purging of the heart of everything except God. At every step in the beginning the attack by Ṽafa is frequent which makes the progress difficult at every stage. Through suḥūṣa and wura, the seeker repulses the attack of Ṽafa and develops attachment for the truth. Salvation can only be achieved by turning away from the world. This happens only by means of poverty.

Poverty (poverty) is attachment not only from all that is worldly and unreal but also from every thought and wish that would divert one’s mind from God. Even the hope of gaining spiritual peace in this world and entrance into heaven in the next is an obstruction to it. The true Ṽafa possesses neither anything nor is possessed by desire for anything. Being denuded of the sensuous, of otherness he does not attribute to himself any
thought, feeling or will. It is pointed out by Al Ghazzali, that it is rule of the Sufi that "poverty should be adornment, patience his ornament, satisfaction his stead and trust his dignity".  

In other words, poverty is to be exterior of the mind, of the world of matter and of the future too. It is the return of the soul to the original state of non-existence and is implicated by the very consciousness of its possession on the part of its possessor. The Prophet said, 'Poverty is my pride'. Aumi says "when poverty is complete nothing exists save God".

One cannot remain steadfast in repentence, abstinence, poverty etc., without patience (ṣabiq) i.e., without endurance of suffering. God exalts those who are patient. As in the Quran it is said, "God is with those who show patience". "ṣabiq is to remain unmoved before the arrows of the divine decrees", says Muhâsibi. Perfect patience is to accept whatever comes from God, even the harshest blow of fate.

In their progress towards the practice of patience, the Sufis built a system of asceticism. Mortification of the lower soul (nafs), leads to contemplative life. The principle of mortification is that the appetitive soul should be deprived from these things, to which it is accustomed. "Mortification is a moral transmutation of the inner man, 'dying to self' is
really 'living in God'. Thus the Sufi who has eradicated self-will is said to have reached the stage of acquiescence, or satisfaction.\(^{15}\)

The next stage on the path is *Tawakkul*, Trust in God. \(^{16}\) Piríí, the spiritual descendent of Hasan of Baṣara, defines "Tawakkul as the apex of ṣubūd, renunciation". \(^{16}\) Shul Num defines it as "complete certitude".\(^{17}\) Thus *Tawakkul* is the capacity for faith, knowledge and love which God has deposited in the human heart. *Tawakkul* involves the renunciation of all personal will and initiative total self-abandonment with perfect indifference to all that is connected with one's own self and complete withdrawal from all that is other than God.

Out of *Tawakkul* is developed *Hida* (satisfaction.) "*Hida* is the joy of the heart in the bitterness of the divine decrees"\(^{18}\), says Shul Num. \(^{18}\) Hujwírî says that "*Hida* is a result of love, in as much as the lover is content with what is done by the beloved.\(^{19}\) Whatever joy or miseries come to the seeker, he has to accept them with all pleasures.

The seeker not only feels satisfaction over what is given to him, but he should be thankful to God. This stage is called *Sukur* (Thankfulness).
According to J.A. Subhan, some authorities divide the Path into seven stages. First stage is ḥumā, the stage of service wherein the seeker endeavours to purify his soul through repentance. Ḥabba is the stage of love, in which the soul is under the divine influence that inclines it towards the love of God. The intense longing for God leads the aspirant to observe poverty which is the lack of desire for everything except God. This desire for nothing but God leads him to the stage of ḥāsil. After purifying himself the seeker contemplates the nature and attributes of God and reaches the stage of ḥāsil, knowledge or ḡnosis. Contemplation produces ṣaḥāl (sustenance), after which stage the illumined heart learns the true nature of Ḥanāfī, reality and exercises tawakkul, dependence on God. Ḥājl, union is the last stage wherein the seeker sees God face to face and enters the final experience of ẓanahwāl, annihilation and subsistence.

On the way, the individual soul passes through stages (nusuq) and experiences certain states (ḥāl) and is then raised permanently to the higher plane of consciousness called ḡnosis (kārināt) and the Truth Ḥamīnāt), wherein, the gnostic (ārif) realises that knowledge, knower and known are one.

But it is difficult to make a distinction between nusuq and ḡal. The something has been described as nusuq by one sufi and ḡal by the other. According to Shahabuddin
Suhravardi, Hal is called so because it is a mood of a temporary phase of mind and it changes quickly. It is the nafs which obstructs its persistence and causes quick change. But when with the Grace of God the nafs is subdued, the hal changes into gana as it becomes permanent abode of the Salik. Thus hal is the spiritual noon of the mystic. Its duration is very short. Gana is a state of spiritual attainment on the path of God. Hal is a gift of God and depends upon His Grace, while the gana depends upon the personal efforts. These are earnings. Nujjiri makes a clear distinction between gana and hal. Gana denotes anyone's standing in the way of God, and his fulfillment of the obligations appertaining to that 'station' and his keeping it until he comprehends its perfection so far as lies in man's power. It is not permissible that he should quit his gana without fulfilling the obligations thereof. Thus the first stage is repentance, then comes conversion (innabat), then renunciation, then trust in God, and so on. It is not permissible that anyone who should pretend to conversion without repentance, or to renunciation without conversion or to trust in God without renunciation. Hal, 'state', on the other hand, is something that descends from God into man's heart, without his being able to repel it when it comes or to attract it when it goes, by his own effort, i.e., it is entirely out of the seeker's control. According to Hadi, gana is permanent stage and hal is a passing
The Sufis say that the physical renunciation of worldly objects of pleasure is not adequate. The real struggle is to fight for the purification of the heart. So one has to kill the **nafs** for the further spiritual progress. The Qur'an says "fear the place of his Lord and hinder the nafs from lust".\(^{126}\) For the nafs is the cause of blameworthy actions, and the struggle with has been called by the Sufis "the greater Holy War" (Al-Jihad - - Akhbar), for "the worst enemy you have is (the nafs) between your sides",\(^{127}\) says the Prophet.

The means to gain control over the nafs are **zuhar** (contemplation) and **mu'amala** (self-examination). When one has gained control over it and stores all the spiritual provision needed for his further journey, he enters the stage of contemplation. The ground of self, the infinite sea of mystic knowledge lies within oneself and is found by looking within one self, by silently contemplating in deep. Contemplation is a "mental attitude under which all things give up to us the secret of their life".\(^{128}\) It means that withdrawal of attention from the external world which releases the faculty of apprehending the real contemplation establishes communion between the soul and Absolute, breaking down the barriers between them. As the Prophet says, "Righteousness consists in worshipping God as if thou seest Him; for if thou seest Him not, yet He
seen thee'. Saiyid'Ali says, "it amounts to give up all authority and activity over which the seeker has control. It is an instrument in the hands of Sufis, through which they try to achieve their goal and concentrate on nothing else but God'.

The soul in contemplation is absolutely free, out of itself and out of all things, dwelling in the heart of the Divine, Beloved, stripped of all and lost for all. It views everything from far off, everything having been made subject to it. In the intense practice of contemplation, all disappears except the object of contemplation. He transcends all space and time and causation and realizes that there exists nothing but God. Once he realizes this, he realizes that God is everything. He can think of nothing but God. He can love nothing but God. He sees everything in God, so much so that if at all he sees himself, he sees himself in God.

Contemplation is accompanied by Zikr (recollecton) which is the remembering and commemorating of God. In the Qur'an, the faithful are commanded 'to remember God often'. This is a plain act of worship, without any mystical savour. But the sufis practise it repeating the name of God or some religious formula with such an intense concentration of each and every faculty upon the name or formula that all external
Impressions conveyed by sense or imagination are destroyed and a state of mindlessness ensues. This is followed by an absorption of the seeker in God.

The most fundamental formulas of the Quran is the first *Shahādah*, that is witness or testimony, *La ilaha ill'Allah*, which is the foundation head of all Islamic doctrine. It means 'there is no God but He'.

After the *Shahādah*, the most cardinal and often used formula is *Bismillah ir-Rahman ir-Rahim*, which is translated as in the Name of God, the Most Merciful and Compassionate.

The *Sūrat al-Fatihah*, the opening chapter of the Quran expresses the primordial relation between God and man. It consists of seven verses, three concerning God, three of man and one, of relation between God and man.

The formula, *Allahu Akbar*, which is repeated during the call to prayer means not only that 'God is great', but He is greater and also greatest.

The formula *Subhān Allāh*, meaning Glory to Allah is a praising of God.

Such formulas accompanied by intense concentration of mind, enable the Sufis to enjoy uninterrupted communion with God.
zikr may be either silent or spoken. The heart of the seeker is reduced to a state in which the existence of anything and its non-existence are the same to him, for nothing save God enters his mind. The repetition of the word or formula is continued till the motion of his tongue ceases and it seems as though the word flows from it, and till the form of the word, its letter and shape are removed from his heart, and there remains the idea alone.

Sheikh Nama considered the zikr to be medicine for the ailments of the heart. For long periods of time, he recited zikr incessantly and he urged his disciples to do the same. Solitude, he explained, did not mean only that one should confine oneself to a cell but also that one's heart and mind should be controlled in order to concentrate upon God.

Ghazzali holds that recollection is acquired by three stages, recollection by the tongue, recollection by the heart, and recollection which takes complete possession of the heart, and prevails over it. By meditation the soul knows the joy of entering into the Presence of God. It then seeks the practice of the presence of God at all times, which is recollection. And recollection is the most excellent of all occupations, for by it the heart is enlightened and is enabled to contemplate God.
"True dhikr is that you forget your dhikr," says Shibli. Since even the word or thought 'O God', implies the consciousness of subject and object, the last mystery of recollection is complete silence.\textsuperscript{134}

But according to Sufis, like Bayazid Bistami, Miffari, Hallâj etc. Dhikr is still a veil between God and the soul. "The homeland of recollection is separation" says Miffari. Abu Bakr al-Sagîti says, "Those who remember His recollection are more negligent than those who forget His recollection." Hallâj says, "Recollection is the most precious pearl, and recollection hides Thee from my eyes."\textsuperscript{135}

Dhikr in its developed form is usually connected with some sort of breath control. Shal expressed the idea that "the breaths are counted, every breath that goes out without remembering Him is dead, but every breath that goes out in recollecting the Lord is alive and is connected with Him."\textsuperscript{136}

Contemplation in Sufism is the highest form and Sufis have always integrated the action and contemplation. "The most essential rapport between contemplation and action is Islam is to be found in prayer, especially in quintessential prayer, which is the invocation (dhikr) practised by the Sufis. There is contemplation and action become unified. Perfect action which is the dhikr leads to contemplation (shumâq or
mushâ-‘adhâh), while contemplation itself the dhikr in as much as the dhikr is unified with “He who is involved” (rasâ’dhâr). In perfect invocation he who involves or performs the act of invocation (dhikr) becomes united with the dhikr and the rasâ’dhâr in a supreme union which transcends the dichotomy between action and contemplation, knowledge and existence, the knower and the known, in which all polarities are embraced within the essential and at the same time primordial unity.”

Say Seyyed Hossein Nasr.

“Prayer”, Saiyid 'Ali says, connected the creature with the creator, and is a medium through which man can approach God. The real meaning of prayer, he writes, is sunât (invocation), which is impossible without concentration. Indeed sunût means sukhahâba (conversation) and a true conversation can be held only by an 'ârif who would have attained the degree of perfection.”

“One can, moreover, distinguish in A‘îkr, or unitive prayer a contemplative action and an active contemplation”, says Syed Hossein Nasr in the book Contemplation and action. He says the incantatory methods of Sûfism, if practised under the direction of a master and within the protective matrix of traditional orthodoxy, are all forms of contemplative action at the highest level leading ultimately to union with God... in a mysterious fashion the agent who performs the contemplative act is able to transcend his own limited existence as agent
through his very action. The secret of this paradox lies in the fact that in the ḥikr man performs an act, but an act that is preceded by contemplation, an act which is also a state of being, an act which is ultimately not the act of man but the act of God... quintessential prayer is a contemplation act which leads to pure contemplation and finally union.⁴³

again he says, "as for active contemplation, it too is the ḥikr from another point of view. Sufism is not a passive form of mysticism. It is a journey (al-maṣāfah) after Divine Knowledge, the attainment of which leads to union and the overcoming of the separation between man in his fallen state and man as the Universal and Perfect Man (al-insān-al-kāmil), who is in union with God, because he is the perfect mirror in whom the Divine Names and Qualities are reflected."⁴⁴

Thus according to the Sufis contemplation and action are as geometrical points which generate both the radii and the circumference. Thus metaphysically the Nashīḥah (Truth) create both the Ṭarīqah (action) and the Shari'ah (Law). The law and the action have both been brought into being independently by God who is the Truth. For the Sufis the Ṭarīqah (action) is providentially the means whereby they can attain that final end or Goal, the (hārī al).
The ultimate goal of the sufis is the Tarhid (union) with God. Tarhid is derived from the three letters Ya Ha Da which means "to make one unit of two or two or more things or individuals". But in the language of sufis it means (1) to believe and hold that God and the world (man and his environment) constitute one whole or indivisibly one Existence. (2) to believe and hold that God is an Infinite and Absolute Being who is above and quite separate from the finite and relative world which he created.

Basing their views on the above two meanings, the sufis interpret the conception of union in their own way of experience and expression.

Junayd defines union which means "either the affirmation of the divine unity or the mystics experience in ecstasy of that unit or union".145

The union with God is not like the union of a body with a body or a substance with a substance. On the contrary it is an intuitive contact of a detachment from the world and all i.e., other than God. In this state, the devotee experiences a vision in which he feels one with God, who manifests Himself in the form of light or illumination (Talal i).
Hâllaj is so carried away by his ecstatic experience that he does not feel the dual nature of man as a living creature and his nature in mystical communion with the divine. Hâllaj says that God created man after his own image, so that man might find that image within himself and attain union with the Divine nature. Hâllaj expresses his intense feeling of complete harmony with God in the following terms.

"I am He whom I love and He whom I love is, I we are two spirits dwelling in one body. If you seest me, thou seest Him, and if thou seest Him seest us both."\(^{146}\)

For Hâllaj union with God involves the infusion of incarnation (bulûl) of the divine spirit in the human body. As Hâllaj puts it in his poems.

"thy spirit is mingled in my spirit, even as wine is mingled with pure water."\(^{147}\)

The recently published researches of M. Louis Masningen, indicate that the meaning which Hâllaj himself attached to the formula Anâl Hâna (I am God), does not agree with the more orthodox interpretations offered at a latter epoch by sûfis belonging to different schools. They argue that since the humanity (nâsîr) of God comprises the whole bodily and spiritual nature of man the divinity (jâhân) of God cannot
unite with that nature except by means of an incarnation. In the words of Kassigian, "an infusion (būlūl) of the divine spirit such as takes place, when the human spirit enters the body."

Ḥallāj was punished for he betrayed the secret of his love, the supreme mystery which ought to be reserved for the elect. It is said that he imagines himself to be united with the divine essence, when in fact he is only united with one of divine attributes. But Ḥallāj declares that there is no essential difference or separation between God and His creatures, for divine unity includes all being. A man who has entirely passed away from his phenomenal self exists in his real self, which is God.

"In that glory is no 'I' or 'we' or 'thou'.
'I' 'we' 'Thou' and 'He' are one thing".

As Nicholson puts it, "it was not Ḥallāj who cried 'Aval Han', but God himself speaking as it were, by the mouth of the selfless Ḥallāj."

According to Abu Ya'qub Mustari God and the soul are identical both in essence and attribute. The utterances of Abu Ya'qub also show the monistic tendency. He says, "I went from God to God, until He cried from me in me, 'O thou I'"
"Glory to me! How great is my majesty". "When I came out
of my 'self', I found the lover and the beloved as one, for
in the world of thought, all is one". In another passage he
said, "As soon as I attained to His Unity, I became a bird
whose body was of Oneness and whose wings were everlastingness;
and I continued to fly in the air of suchness for ten years
until I reach an atmosphere a hundred million times as long
and I continued to fly until I reached the field of eternity
without beginning and in it I saw the tree of Oneness...and
I looked and saw that all of it was descit". In the Khadijah Al-Anwar, Ghazzali said that the type
of mystical experience enjoyed by Abu Nasir and Hallaj is
called tanzih. It means the 'affirmation of the divine unity'.
Ghazzali argues that the two things can never become one; for
either both exist, in which case they are not identical. If
the one exists and the other does not, again there is no duality.
If they both do not exist there is no identity either. So
perfect union means that nothing exists except the one. Here
Ghazzali forgets his orthodoxy and becomes a non-dualist.

The doctrine of identity is not accepted by Al-Barraj
and Aujudi. "A man cannot lose his humanity said Barraj, but
the inborn qualities of humanity are charged and transmuted
by the all powerful radiance, shed upon them from the divine
realities."
Mubāsibī and Dhū'il Rūm maintain that in the unitive state, the soul retains some trace of individuality. According to Jami, union is the result of raking the heart single and purifying it from attachment to anything except God. It is the realization that any appearance besides God is false. All desire and will and all objects of knowledge and understanding are removed from the intellect, vision of the mystic. There is no "otherness" besides God and there is no will, thought or action that can be referred to one's self.

Fana, 'the passing away' from the self does in fact involve the cessation of being, while baqa means persistence. "The best interpretation of fana and the following stage baqa has been given by the Japanese scholar Toshihiko Izutsu, says Annemarie Schimmel, who, explains fana as "the total nullification of the ego-consciousness, when there remains only the absolute Unity of Reality in its purity as an absolute Awareness prior to its bifurcation into subject and object" — the state the qūris would call ika, unification, collectedness."

Thus the goal of the qūris is attained through constant meditation, which leads them to Fanaa Man ant, absorption in the Absolute. This final experience is always regarded as a free act of divine grace, which enrapture man and takes him out of himself, often in an experience described as "Kestasy".
which means literally "finding out", i.e., to find God and become quiet and peaceful in finding Him. In this ecstatic state, the Sufi becomes absolutely senseless and he makes no difference between himself and God. For him nothing exists except God. He thinks of God, he lives in God and talks of God. All his doubts are resolved and his desires fulfilled and his end achieved. At this state, he is called the Perfect Man.

The picture of a perfect man has been given by philosophers and mystics in their own ways. "The analysis of the Perfect Man can be considered from the point of view of empirical perfection and spiritual perfection. The empirical perfection as far as possible in this world. The transcendental picture of perfection, however, would be the picture of pure and perfect soul and that has reached its real nature of 'infinite consciousness', pure understanding, absolute freedom and eternal bliss, everlasting into the eternal flow of the Divine Energy".

The Perfect Man according to Ibnal Arabi and Jili is the Prophet. Ibnal Arabi, says, God created a microcosmic being, the Perfect Man, insan kamil, through whom His consciousness is manifested to Himself. The Perfect Man is the spirit in which all things have their origin; the created spirit of Muhammad, is thus, a soul of the uncreated divine spirit, and he is the medium through which God becomes conscious of Himself.