CHAPTER - IV

RELIGIOUS DISCOURSE: CODE MIXING IN SUFI DISCOURSE & MAHFIL-E-SAMA

INTRODUCTION

The discourse of ‘religion’ has wrought major social changes not only in South Asia but throughout the world. In spite of this, commentators and scholars of ‘religion’ are often blind to the political implications of their ‘packaging’ of other people’s beliefs and practices through their reification of the category of ‘religion’. Such inadvertent reification is part of the genealogy of Religious Studies and its marking of a distinct proprietary territory of ‘religion.’ The influence of positivist models of ‘objective’ knowledge has also contributed to scholars’ neglect of the political dimensions of the raw material from which they have constructed the discourse of ‘religion’ in general and the totalitarian architecture of the ‘World Religions’ in particular. Such traditional forms of scholarship assumed that ‘religious’ language and texts are politically neutral rather than expressions of relations of power. ‘Canonical’ or ‘sacred’ texts were positioned as touchstones of definition, while ‘key insiders’ typically literati or lay persons associated with scripturalist trends were identified as the most appropriate sources for evaluating the meanings of texts and actions. By resorting to texts and person, it was thought that an ‘objective’ description could be given of the proper constituent elements of any particular ‘religion’, which could then be identified by its key texts, experts, and institutions and kept distinct from the constituents of other ‘religions’ or their compound forms of ‘Indian religions’ or the ‘Judeo-Christian’ tradition. All such scholarly formations are intrinsically ideological, and often blatantly ahistorical to boot.
In such ways, a bridge was made between an abstract category of ‘religion’ and the human world of practice and belief. The term ‘religion’ could be used as a means of identifying persons, places, and societies. Linguistic realism became the order of the day, hesitant to problematise the relationship between labels and persons, signs and referents. As a result of this lack of attention to the social life of words, it has been assumed that such group labels as ‘Hindu’, ‘Christian’, or ‘Muslim’ can be accepted at face value, as simple referents to existing social groups rather than as performative or transformative categories used for particular purposes, as labels capable even of bringing into being groups to which they claim only to refer. Written or oral texts were thus seen as ‘sources’, passive media that shed light on the inner world of ‘belief’ or the outer world of ‘events’, ignoring the agency and power of such texts to make ‘moves’ in the world, and so to reshape it.

In the case of Islam, the World Religions model has led to an acute and unanticipated collusion of academic and ‘reformist’ Muslim discourses in that almost without exception the form of religion presented in academic primers on Islam is indistinguishable from the textualist, normative, and Arabocentric vision of Islam promoted by many Muslim reformist groups. Similar trends are observable in the case of other ‘World Religions’ such as Buddhism and Hinduism. ‘Beginnings’ thus always count more than ‘ends’; ‘scripture’ has authority over practice; a ‘canon’ and a clear articulation of orthodoxy are to be distinguished from the jarring incoherence of the masses; ‘superstition’ and ‘idolatry’ are to be relinquished in the name of ‘true religion’. Religious Studies specialists increasingly work in a context in which publishers, readers, and the media at large expect responses in terms of such a framework. Invitations to appear on radio or television programmes on ‘religion’ are often withdrawn if academics refuse to give themselves or their subjects a tidy religious label. This is an example of the consequences of a type of representational discourse that functions to deny individuality and agency.
In Roman Latin, the word religio did not generally apply to an imagined hypostasised entity, or to an inner realm of ‘belief’, but was used relationally to refer to respect for the ordered public world of established tradition. Religio was thus contrasted with the private and selfish world of superstition; it was not contrasted with the ‘secular’ as it is today. At first, ‘Christianity’ was not seen by Romans as falling into the domain of religio, nor did Christians and Jews consider themselves to belong to religions. But by the third and fourth centuries of the Christian era, Christians had succeeded in redefining religio to emphasise belief and exclusivity. Yet after the fall of the Roman Empire in the west, religio and its cognates were little used for nearly a thousand years. The ‘religious’ were only those of unusual piety, such as monks. ‘Religion/religions’ only began to develop its current meaning in the early modern era, slowly expanding its remit to become a means of classifying communities, societies, and more recently whole ‘civilisations’.

Wilfred Cantwell Smith argued that until modern times, no language contained the idea that the whole world can be divided up into neatly labelled, clearly separable, and countable ‘religions’ or ‘sects’. He considered that Arabic is a partial exception to this, in that the word “din” has long been used along with “nizam” to indicate some kind of system. During the ‘Abbasid period (750-1258), Arabic scholarship evolved a system for the categorisation of ‘sects’ (firaq) and ‘religious’ communities (madhhab, mila) to make sense of the diversity of intellectual and social practice that they encountered through the expansion of ‘Abbasid military and commercial power across much of Asia. Ranging between plain curiosity and a polemical will to power, such scholarship included the Book of India of al-Biruni (d. 1048) and the great heresiographical compendium of al-Shahrastani (d. 1153). ‘Islam’ may then be said to be something of a special case in developing a label for itself from within because it emerged in a context of encounter with other traditions in a range of commercial, scholarly, and military
settings. Certainly, Islamic legal categories constituted communities in what might be regarded as a ‘religious’ framework, so that such complex multicultural polities as the Ottoman empire could administer their different peoples under the framework of the ‘religious’ community or milla. But insofar as access to this legal status was dependent on any group being recognised as a ‘people of the book’ (ahl al-kitab), it is the nexus of power and written language rather than ‘religion’ per se that offers a more helpful mode of understanding this process of categorisation. After all, even the animist groups with whom Muslims came into contact in Inner Asia and Africa would usually be regarded by modern commentators as having a ‘religion’. But unlike Jews and Christians (and the Zoroastrians and Hindus at times accepted as ahl al-kitab), what such groups did not possess was a book. Recognition as a legitimate ‘religion’ was in this way incumbent on access to written language, since in the legal framework of Shari’a at least, groups received the protection of law through demonstrable possession of a prophetic book. For the ahl al-kitab, ‘religion’ was thus a corollary of writing that in turn lent the prestige of recognition and protection by the legal apparatus of the state. At a comparative level, what is therefore clear is the centrality of written language to the legitimacy of recognition. This emphasis on what we might term the research credentials of religiosity was one that Muslim scholars shared with their Christian counterparts in an echo of the historical interconnections of Christian and Islamic knowledge systems, a common culture of paper and pen that would render the scholarly ulama class the natural informants for early Orientalists searching for the key constituents of the Islamic ‘religion’. Whether in the ‘Abbasid or Roman spheres, intellectuals in other world empires formulated their own responses to the encounter with difference, each response stamped with the imprint of power and as stylus, pen, and eventually print technologies developed of writing. Building on Foucault’s specific use of the term, in Religion, Language, and Power we treat the language of ‘religion’ as discourse, that is, as a
range of social practices and investigations, in talk and writing, that bring into being new ways of classifying and linking experiences and people, so creating new versions of ‘reality’ that in turn produce specific social and political effects.

LANGUAGE OF SUFISM IN SOUTH ASIA

The story of South Asian relations with Iran goes back to past and covers many important aspects of life-political, literary, cultural and religious. The spirit of Persian renaissance turned Iranian traditions into a vibrant force and shaped the sociopolitical ideals of the sultans, the literary and artistic paradigms of scholars, the moral code and spiritual goals of the sufi, the melodies of the musicians and the parameters of the medical science. The artists, the painters, the architects, the caligraphists of Iran all came to be admired and imitated. The aesthetic and artistic genius of Iran inspired for centuries the literary and spiritual activities of the people in South Asia and its intellectual and emotional life revolved around the patterns set by Iranian traditions. Hardly any other cultural tradition has had such far-reaching and abiding impact on the lives of the people. Naturally therefore when one thinks of Iranian impact on South Asia, a world of historic visions and memories glows into consciousness.

Two preliminary observations may be made to put the present discussion in its proper conceptual framework. First, many of the important scholars of Islamic sciences who influenced Muslim mind in South Asia belonged to Iranian lands, though they wrote in Arabic. When their works came to be translated into Persian, the area of their influence widened. Of the six distinguished compilers of the hadith collections (sihah sitta) five were Iranians. Zamakhshar, the author of kashshaf, the classical work on exegesis, and Sebowaih, the celebrated Arabic grammarian, belonged to Zamakhshar and Shiraz in Iran. The Arabs themselves, remarks Amir Khusrau, acknowledged their preeminent academic stature and addressed them as ‘Allamah’. In fact, Persian became in South Asia the
transmission house for Islamic sciences including tafsir, kalam, fiqh and tasawwuf.

Second, if the course of different streams of thought in Iran is closely followed, it would appear that there has been considerable cycling and recycling of ideas between Iran and India. India is the cradle of pantheistic philosophy and the Upanishads contain the earliest expositions of these ideas. When Islam reached Khurasan and Transoxiana, the religious atmosphere was saturated with Buddhist and Hindu ideas. The temples of Bamyan, Balkh and Marv were centers of Buddhist tradition. It was but inevitable that some of their concepts influenced the Iranian mind. The Upanishads proclaim *Tattvam assi* (Thou art thou), and the idea finds its echo in Bayazid. The Karramiyan cult was a half way house between Islam and Buddhism. Hujwiri has given an account of twelve schools of mystic thought which flourished during the eleventh century of the Christian era. An analysis of the thought contents of these garohs, as he calls them, reveals the impact of Indian ideas. Concepts like *fana, baqa, hulul*, etc. are inexplicable except in the context of Hindu and Buddhist religious traditions. Thus some of the Iranian mystical ideas that reached India during the medieval period had in fact originated in India and were cycled back to India under Islamic rubrics. Indian fables (like Panchatantra), lexical and phonological traditions, mathematical theories and astronomical concepts reached Iran and influenced Iranian thought.

If one surveys the historical landscape of India during the medieval period, a number of Iranian cultural streams in the realm of polity, social traditions, literature, historiography and mystic thought seem flowing in every direction enriching the soil and contributing to the variegated culture pattern of India. It was generally believed in India during the Sultanate period that kingship was not possible without emulating Persian customs, ceremonies and principles of government. When Iltutmish, the real founder of the Delhi Sultanate, is referred to
as Fari^du^n far, Qubad Nahad, Kavus Namus, Sikandar Daulat, Bahram Shaukat, the whole concept of greatness seems to reel round the Iranian heroes. Both Ilutmish and Balban prided in calling themselves descendants of Afrasiyab. Barani's Fataway-i Jahandari illustrates the depth and dimensions of Iranian influence on medieval Indian polity. The sultans of Delhi were Turks by race but Iranian by culture. Their entire administrative set-up from names and nomenclature of offices to forms and functions of institution was modeled on the Iranian pattern. Barani remarks: "it became necessary for the rulers of Islam to follow the policy of the Iranian emperors in order to ensure the greatness of the True Word and the maintenance of their own authority."

In the fields of learning and literature, Iranian influence shaped the contour and conspectus of historiography, poetry, tasawwuf (mysticism), insha (epistolary principles) and tibb (medicine). Amir Khusrau has referred to the linguistic homogeneity brought about by the Persian language in a country of proliferate linguistic traditions. He remarks:

"The Persian language as spoken in India is the same from Sind to Bengal. This Persian is our Dari. Indian languages differ from group to group and change (their dialects) after every hundred miles. But Persian is the same over an area of four thousand farsangs".

History writing among the Muslims was conditioned by two distinct traditions, the Arab and the Iranian. The Arabns wrote history of an age and handled the historical data year by year; the Iranians, inspired by the traditions of Shah Namah, dealt with dynasties and their assortment of facts concerned mainly the court and the camp. The Iranian historians generally dedicated their works to rulers or the ruling dynasties. In India the Iranian tradition influenced the pattern of history writing. From Hasan Nisha^pu^ri^, the earliest historian of the Delhi Sultanate (Taj al-Ma^athir) to Khair al-Din Ilahabadi, the last historian of the Mughal Empire ("Ibrat
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Namah), the Iranian pattern determined the collection and presentation of historical data. The whole jargon of official correspondence and epistolography was developed in India on the principles of ilm-i dab-i ri', as described in Chahar Maqala and as adopted in Dastur al-Albab fi 'Ilm al-Hisab by Abdul Hamid Muharrir Ghaznavi. The drafting of Fath Namahs (official communiques of victory) was done on the Iranian model. The Fath Namahs of Ala' al-Din Khalji drafted by Kabir al-Din have not survived but Balban’s fath Na''mah of Lakhnati as drafted by Amir Khusrau is available in Ijaz-i Khusravi and Akbar’s fath Na''mah of Chitor is preserved in Namakin’s Munsha’at wa Ruqaa’at. Their form and format are to all intents and purposes Iranian.

With the Sha''h Na''mah, which crystallized the historic memory of Iran, begins the history of literary, cultural and political traditions of Iran. It ushered in the dawn of Persian Renaissance and Firdausi justly claimed: ‘Ajam zinda kardam bedin Pa''rsi (I have brought back ‘Ajam to life through this Persian.) From the time of Balban to the days of Akbar and even later the Sha''h Na''mah was read at the courts of sultans and principles of governance and cultural effervescence were drawn from it. Its verses were recited even in the khangahs. When Balban presented himself at Pakpattan to seek the blessings of Shaikh Farid Ganj-i Shakar, the saint recited the following verses of Firdausi:

Farido''n-i farrukh firishtih nabu''d
Za u'd-o za 'ambar sirishtih nabu''d
Za dad-o dahish yaft an nikul"
To dad-o dahish kun, firishtih to-i

(Fari^du^n, the blessed, was not an angel; he was not made of agallochum or ambergris. He attained the position of kingship through his bounty and liberality. Bestow liberally and Far^du^n is thee.)
The Shah Namah influenced the politico cultural thinking of the people so deeply that its translations were undertaken in several Indian languages, Urdu, Hindi, Gujarati, etc. 'Isa'mi wrote his Futuh al-Salatin as Shah Nahma Hind and said:

Jahan ta ki baqist andar jahan

Bi Shahnma ma Baqis nam-i shaha'n

(As long as the world lasts, the Shah Na'mah will remain and with it the names of the kings it describes.)

Shaikh A'zari versified the conquests of Ahmad Shah Bahmani in Bahman Na'mah on the pattern of Shah Na'mah. During the time of Aurangzeb, Bahadur Ali rendered into prose many stories of Shah Na'mah and named them Shah Na'mah-i Bakhtawar Khani. The glamour of Shah Na'mah as a model of sociopolitical activities inspired Hafeez Jallandhari to write Shah Na'mah-i Islam in Urdu.

In all the important genres of poetry; ghazal, mathnawi, qaisidah-the success of a poet in South Asia was measured by the extent of his approximation to the standards set by the Iranian poets. In the words of Jum there were three prophets in the sphere of poetry, Firdausi of abiyat, Anvari of qaisidah and Sa'adi of ghazal. Each one of them had his literary following in India.

Sa'adi was the great master of ghazal. He was justified in claiming sovereignty over the realm of letters (Sukhan Mulkist Sa'ad r musallam). In his poetry, which is soaked in cosmic emotion, feelings move in tune and time as naturally as the heart beats. Am'r Khusrau and Hasan both tried to emulate him but did not succeed. However, both of them admitted their indebtedness to Sa'adi. Khusrau acknowledged having poured in his cup the wine of Shiraz and Hasan claimed to
have plucked a flower from the garden of Sa`adi. Shaikh Nasir al-Din Chiragh, a friend of both Khusrau and Hasan, however, remarked:

Amir Khusrau va Amir Hasan bistyar khwastand ki be-tariq-i Khwaja Sa`adi hi-guyand, nuyassar nashud, Khwaja Sa`adi anchih guff az sirr-i hal guft.

(Amir Khusrau and Amir Hasan much desired to emulate Khwaja Sa`adi in their poetry, but did not succeed. Whatever Khwaja Sa`adi has said is based on cosmic experience).

Unfortunately this sirr-i hal of Sa`adi was overshadowed by his eminence as a poet. But in India his pre-eminence as a dedicated Sufi was widely acknowledged and invocatory and incantational significance was attached to his verses. Shaikh Hamid al-Din Nagauri, a distinguished khalifa of Khwaja Mu'in al-Din Chishti of Ajmer, told his audience that during the closing years of his life Shaikh Sa`adi lived in seclusion at the mausoleum of Shaikh `Abdullah Khafifi and spent his time in prayer and meditation. He thus advised those who came to see him:

"Offer five time prayers regularly and whatever much or less God has given you share it with the needy and the poor. If you do that then wherever you may be (placed in life), you can proceed from there on the path to God (and attain gnosis)."

He made altruism a corner stone of his mystic discipline. He had learnt from his spiritual mentor, Shaikh Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi, that rejection of egotistical arrogance and self-abnegation was the only way to spiritual enlightenment. He says:

*Mara Pir-i dana-yi murshid, Shihab*

*Do andarz farmand bar rû-yi ãb*
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yiki in-ki bar khwish khud-bin mahash

durum in-ki bar ghayr bad-bin mahash

(My wise and blessed spiritual mentor, Shihab

Gave two pieces of advice to me while sailing on the river

First, do not be ego-centric (and overbearing)

Secondly, do not look down upon and wish ill of others.)

Sa'adi's role in focusing on moral and ethical ideas of Islamic mysticism was second to none. Innumerable works of Indian Sufis have quoted his verses as the real way to attain gnosis. In fact, in India the mystic spirit was generated and sustained more by Persian verses than mystic classics or ethical treatises.

In the thirteenth century the clan of Persian poetry was towards moral rejuvenation of society by restoring the dignity of man as Man and inculcating respect for moral and ethical values. There was a painful realization that the moral fiber of man had weakened and that human beings were multiplying while humanity was languishing. The life breath of the poetry of Sa'adi, Rumi and 'Iraqi was their restless concern for humanity. In fact, the process of what Iqbal called adamgarî (shaping the man) and which later on became the summum bonum of mystic activity, begins with them. Rumi set out in search of "Man" crying insanam arizfst (I yearn for a true human being); Sa'adâ found beasts masquerading in human form and sought protection from vicissitudes and revolution of the time (zinhar az dowr-i gibî va inqilab-i rûzigar). They applied all their energy to resurrect the fallen structures of faith and confidence and in directing the soul movement of man. In the poetry of Amir Khusrau one can hear an echo of the spirit generated by these great masters. His mathnawi, Matla' al-Anwar, is soaked in this spirit of the age and reflects his anxiety to salvage humanity from its imminent doom.
Surprisingly, the Iranian poets were writing in an age of gloom and depression when the Mongols had devastated centers of Muslim culture and Khusrau wrote when the Khalji Empire had risen with all its grandeur and glory. That under so dissimilar circumstances their concern for humanity should be the same shows their anxiety to salvage higher values in times of both gloom and glory. Rumi’s Mathnawi and Khusrau’s Matla’ al-Anwar supplied Iqbal with both ideals and emotions and he prayed to God in Amağhan-i Hijaz

Ata kun shir-i Rumi, suz-i khusrau

(Bestow on me the tumult of Rumi and the flame of Khusrau).

Ghazals apart, Sa’adi’s Gulistan and Būstan were read by princes and plebeians alike and were prescribed in the syllabus of medieval Indian madrasahs. The Gulistan became a manual of guidance for the ethical and moral training of young minds. Not only its verses, but prose sentences also passed into proverbial literature and set the norms of good behavior. A number of works were written in imitation of Gulistan-Baharistan, Kharistan and Parishan—to name a few, but none could come anywhere near Sa’adi’s work. Kharistan was written by Majd al-Dīn Khwafi at the instance of Akbar; Qasim Kūhi wrote in imitation of Bustan during the same period. But Sa’adi was inimitable.

In the sphere of ghazal, Hafiz (d. 1389) was the other charismatic figure whose influence on the literary traditions of India was deep and far-reaching. A literary artist, he depicted delicate feelings and ideas like a painter, giving them a life-like touch. Baba Fughani, Sa’ib, Naziri, ‘Urfi and a large number of other poets in Iran and India struggled hard to emulate his musical thought but did not succeed. Even the arrogant ‘Urfi considered him a literary sanctum (ka’abih sukhan). Urdu poets like Ghalib, Sauda and Momin have borrowed delicate sensitivity of emotions from him.
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Hafiz’s literary reputation reached India during his life time. Bengal and Kashmir were in direct contact with him. About the appreciation of his poetry by the people of Kashmir he himself says:

_Bi-shi’r-i Hafiz-i Shiraz mi-raqsand-o mi-nasand
Siyah-chashman-i kashmir-o Turkan-i Samarqandi_

(The black-eyed Kashmiris and Turks of Samarqand love the verses of Hafiz of Shiraz and dance in tune).

His poetry came to represent the quintessence of romantic fervor of Iran. His verses, chiselled linguistically and charged emotionally, took the contemporary Persian-speaking world by storm. Both men of letters and mystics enjoyed his verses in India. Looked upon as lisan al-ghayb (the tongue of secrets), people turned to his work for auguries and divinations. An old manuscript of Diwan-i Hafiz preserved in Bankipur Library shows that Humayun and Jahangir frequently consulted it for fal (augury). Reacting to this aspect of popular interest in Hafiz’s poetry, Iqbal warned them against too much involvement in Hafiz. He was opposed to impressionism but fully realized Hafiz’s greatness as a poet and his charismatic influence.

In fact the ghazal tradition in India, both in Persian and Urdu, derived its hue and color from Hafiz. There were people in India who ascribed talismanic effect to his verses. Shah Fazl-i Rahman Ganj Murabadi, spiritual leader of some of the most distinguished Indian ulama of the nineteenth century, wrote Hafiz’s verses in amulets.

Hafiz returned India’s compliment to Persian masters by eulogizing Tutiya-i Hind. Amir Khusrau has very beautifully described in Dibacha Ghurrat al-Kamal the significance of tuti imagery in literature. Hafiz’s appreciation and esteem of
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Khusrau’s poetry is evident from the fact that he copied out his khamshah in his own hand.

The Khamshah tradition in Persian literature owes its origin to Nizami of Ganja (d.1209), the most resplendent poet of romantic epic. The profundity of his ethical and philosophical thought created a stir in the literary and Sufi circles in India. A large number of Khamshahs were written in Central Asia, Turkey and India in its imitation, but in Browning’s words, “They strove to do, agonized to do, but failed in doing.” In India Khusrau wrote a replica of his Khamshah. According to Jami, no other poet could write a better rejoinder to Nizami than Khusrau. But Nizami’s emotional rigor and grasp of minute detail could not be achieved by Khusrau. Shibli thought that Nizami wrote with patience and concentration; Khusrau hurriedly and with a distracted mind. The result was obvious. According to Daulat Shah Samarqandi some Central Asian princes held a seminar on the relative merit of the two Khamshahs. They debated and argued in support of their points of view. Ultimately the following verse of Khusrau:

\[
gatri yi abi na-khurad makyan
Ta na-kunad riy suyi-i arman
\]

(No hen takes a drop of water without lifting its head towards the sky (in gratefulness to God),

led to their verdict in favor of Khusrau. This was rather too much. However, it cannot be denied that Khusrau’s use of bird symbols was superb. Explaining the concept of makan and la-makan he said:

\[
Gar makan-o la-makan khwahi ki yak-ja bingari
Murgh ra bin dar havu---ham lu-maqam-o ham maqam
\]
Important mystic teachers in India like Shaikh Farid al-Din Ganj-i-Shakar and Shaikh Nizam al-Din Awliya cited verses of Nizami to explain and illustrate different emotional states and mystical concepts. Isami said that every word of Nizami was loaded with breathtaking incantational power. Inspired by Nizami’s Khusrau-o-Shirin, Jami wrote his Mehr-o-Mah. But Nizami was nonpareil.

The masters of Persian qasidah-Rudaki, ‘Unsuri, Farrukhi, Khaqani and others, determined qasidah patterns and motifs in India. Rudaki inspired generation after generation of Indian poets, including Ghalib and Shibli, to compose verses in the same rhyme and meter. Khusrau admits in Tuhaft al-Sighar that he struggled hard to emulate Khaqani but did not succeed. The Mughal court poets-Ghazzali, Meshidi, Faizi, Talib Amuli, Kafin Hamadani—all followed the footsteps of the qasidah writers of Iran. Ghalib wrote a rejoinder to Nazari (d.1612), the chief lyric poet of the time, but confessed his mistake:

javab-i Khwaja Naziri nivishti-am Ghalib
Khata nimfidi-am-o chashm-i afarin darom

In fact, the Iranian milieu, its smiling meadows, murmuring brooks, twittering bulbuls, melting glow of the twilight and moving moon up the sky was a source of undying inspiration to the poets of Iran. As the Indian poets did not have first hand and direct experience of the Iranian phenomena of nature, their references to it appear insipid and prosaic. However, the incantation of words in the qasidahs of Indo-Persian poets was superb.

The most prolific period of Persian poetry in India was the age of Akbar (1556-1605), which Professor Hermann Ethe considered to be the “Indian summer of Persian poetry.” Ahul Fazi has referred to Gulistan, Hadiqah, Mathnawi of Rumi, Auhadi’s Jam-i Jam, Shah Namah, Khamsah-i-Nizami, Kulliyati-Jami, Diwan-i-Hafiz as popular studies at the court of Akbar. These works set the norms of
excellence and the poets of Akbar’s court vied with each other in emulating these masters. Akbar’s liberal patronage of men of letters attracted to his court scholars, philosophers, poets and artists from every part of the Persian speaking world--Meshed, Ispahan, Shiraz, Nishapur, Harat, Marv, Najaf, Hamadan, Kashan, Ray, Sabzwar and Tabriz. Under him Agra could boast to have within its confines many of those celebrities whom the author of Ma’athir-i-Rahimi significantly calls the musta’idan-i Iran. This atmosphere continued in the centuries that followed and as late as the nineteenth century Ghalib claimed:

\[
\text{Emruz man Nizami-o Khaqani-am bi-dahr}
\]

\[
\text{Delhi za man bi Ganja-o sherwan barabar ast.}
\]

(In the world today I am like Nizami and Khaqani. Due to my presence here Delhi is like Ganja and Sherwan.)

The Persian poetic genius found a congenial atmosphere at Akbar’s court and its influence spread far and wide. India became a channel for the spread of Persian poetic traditions in other lands. “After Jami,” wrote Ghalib, “Urﬁ and Faizi were the chief Persian influences on Turkish poetry.” Nefa’i, the greatest Turkish poet of the seventeenth century is specially seen vying with Urﬁ and it is not without significance that copies of some of the best qaṣids and Diwans of Urﬁ are found in the libraries of Ankara and Istanbul. Urﬁ infused a new spirit in eulogistic literature by his qaṣids and ghazals, which are characterized by high ideals, deep egotistical perspicacity, dynamism and drive. According to Iqbal, who drew inspiration from him in evolving his concept of khudi, Urﬁ’s imagination built a magnificent palace at the altar of which the wonderland of Bû Ali Sina and Farabi could be sacrificed. Even Ghalib was beholden to him.

The emotional vigor and linguistic finesse with which Persian language, literature and traditions spread in India may be gauged from their effect on the various
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vermacular languages of India. Dr. Maulwi 'Abdul Haq has traced the impact of Persian language on the Marathi language. Many Persian tales and terms form part of Bengali literature. Jayananda writes in his Chaitanya Mangal: “A Brahmin will grow a beard and read Persian. He will put on socks and with a stick in one hand will take a bow in the other. The holy Brahmin will recite the mathnaw^.” Similarly in the Punjab many themes and stories of Iran were assimilated in the Punjab literature.

When Akbar got Sanskrit works translated into Persian, the frontiers of Persian language were further widened and Persian became the language of all Indian religions. Mahabharat Ramayan, Atharban, Haribas, etc. were rendered into Persian by the scholars of Akbar’s court. It was through D^r^ Shukoh’s Persian translation that the philosophy of Upanishads was introduced to Europe.

“Sufism”, remarks Shaikh Ali Hujwiri, “is too exalted to have any genus from which it might be derived.” Notwithstanding the fact that mysticism has no genealogy and that the mystical attitude was developed in all regions, languages and religions of the world, the Sufi ideology and institutions in Islam were nurtured in Iran. South Asia imbibed these metaphysical and ontological concepts from Iran and its mystical thought rotated within the perimeters laid down by the Iranian thinkers. Ideology apart, even the organization of khanqah life was largely determined by the Sufis of Iran. Shaikh Abu Said Abul Khair, Shaikh Saif al-Din Bakharzi and Shaikh Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi had taken a momentous decision to transform the mystic discipline, which had hitherto remained confined to individual spiritual salvation, into a movement for mass spiritual culture. Iran provided drift and direction, animation and ardor to this effort. Organization of khanqah life, principles of spiritual training and demarcation of areas of spiritual jurisdiction (walayats) were the crucial matters and once their details were worked
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out, the mystic movement entered a new phase and vast areas became available for
the proliferation of Sufi ideology and institutions.

Shaikh Abd al-Qahir Abu Najib Suhrawardi laid down rules regarding pir-murid
relationships in his adab al-Muridin. His nephew Shaikh Shihab al-Din
Suhrawardi gave in 'Awarif al-Ma'arif a complete code for the organization of
khanqahs. Shaikh Farid al-Din Ganj-i Shakar who was anxious to transform
mystic disciplines into a mass movement taught 'Awarif to his senior disciples and
prepared its summary. The 'awarif became widely popular when its Persian
translations were made and mystics of all silsilahs turned to it as manual of
guidance. At a time when the concept of walayat was being worked out as silsilahs
were taking shape, it served a great need of the time. The earliest Persian
translation, as could be expected, was made at Multan by Qasim Daud Khatib
during the time of Shaikh Baha al-Din Zakariya, a distinguished khalifa of Shaikh
Shihab al-Din. Qasim Daud's aim, as he himself says, was to make it available to
a large circle of people so that they could act upon it. Another early translation of
'Awarif was made by Shaikh 'Abdur Rahman b. Ali Buzghush whose father was a
disciple of Shaikh Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi. Long before 'Izz al-Din Mahmud
Kashani (d.1334) prepared a Persian recension of 'Awarif al-Ma'arif under the
title Mishah al-Hidaya wa Miftah al-Kifayah, the ideas of Shaikh Shihab al-Din
Suhrawardi had become popularly known in the Sufi circles of South Asia and
khanqahs were organized on the foundational principles enunciated in 'Awarif.

With the effective organization of khanqahs, it became possible for the saints of
different silsilahs to carry forward their programs of mass spiritual culture.

A number of mystic silsilahs flourished in South Asia during the medieval period.
Abul Fazl gives a list of fourteen orders which have worked in India. Some of the
important saints of these silsilahs either belonged to Iran or had spent some time
in the Sufi centers of Iran. Before he entered India, Khwaja Mu'in al-Din Chishti, the
renowned founder of the Chishti order in India, had spent considerable time in the company of Sufi saints in Iran. The founder of the Suhrawardi order in India, Shaikh Baha al-Din Zakariya, was a disciple of Shaikh Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi and the spiritual guide of Iraqi. The founder of the Firdausi order in India, Shaikh Badr al-Din Samarqandi, was a disciple of Shaikh Saif al-Din Bakharzi who was a friend of Maulana Jalal al-Din Rumi’s father. Makhdum Muhammad Gilani, who popularized the Qadiri order in India, had for years travelled in Iran and Khurasan.

Khwaja Baqi Billah, founder of the Naqshbandi order in India, was born in Kabul and had spent considerable time in Mawara al-Nahr (Transoxiana) and Balkh. The Shattari silsilah, which traced its origin to Shaikh Bayazid Taifur Bistami and was known in Iran as Tariqa-i ‘Ishqiya, came direct from Iran. Its pioneer saint in India was Shah ‘Abdullah Shattari who lies buried in Mandu. Shaikh Muhammad Ghauth, an outstanding Shaikh of the Shattari order, translated Amrit Kund into Persian under the title of Bahr al-Hayat. The way Shaikh Muhammad Ghauth has used Muslim mystic terminology to communicate Hindu mystical concepts is most striking. He was in a way a precursor of Dara Shukoh, whose majma’ al-Bahrain is an expression of the same attitude which inspired Shaikh Muhammad Ghauth.

The organization of silsilahs in India made the dissemination of Sufi ideology easier. Itineracy being a part of the mystic discipline in those days, itinerant Sufis from Iran and India carried mystic traditions from one country to another. Delhi, Lahore, Multan and Ajodhan were connected with the mystic centers of Iran and Central Asia. ‘Ir^q^ of Hamadan joined the circle of Shaikh Baha al-Din Zakariya’s disciples in Multan and brought to India Ibn ‘Arab^’s pantheistic philosophy, which he had learned at the feet of Shaikh Sadr al-Din Qunavi. Through Khwaja Qutb al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki who hailed from Aush, a great Hallaji center, pantheistic ideas of Ahmad Jam found currency in the mystic circles of Delhi.
Both mystic thought and experience derive their sustenance from cosmic emotion ('ishq), which is embedded in the psyche of Iran. It was cosmic emotion that wove the essential features of Sufi soul movement into the texture of Iranian thought. Since mystic experiences could not be explained in plain language, the Sufi poets adopted the language of symbols for the communication of their ideas. Abu Sa'id Abul Khair, Sana'i, 'Attar and Rumi planted the symbolist tradition in Iran and Indian Sufis drew inspiration from them. Iqbal was so deeply influenced by Rumi that according to Sa'id Na'ficy he revived the "symbolist traditions with magnificent results." In India the Sufi tradition developed under the symbolist rather than the impressionist trends in Iran.

The poetical works of Shaikh Abu Sa'id Abul Khair (d.1049), Khwaja 'Abdul'lah Ansari (d.1088), San'a' (d.1131), Ahmad F'm (d.1142), Niz'm Ganjav (d.1209), 'Attar (d. 1229), Shaikh Saif al-Din Bakharzi (d. 1259), Rumi (d.1273), 'Iraqi (d. 1289) Sa'adi (d.1292), Shaikh Awhad al-Din Kirmai (d.1237), Hafiz (d.1389) and Jami (d.1492) supplied a warm fund of emotions to Indian Sufis and provided those moral and ethical ideals which became the elan of the Sufi movement in South Asia. The mystic literature produced in India during the last 800 years or so is replete with extracts from the works of these poets. Many of their verses have been accepted as epitomes of ideal behavior and have assumed the significance of proverbs based on unimpeachable human experience.

Iqbal has remarked in his Development of Metaphysics in Persia that the secret of vitality of Sufism is the complete view of human nature upon which it is based. A mystic teacher, therefore, needed nafs-i gir (intuitive intelligence) and psychological insight to make his efforts at moral and spiritual regeneration of man and society really effective. Apart from inculcating love of God, the Sufis strove hard to strengthen the moral fiber of man by drawing him to futuwwat
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(generosity and manliness). The mystic poetry of Iran consequently became a powerful vehicle for the dissemination of these ideas.

Looked at from this angle, Shaikh Abu Sa'id Abul Khair was a powerful influence on Indian mind. He captured the imagination of Indian Sufis by his quatrains vibrating with emotions of human love and sympathy. Shaikh Nizam al-Din Awliya', in particular, derived his mystic ideas and social ethics from him. His faith that real human happiness lies in large-hearted tolerance, compassion and good will towards all human beings was based on the teachings of Shaikh Abu Sa'id. He frequently recited these verses in support of his views:

Har-ki mara ranja darad, rahatash bisiyar bad
Har-ki ma ra yar nabvad, Izad 'u ra yar bad
Har-ki andar rah-i ma khari nahad az dushmani
Har guli kaz bagh-i 'umrash bishkufad bi-khar bad.

(He who nurses ill-will against me may his joys (in life) increase,
He who is not my friend, may God be his friend,
He who puts thorn in my way on account of enmity,
May every flower that blossoms in the garden of his life be without thorns.)

The Indian Sufis derived from Shaikh Abu Sa'id’s teachings the following principles of mystic morality:

1) Concern for the welfare of man as the summum bonum of mystic ethics.

2) Harmony in social relations as the basis of individual and collective happiness.
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3) Ways of dealing with cognition, feeling and volition with a view to reforming human behavior.

4) Treating all living beings man and animal with equal affection.

5) Emphasis on cultivation of cosmic emotion in preference to intellectual pursuit.

6) Superiority of moral and ethical life over academic achievement.

7) Determinism and free will extent and implications.

Inspired by Shaikh Abu Sa‘id’s teachings, Shaikh Nizam al-Din Awliya’ advised his followers to reform human responses at the stage of cognition. This was the surest way to bring about change in human character. Further he believed that a man with vast human sympathies alone understood the divine purpose of life. He admired Shaikh Abu Sa‘id’s benevolent attitude towards all living beings, men and animals. Shaikh Abu Sa‘id once saw a man beating his bull and cried out in agony as if he himself was being beaten.

Again inspired by the example of Shaikh Abu Sa‘id Abul Khair, Shaikh Nizam al-Din Awliya’ told his disciples that a morally autonomous personality was superior to an intellectual prodigy. He cited the following incident of Shaikh Abu Sa‘id’s life. One day Bu Ali Sina visited khanqah of Shaikh Abu Sa‘id. He instructed an acquaintance to report to him the Shaikh’s impression about him after he had left. The Shaikh on being asked by the person said: “Bu Ali is a philosopher, a physician and a man of vast learning, but he is devoid of moral qualities (makarim-i akhlaq nadarad).” On hearing this Bu Ali Sina wrote to the Shaikh that he had written several books on ethics. “How do you say that I do not have moral qualities?” The saint smiled and said:

*Man na-gufte-am ki Bu Ali makarim-i akhlaq na-danad; bal gufte-am ki na-darad.*
(I did not say that B^ Ali does not know ethical qualities; I said that he does not possess them.)

In fact, Shaikh Abu Sa’6d and Khwaja ‘Abdullah Ansari, popularly known as Pir-i Hari, supplied elan and motive power to the Muslim mystic activity in India. Pir-i Hari’s risalahs sowed the seeds of later mystical didactic epic poems; his quatrains propagated mystic concepts as ideals of human behavior; his Tabaqat al-Sufiya laid the foundation of biographical studies of Sufi saints, while his Munajat provided fire and fervor to Sufi invocation gatherings. In his foreword to Sardar Jogendra Singh’s English translation of Munajat, Gandhiji appreciated him as one of the best minds of all the religions of the world.

Shaikh Abu Sa’id and Pir-i-Hari gave a revolutionary dimension to Sufi weltanschauung by defining the purpose of religious devotions in terms of the service of mankind. Countless genuflexions of prayer and endless fasts, they said, could not give divine significance to life, if not accompanied by deep and abiding concern for the welfare of man. They emphasized that life dedicated to social service was of greater value than pious contemplation in seclusion. Shaikh Mu’in al-Din Chishti’s definition of devotion (ta’at) as:

\[ \text{Providing redress to the destitute, fulfilling the needs of the downtrodden and feeding the poor} \]

Shaikh Nizam al-Din Awliya’s classification of devotion into ta’at-i lazmi and ta’at-muta’addi are, in fact, echoes of the same spirit. Bibi Fatimah Sam, a distinguished mystic woman of the thirteenth century, demonstrated the working of these principles in her life and shared her piece of bread with neighbors in straitened circumstances.
An early Persian poet whose poetry influenced Indian mystics at the emotional level was Shaikh Ahmad Jam. Shaikh Qutb al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki breathed his last listening to his verses.

Sana'i presented mysticism as a philosophy of life. His diwan and Hadigah were popular studies in India. The Hadigah was read both in khanqahs and the courts of the kings. Shaikh Nasir al-Din Chiragh of Delhi referred to Sana'i's life as a model of spiritual excellence. He invited people absorbed in materialistic pursuits to the realm of spirit by reciting the following verse of Sana'i:

\[Ay \text{ ki Shanudi sifat-i Rüm-o Chin} \]
\[Khiz-o biya mulk-i Sana'i be-bin\]

(O' you who have heard of the glories of Rome and China; Rise and behold the realm of Sana'i.)

Shaikh Saif al-Din Bakharzi's remark that Sana'i's verses made him a real Muslim, were often cited in the mystic circles of Delhi. Shaikh Nizam al-Din Awliya' approvingly quoted the following supplication of shaikh Saif al-Din Bakharzi:

\[Ay-kash mara bad anfa barad ki khak-i sana'i-st, ya khak-i 'a biyarad ki man surmeh kunam.\]

(O' that some gale might take me to where Sana'i lies buried, or that it might bring his dust to me to put in my eyes.)

During the time of Shah Jahan, 'Abdul Laffi 'Abbasi wrote a commentary on Hadigah under the Laa'if al-Hada'iq. From the time of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Awliya' to the days of Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, Sana'i has been a powerful influence on Indo-Muslim religious thought. Iqbal's Shikwa, Iblis Ki Majlis-i Shura etc. at
once takes one’s mind to Sana’i’s “Lament of Satan.” Unlike many contemporary mystics, Sana’i did not think of knowledge as hijab-i akbar (the greater curtain preventing the vision of Reality). He, however, rejected over-intellectualism and defined the purpose of knowledge (‘ilm) clearly and thoughtfully. According to him Sufism was an appeal to a higher source of knowledge.

Khwaja Farid al-Din ‘Attar’s Mantiq al-Tayr and Tadhkirat al-Awlîya’ were avidly read in the Sufi circles of Delhi. The Mantiq al-Tayr provided an interesting excursion in the realm of the spirit and its symbolic approach inspired others to undertake similar works. Zia Nakhshabi’s Tūfî Namah and Namûs-i Akbar seem inspired by ‘Attar’s technique. His Pand Namah was for centuries included in the syllabus of madrassahs and its sentences passed into aphorisms. ‘Attar became a symbol of catholicity of thought and liberal tradition. His following verse was inscribed in the temples of Kashmir and was recited in the khana’îhs of Delhi as a veritable expression of the cosmopolitan spirit:

Kufr kafer ra-o din din-dar ra
Zarre-yî dardî dil-i ‘Allot ra

Iraqi was another dynamic figure whose verses provided moral and spiritual animation to the Sufi movement in India. His Lama’at captured the imagination of intellectuals; his diwan fascinated the Sufis. His ‘Ushshaq Namah traverses the same path of cosmic emotion that R^m^ has covered with greater artistic deftness and symbolistic vigor. His concept of ego and his emphasis on self-respect, resignation and contentment inspired Khusrau, ‘Urﬁ and Iqbal. Iqbal was, in particular, deeply impressed by a risalah of ‘Iraqi, Ghayat al-Imkan fi Warayat al-Makan, which contains striking modern concepts. He interpreted, remarks Iqbal, “his spiritual experience of time and space in an age which had no idea of the theories and concepts of modern mathematics and physics.”
With Rumi’s Mathnawi the impact of Iranian Sufi traditions on South Asia touched its highest watermark. No mystic writer before or after him has succeeded in portraying soul movement and its subtle, inexpressible experiences with such perception and delicate sensitivity. Rumi believed in the creative urge of the self and visualized a long and unending process of its evolution and growth. He had a philosophy of life, a vision of moral and spiritual needs of man and society, a fine spiritual sensibility and a powerful imagination that made his delineation of delicate spiritual experiences a magical performance. In fact, he provided a picture gallery of mystic ideas and images. In India he was first quoted by Shaikh Nasîr al-Din Chiragh, a disciple of Shaikh Nizam al-Din Awliya’. In subsequent years the mystics were so enamored of his Mathnawi that they taught it to their disciples, heard it in their audition parties and expounded mystic ideas to their audience in the light of the anecdotes given in it. It provided a powerful technique to communicate mystic ideas symbolically. Akbar remembered by heart a large number of poems from the Mathnawi and enjoyed reciting them. Significantly, Rumi has selected some stories that are of Indian origin and there are many words in the Mathnawi that are common to Persian and Hindi, as ‘Abdul Latif ‘Abbasi (d.1648) has pointed out in his glossary of Mathnawi, the Lata’if al-Lughat. I may refer, incidentally, to only two references to India in the Mathnawi. God thus speaks in the Mathnawi:

“In the Hindus the idiom of Hind (India) is praiseworthy,

In the Sindians the idiom of Sind is praiseworthy

I look not at the tongue and the speech

I look at the inward [spirit] and the state of feeling.”

At another phase Rumi says:
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He whose adversary is his own shadow is not safe either in India or Khutan."

These verses reveal Rumi’s assessment of India. It is interesting to find that in Rumi’s mind the Indian animal elephant was a symbol of nostalgic remembrance. At several places in the Mathnawi he says:

_Pil chun dar khab binad Hind ra_

When the elephant dreams of India).

_or,

_Zan-ki pil-am did Hindustan bi-khab_

(Because my elephant dreamed of India).

Shams Tabrizi was perhaps the first to present the Indian elephant in that way. He said:

_Dūsh amad pil-i ma ra baz Hindustan bi-khab_

_Pardi-yi shab mi-darid 'ū az junūn te bāmadād_

(Last night our elephant dreamed of India again

(Tearing madly at the curtain of night till the morn.)

The Indian Sufis drew inspiration from Rumi’s moral and ethical ideals and admired his cult of Ishq (cosmic emotion), but an integrated approach to his work on which could be based integration of individual personality and regeneration of human society was still far off. It was left to Iqbal to turn to Rumi for inspiration and guidance for this purpose. Iqbal’s philosophy his concept of khud^2^, his ideal of human excellence, his spiritual goals were all determined by R^m^2. Iqbal
proudly calls himself a 'disciple of Rumi'. Throughout the centuries, no one in India has been so deeply inspired by the Mathnawi as Iqbal was and none has fathomed the depth of Rumi’s thought as minutely as Iqbal did. Emotionally speaking, Indian Sufis have always been in the domain of Rumi. A number of commentaries were compiled, particularly noteworthy being those of Muhammad Afzal Allahabadi, Wali Muhammad, Maulana 'Abdul Ali Bahr al-'Ulûm, Muhammad Razi, Mirza Muhammad Nazîr Arshi, Maulana Ahmad Husain Kanpûrî and Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi. The writer of these lines has two very interesting manuscripts of Mathnawi. One is a thematic summary made by Muhammad b. Dost Muhammad, a disciple of Khwaja Obeidullah Ahrar and another summary belonging to Shah Waliullah of Delhi with marginal notes by Abu Raza.

While interest in Mathnawi was unabated throughout the centuries, it was Iqbal who found in Rumi a real guide in the arduous task of resurrecting the individual and the community. Iqbal saw Rumi in his imaginary excursion to the other world addressing him as zinda rûd (living stream). Inspired by Rumi’s symbolic imagery, Iqbal adopted shahîn as his symbol for selfless and persistent effort to achieve the goal and for hitching wagons to the stars. If there is any truth in Arnold’s remark that noble and profound application of ideas to life is the most essential part of poetic greatness, Sa’âdi and Rumi may undoubtedly be ranked among the great poets of all time.

Not marble nor the gilded monuments

Of princes shall outlive this powerful rhyme.

Muslim mystics of Iran looked at the Ultimate Reality from different angles, as self-conscious Will, as Beauty, as Light and as Thought. All these trends are reflected in the Indo-Muslim religious thought. The symbols captured the
imagination and preserved concepts otherwise abstruse and difficult to comprehend. Shaikh Shihab al-Din Suhrwardi Maqtul’s (d.1191) Hikmat al-Ishraq deeply influenced religio-philosophic thought. Who can say that his Awaz-i Par-i Jibril did not suggest to Iqbal the title of his collection of poems Bal-i Jibril (Gabriel’s Wing). Suhrwardi presented human soul as an element of 'light' (nūr) and God as 'light of lights (nūr al-anwar) and used color and light as symbols of spiritual development. Seyyed Hossein Nasr’s thought provoking study of Bu Ali Sīna, Suhrwardi and Ibn ‘Arabi is most helpful in fathoming the depth and impact of the thought of these three sages. Ishraqi ideas reached India through the pupils of Mulla Sadra, particularly Mir Baqer Damad. Shaikh Mubarak, Mir Fathullah Shirazi, Abul Fazl and Faizi and a few others became ardent advocates of Ishraqi philosophy. ‘Abd al-Nabi Shattari (d.1611) wrote a commentary on Hikmat al-Ishraq under the rubric Rūh al-Arwah. The author of Anwariya was a relation of the author of Tabaqat-i Akbari.

The thought of Ikhwan al-Safa became a significant factor in the intellectual life of India during the time of Akbar. It was in a way a recycling of the ideas which were articulating through Kalīla wa Dimna. Akbar got a Persian version of Ikhwan prepared at his court. Rejection of denominationalism, faith in evolutionary concepts, astral influences, millenary ideas came from Ikhwan. Some of the concepts of Ikhwan were echoed in the A’in-i Akbari.

Though lesser in impact and influence, the Nuqtawi movement of Iran also exercised some influence on religious thought in India. The Nuqtawi ideas spread in India through Sharīf Amuli, Tashbīhi of Kashan, Wuqū’ī of Nishapūr. It appears from Tarikh-i ‘Alam ara-i ‘Abbasi that Akbar had contact with Mir Syed Ahmad Kashi.

Semasiological study of mystical terms with their subtle and fluctuating connotations in Iran and India is an interesting field for investigation and analysis.
In Akbar’s time Shaikh Muhammad Ghauth had made an earnest effort to transfer Hindu mystical concepts into Muslim mystical parlance. Shaikh ahmad Sirhindi was perhaps unique in fixing sharp, clear and penetrating connotation of mystic terms in the light of Islamic mystical concepts. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Indian semantics saw subtle clashes arising out of ideological backgrounds of terms flowing from Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian sources. However, some concepts were from the very beginning differently understood in India and Iran. For instance, the following observations by Shaikh Ali Hujwiri, the author of Kashf al-Mahjūb, about fana (annihilation) and baqa (subsistence) are significant:

Some wrongly imagine that annihilation signifies loss of essence and destruction of personality, and that subsistence indicates the subsistence of God in man; both these notions are absurd. In India I had a dispute on this subject with a man who claimed to be versed in Koranic exegesis and theology. When I examined his pretensions I found that he knew nothing of annihilation and subsistence, and that he could not distinguish the eternal from the phenomenal.

Mansūr Hallaj is a seminal figure in the history of religious thought. His works were mainly in Arabic but he was born in Iran and had visited many countries, including India. It was through Persian works that his ideas reached Indian mystics. He came to be regarded as an embodiment of the principles underlying the pantheistic philosophy. Opinion about him was, however, divided. The earliest Persian work to refer to him is the Kashf al-Mahjūb of Shaikh Ali Hujwiri who firmly held the view that “it would be an act of dishonesty to omit his biography in any mystical work. He quotes Shibli, who is reported to have observed: “Al-Hallaj and I are of one belief, but my madness saved me, while his intelligence destroyed him.” Hujwiri refers to his fifty works which he found in Baghdad and other places. Though he considered him an ecstatic (maghlūb andar hal-i khud), he
“derived much support from him” and even wrote a book in deference to his views. In one of his books entitled Minhaj, now extinct, Hujwiri gave a biological sketch of Hallaj. Though Hujwiri seems deeply impressed by Hallaj and Kashf al-Mahjûb was a popular study in medieval India, the attitude of Chishti and Suhrawardi saints towards Hallaj was one of caution. They feared lest his pantheistic utterances led to moral confusion. During the time of Firuz Shah Tughluq all those mystics who were inspired by Hallaji thought, Mas‘ûd Bak, Ahmad Bihari, Rukn al-Din and others, were charged with heresy and executed. Even as late as seventeenth century the state dealt strictly with Hallaji trends. The execution of Sarmad at the orders of Aurangzeb indicates the same attitude of disagreement with the views of Hallaj. Professor Louis Massignon once told me that his research suggests that Aush, where Khwaja Qutb al-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki was born, was a Hallaji center and a focal point for the spread of pantheistic ideas in India. His friend and associate Qazi Hamid al-Din Nagauri was also keenly interested in the thought of Hallaj. His Risala-i ‘Ishqiya bears an indelible stamp of Hallaji thought. As I have shown elsewhere, Hallaj’s works were widely read in Chishti mystic circles. Hallaj’s execution became a symbol of sacrifice for the sake of freedom of thought and poets found no better expression of communicating the spirit of sacrifice for a cause than the episode of Mansûr Hallaj. Iqbal found in his thought many elements of permanent value. In Javid Namah he presents Hallaj as a dynamic force revealing secrets of khudi. In Zabur-i ‘Ajam he depicts Hallaj along with Shankar and seems to suggest that he was inspired by vedantic philosophy. In his Metaphysics of Persia he presents Mansûr’s slogan “I am God” as an echo of Indian Vedantist’s Aham Brahma Asmi. In his Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam and in Javid Namah he emphasized the originality of his thought and his greatness as a thinker.

“In the history of religious experience in Islam, which, according to the Prophet, consists in the ‘creation of Divine attributes in Man’, this experience has found
expression in such phrases as 'I am the creative truth' (Hallaj), 'I am time' (Muhammad), 'I am the speaking Qur’an' (Ali), 'Glory to me' (Bayazid)," observes Iqbal.

While Hallaj’s ideological influence remained confined to higher mystic intellects, the impact of Imam Ghazzali was more widespread. His Kîmiya-i Sa’adat became a popular study throughout South Asia. Its passages were read out daily in some mystic centers. Though for all practical purposes it is a Persian recension of Ihya al-Ulûm, the religious circles in India undertook to translate Ihya into Persian. During the time of Iltutmîsh, Muaiyid Jajarmi translated it into Persian. Unique in the comprehensiveness of its approach and incomparable in its psycho-ethical analysis of the basic religious situations, the Kîmiya became a manual of guidance for the Indo-Muslim society. Ghazzali had himself been a student of Greek philosophy and as he confesses in his al-Mungidh min al-Zalal was greatly disillusioned by philosophy. He came to believe in the efficacy of ‘cosmic emotion’ which could unravel the mysteries of nature and give that solace and peace of mind which human soul longed for. His approach appealed to those also who believed in the supremacy of reason and thus its impact was felt on a wide scale.

The Kashf al-Mahjûb consolidates mystic ideas as they had developed in Iran and Central Asia up to the eleventh century. The author had personal contact with many eminent mystic teachers like Hasan Khuttali and Abul Qasim Gurgani. Dara Shukoh considers Kashf al-Mahjûb as the first book on mysticism written in Persian. This may or may not be correct, but it is a fact that Kashf al-Mahjûb exercised tremendous influence on contemporary and later religious thought, not only in India but in Iran also. Jami quotes from it extensively in his Nafahat al-'Una. In India Shaikh Nizam al-Din Awliya’ used to say that for one who had no spiritual mentor, Kashf al-Mahjûb was enough to guide.
At the purely intellectual level it was Ibn `Arabi (d.1240) who dominated the scene. Though his works were in Arabic, it was mainly through Persian channels that his ideas found currency in India. The key and kernel of Ibn `Arabi’s thought is pantheism, the earliest exposition of which is found in the Upanishads. It was thus a recycling of ideas that had originally traveled from India under different rubrics. The pantheistic philosophy provided an ideological bridge between Islam and Hinduism. Though commentaries on Ibn `Arabi’s works were written in India by Syed Ali Hamadani of Kashmir, Ali Piru Mahaimi of Gujurat and others, the ideas of Ibn `Arabi fascinated the Indian Sufis when `Iraqi and Rumi prepared the ground for their reception. Mas’ud Bak’s Diwan as well as his Mir’at al-`Arifin reflect the influence of Ibn `Arabi. Shah Muhibullah of Allhabad wrote commentaries on Ibn `Arabi’s works both in Arabic and in Persian. From the sixteenth century onward enormous literature appeared in India on the mystical ideas of Ibn `Arabi. Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindī’s criticism of pantheism gave a temporary set-back to this trend, but when Shah waliullah attempted a reconciliation between the thought of Ibn `Arabi and Sirhindī pantheistic ideas again became a force in the mystic sphere.

In the propagation of Ibn `Arabi’s mystical thought Mahmūd Shabistāri’s Gulshan-i Raz also played a very important role.

One of the most distinguished Persian Sufis who was a very enthusiastic advocate of Ibn `Arabi’s ideas was ‘Abdur Rahman Jami (d.1492). His literary works and his mystical ideas were well known in India during his lifetime. Mahmūd Gawan corresponded with him and Jami created in him an interest in Ibn `Arabi’s thought. The last great mystic itinerant who visited Iran was Maulana Fazlullah, better known as Jamali. His meeting with Maulana Jami at Harat was a historic event. Due to long and arduous travels, Jamali had no clothes on his body when he entered the majlis of Maulana Jami. Jami was a bit displeased when he saw a
beggar-looking visitor sat near him regardless of the dust and the dirt that had enveloped his body. When Jami came to know about his Indian origin, he asked him if he knew Jamali. Jamali recited the verse

\[
\text{Ma ra za khak-i ktiyat, pirahani-st bar tan}
\]

\[
\text{an ham za ab-i dideh, sad chak ta bi-daman}
\]

(I have on my body a garment made of the dust of your lane,
And that too tears have torn into hundreds of pieces.)

and as those verses ran on his lips tears trickled down his cheeks and rolled on his body piercing the garment of dust. Jami stood up excited, embraced him with mixed feelings of surprise, love and embarrassment. This meeting between Jami and Jamali was in fact a historic meeting between mystic traditions of India and Iran. Jami had written Nafahat al-'Uns to popularize the great mystics of Islam and their teachings; Jamali wrote Siyar al-'Arifin on his return, perhaps inspired by Jami and after him compilation of mystic tadhkirahs gathered momentum in India.

The ethical and moral ideas enunciated by Persian masters like Sa'adi, 'Attar, Rûmi, Sana'i and 'Iraqi became the inspiring motive of the lives of the Indian saints. Taken as a whole, the Persian Sufi ideas and traditions supplied to Muslim mystical movement in South Asia its motive power, its driving force, its ideals and its goals.

**CODE MIXING IN MAHFIL-E-SAMA**

Samā' is probably the most controversial practice of the Sufis and many legal scholars have criticised it severely. In discussing the legal approaches to samā', Arthur Gribetz has noted that the relationship of Islamic law to music and poetry has always been ambivalent. This attitude is naturally projected into samā'. The
opponents of sama’, the Hanbalite jurist Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 1200) foremost among them, have seen the references of Qur’an to the amusement [23:3,53:61], excitement through voice [17:64] and idle talk [31:5] as references to singing and music. Also the poets are treated with contempt as people who lead others astray. Moreover, a hadith, in which Ibn ’Umar blocks his ears when he hears the sound of a mizmār (reed pipe) and thus claims to follow the example of the Prophet, is construed as a proof for prohibiting music. None of the Qur’anic passages mentions specifically music or singing, and selective interpretation is used by the proponents of sama’ as well. The Qur’an declares that God has distinguished what is legal and what is not [6:119], and since there is no mention of music, it is obviously allowed. Also listening to the Word of God is interpreted as listening to music and poetry. Likewise, al-Ghazālī (d. 1111) interprets the mizmār hadith not to prohibit music but demonstrate only that the Prophet was disturbed by the playing of mizmār at that instance. To prove his case, he adds that the Prophet had not unambiguously forbidden Ibn ’Umar from listening to music. The legal argumentation has never managed to create a conclusion, which would convince both the opponents and proponents of sama’. Rather, the legal discussions have been characterised by the subjectivity of interpretation. Arthur Gribetz takes the difference of Ibn Taymiyya’s (d. 1328) and al-Ghazālī’s views as an illustrative example. The former declared sama’ forbidden because it was not specifically referred to in Qur’an and Sunna, while the latter declared, for exactly the same reason, that there was no basis on which sama’ could be proclaimed illegal.

One fact, on which both the proponents and opponents of sama’ have agreed is that a beautiful voice has a strong influence on a human being. Opponents of course perceived this influence as undesirable, while the Sufis utilised it in their religious life. A hadith cited by almost all the proponents of sama’ is the report of a black camel driver who with his beautiful voice was able to lure camels carry such a weighty load that they would die under it. This hadith is found in most
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early Sufi manuals. These manuals concentrated largely on the legal ramifications of sama'. Qushayri (d. 1074), for example, takes in his Risāla great pains to define the legality of sama' in order to ascertain the limits of its permissibility. Also Kitāb al-Luma' fi'l-ta awwuf by al-Sarraj (d. 988) and Iḥyā' Ulūm al-Dīn by al-Ghazālī concentrate on the legal aspects. In addition to legal discussion, these two texts show a growing interest in the spiritual benefits of sama'. Al-Sarraj perceives sama' as a technique, which during the moments of heightened awareness can produce a spiritual experience in the listener's heart. This experience is a grace or revelation from the divine realm. Al-Ghazālī differs from this approach in stating that sama' brings forth the divine secrets already contained in the heart; it is not an experience coming from outside but a revelation from within. The attitude of al-Ghazālī is apparently moulded by the Pythagorean and Neo-Platonic thought of the music as an awakener of the memory of the celestial harmonies the soul heard in pre-existence. The Qur'anic support for this idea of souls' divine pre-existences is the passage on the primordial covenant between God and the souls. God asked the souls before they were created into the bodily existence “Am I not your Lord?” (7:172). The voice of God the souls heard was the most beautiful voice and consequently they hear echoes of this voice in all the beautiful voices. Thus, every beautiful voice reminds the souls of their divine origin and the time they were with their Beloved.

It should be noted that most of the above mentioned writers were very cautious in their advocacy of sama'. This attitude crystallises in Hujvīrī's (d. 1071) Kashf al-Mahjūb. He warns against the dangers sama' could pose to the uninitiated listeners and quotes approvingly words of shaykh who told him that one day listening to music would beto him like croaking of a raven. Though Hujvīrī admits sama' only instrumental value in the early stages of mystical path, he also reveals though abashedly that he himself likes to listen to mystical music. An early Sufi and enthusiastic proponent of sama' was the younger brother of al-Ghazālī, Ahmad al-
Ghazālī (d. 1126). He is polemical against the critique directed towards the practice and devotes almost half of his Bawāriq al-ʿIlmaʾ to the refutation of the arguments of the opponents of samāʾ. After the refutation he declares that samāʾ is necessary to the people of knowledge. It is not an assigned duty of the Sufi disciples, but is admissible to them as they are aspiring lovers. The strong advocacy of his work is a rare example among the early Sufi treatises, and it is noteworthy that Ahmad al-Ghazālī’s spiritual descendants, Abū Najīb and Abū Hafṣ ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī, followed the ideas of more reserved al-Qushayrī and al-Sarrāj.

All the Sufis were not, however, interested in the legal aspects of samāʾ and discussing its potential dangers. Instead, they laid more emphasis on its value in the mystical path. Foremost of these masters was Abū Saʿīd ibn Abīʿl-Khayr (d. 1049). He left behind no writings, but his life is exceptionally well documented in two biographies completed in about hundred years after the master’s death. The significance of Abū Saʿīd lies in his impact in Persian becoming the language of Sufism in the eastern Islamic areas and in the integration of anti-legalistic and blame incurring tendencies to Sufism in those areas. Terry Graham notes that even greater contribution was the institutionalisation of the khānqāh, Sufi lodge. This is also central to the development of samāʾ, since this practice was an integral part of the religious practices in Abū Saʿīd’s khānqāh. Moreover, the master conceived samāʾ beneficial for the novices as well. Other masters allowed listening to mystical music only to the elect, but Abū Saʿīd permitted even the beginners in the mystical path take part in the mystical concerts. He saw, for example, that it is better to let the music rule the bodies of the youths instead of their desires. Abū Saʿīd was not very concerned with the legal discussions on samāʾ; to him the benefits accrued from the practice were the greatest argument for it. He emphasised the role of samāʾ in the mystic’s progress and its capability to bring him closer to the Beloved. According to Graham, the practice was one form of
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worship to him. Abu Sa'id also adopted ghazals and quatrains in Persian as the principal texts to be performed by the reciters. Ernst and Lawrence point out that the role of sama among the Sufi practices became more pronounced when different Sufi paths or orders (tarîqa, pl. turuq) were founded since the 13th century. Certain Sufi orders, notably Mevleviyya and Chishtiyya, adopted sama as a central practice. After founding the orders, sama was not anymore an idiosyncratic practice of individual masters but it spread widely as an institutionalised part of the Sufi orders. The congregational nature of sama assemblies made it a heated topic of debates.

SAMA' IN INDIA

Islam became a permanent part of the religious landscape of South Asia only after the founding of the Sufi orders. The Ghaznavid Empire held sway over parts of the modern Punjab since the 11th century. Many Muslims were, however, born outside India and had migrated there later on. More stable Islamic state was founded only in the early years of the 13th century by a general of the invading Ghurid troops, Qutb al-Din Aibak. The founder of the Indian Chishtiyya, Khwaja Moîmuddin (d. 1236), arrived to India in the wake of the Ghurid conquest and sama was to become a central feature of the Chishti practice. Ernst and Lawrence note that the emphasis on sama also served to separate the Chishti order from their rival order, Suhrawardiyya, in the Delhi sultanate.

In analysing the 14th and 15th century texts of Chishti writers, Ernst and Lawrence note that there is a clear difference in tone to the earlier writings. While earlier treatises, discussed above, emphasised the legal limitations of sama and were overtly cautious in their advocacy of the practice, the Chishti theoreticians propagate a full fledged utilisation of sama. They do not want to limit this practice for a small group of selected people, but consider it beneficial to the beginners as well. On the other hand, they do not consider sama either as a
practice of little importance, which an advanced Sufi could abandon, as e.g. Faujdar had written. The main contribution of the early Chishti writers is, according to Ernst and Lawrence, connecting the three grades of ecstasy with three classes of listeners. Both, the three categories of ecstasy empathetic ecstasy, momentary ecstasy and durative ecstasy and the three classes of listeners uninitiated listener, mature listener and perfected listener were discussed earlier by the non-Indian Sufis. Into a single theoretical construction they were conflated only in the circle of Khwaja Nizamuddin, most notably by Fakhr al-Din Zaraddi in his Arabic U al-Sama'. In the early Chishti treatises the empathetic ecstasy was attributed to the uninitiated listener, momentary and durative ecstasy to the mature and perfected listeners respectively. The significance of this theory is that the empathetic ecstasy, tawajud, is conceived as an important threshold experience of the Sufi path. The hadith often used in supporting the empathetic ecstasy is the injunction of the Prophet that the believers should weep or at least try to weep, when they recite the Qur'an. Similarly, in sama', the uninitiated listener should try to experience the ecstasy, wajd, of the perfected listeners, if they cannot experience it themselves. The theory of three kinds of ecstasies connected with three kinds of listeners also implies that sama' is important to the perfected listeners, not only to the beginners.

Ernst and Lawrence note that there is a clear change in the attitudes of the theoretical writings of the Chishtis in relation to the earlier treatises of non-Indian writers. The tone in advocating sama' is more daring and the practice is considered potentially more beneficial than dangerous. The Chishti writers also find new ways to trace the legal basis of sama'. Ashraf Jahangir Simnani quotes the adith qudsi "He who is hostile to the saint of mine has come against me in warfare" and combines it with a list of saints, who died while listening to music, in order to make his case. I would argue, however, that attribution of this kind of attitude towards sama' to the Indian writers is incorrect. This bolder attitude may have not
been voiced in theoretical writings before Hamid al-Din Nagauri and Zarradi in the 13th and 14th centuries respectively, but it certainly existed in the khanaqah of Abu Sa’id, as has been noted above. Thus, I would suggest that the Chishti writers only gave a literary and theoretical expression to the practice of Abu Sa’id. He was certainly well known among the Indian Sufis, and, for example, in Fav aid al-Fu’ad Khwaja Nizamuddin speaks of him in about fifteen instances. It would not be surprising if Abu Sa’id’s attitude towards sama had been transmitted to the Chishti tradition.

It is interesting that the idea of sama as a well grounded spiritual practice was mirrored also to Sufi orders, which normally do not consider sama as the focal point of their practice. Among these orders are the Indian Suhrawardiyya, Firdausiyya and Qadiriyya. The wholesale rejection of sama was articulated only in the turn of 16th and 17th centuries by Ahmad Sirhindi (d. 1624). Subsequently, the most widespread Naqshbandi sub-order, Mujaddidiyya, rejects sama as a part of mystical practice. Arthur F. Buehler notes that some other Naqshbandi sub-orders did engage in sama, among them the lineages that followed the teachings of Baqi’llah (d. 1603) and Amir Abul’-Ulai’ (d. 1651). The latter’s lineage combines the Chishti practice of sama with the unvoiced zikr typical to the Naqshbandiyya. Buehler writes that this order never became widespread in South Asia. Music has been considered a basic skill of a gentleman, as Metcalf notes, and as an artistically sensitive gentleman Dard must have been inclined to listening music for aesthetic reasons, not necessarily to achieve mystical states.

The sharpest critique of the Mujaddidis was not directed towards sama, but towards the doctrine of unity of existence, which they conceived subordinate to the unity of witnessing. The more polemical attitude was adopted in the 19th century by different reformist Islamic movements, which conceived sama as one of the un-Islamic innovations. In the forefront of this criticism were the members
of the theological school of Deoband, founded in 1867. The founders, Muhammad Qāsim Nanautavī and Rashīd Ahmad Gangohī were themselves disciples of Hajjī Imdād Allāh, a famous Sufi of Sābīri Chishti lineage. The early Deobandis did not propagate total rejection of Sufism, but only of the forms they considered degenerated. It is also worth noting that the Deobandis were by no means inimical to poetry, only its musical performance. Muhammad Ya’qūb, an early Deobandi, instructed his followers to recite verses of Ḥāfīz, Dard and Saudā, if they felt distracted during zikr. Sama has been attacked since the 19th century by the representatives of the Deobandi school and since 1920s by the members of Tablighī Jamā’at, a grassroots organisation dedicated to promoting strict adherence to the Islamic rituals.

A good example of the lines the criticism of sama follows can be extracted from a short book named Qavvālī aur Islām (1994) by Muhammad Ashfaq Husain. The line of thought is typical to the Deobandis and representatives of Tablighī Jamā’at but it also summarises many centuries of the debate. The Deobandis accept the moral qualities of the early Sufi masters, and the writer of Qavvālī aur Islām begins with stating that the great Sufis were morally so elevated that listening to qawwāli could not do any harm to them. Common people, on the contrary, should not follow their example. This is followed by often repeated arguments from Qur’ān and Sunna in an attempt to demonstrate that music is prohibited by God and that the Prophet and his companions never listened to it. As if to appeal to the Sufi authorities favoured by a potential reader, the author next quotes notable Sufis ranging from ‘Abd al-Qādir Jilānī to Khwaja Nizamuddin. Every quotation expresses some limiting factor concerning the use of instruments and the status of participants. The quotations are complemented with remarks of the author stating that this limitation is not followed anymore, which is a reason enough to prohibit all sama and qawwāli. The discussion is continued by condemnation of poetry, especially its lyrical forms, and mystical states. The conclusion of the book is that
the good Muslims should not follow the example of the Sufis. Instead, they should stick to the example of the Prophet and his companions in imitating a precedent (taqlid).

The rhetoric of the book is interesting because of its selectiveness in choosing the quotations from Chishti masters who are known to have had a strong inclination for sama'. Ernst and Lawrence note that this kind of argumentation is very central in the writings of the Deobandi school, especially in the polemical writings of Ashraf 'Ali Thanavi (d. 1943). It is ironic, though, that even the Chishti master, who nowadays exemplifies the reserved attitude towards sama', Khvaja Nasir al-Din (d. 1356), seems to have been sensitive to the affects of poetry sung without musical instruments. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami notes that a major disciple of Khvaja Nasir al-Din, Khvaja Bandanavaz Gesudaraz (d. 1422), relates several instances when his master was absorbed in sama'. Among the Chishti masters, the reserved attitude of Khvaja Nasir al-Din is encountered only in Hajji Imdad Allah, the guide of the founders of Deoband. The legacy of this master has been subjectively interpreted much in the same way the Qur'anic statements or hadiths were interpreted insupporting or rejecting of sama'.

One of the disciples of Hajji Imdad Allah was Zauqī Shah (d. 1951). Ernst and Lawrence note that he was among the followers of Hajji Imdad Allah, to whom the latter had given khilafat, in contrast to the followers who had received only permission to spread the religious message of Islam. The founders of Deoband belong to this latter group, and Zauqī Shah's attitude to sama' differs from their attitude radically. He referred to the example of Hajji Imdad Allah and considered sama' a central spiritual practice that is in the core of the Chishti spirituality. He even went as far as to organise asama' assembly in the Mecca mosque during his pilgrimage in 1950, when the Saudi dynasty and the Wahhabi movement already held firm grip of the holy cities of Islam. Even more polemical stance was adopted
by the principle follower of Zauqī Shāh, Capt. Wālid Bakhsh Siyāl, who dedicated a notable portion of his writings to the defence of sama. He deems the practice central to the elevated spiritual life and even makes Hajjī Imād Allāh one of its staunchest supporters. The debate continues in the present day. Many notable Chishtis of the present day have not, however, taken part in this debate. They seem to rely on the example of the pastmasters of the order. In this light listening to poetry and music appears such a self-evident part of the Chishti spirituality that taking part in the debate becomes irrelevant.

HISTORY OF QAWWALI

The history of Chishti sama is inextricably linked with the history of qawwali. The beginnings of creating this musical form are often traced back to Khwaja Moinuddin, and an often stated reason for his institutionalising sama is his desire to preach Islam to the music-loving Hindus. Shemeem Abbas proclaims that the Sufis preached a simplified Qur'anic message to large masses with the help of music and vernacular poetry. Pir Ahmad Nizāmī stated that Khwaja Moinuddin, detecting the fondness of music in Hindu population, started to use qawwali as a means to attract people together. Thus, qawwali facilitated preaching to large crowds. In Pir Ahmad Nizāmī’s case, the idea is perhaps a projection of the programs of ‘Urs Maal which were instituted by his late father, Pir Zāmin Nizāmī. The programs begin with a mushā’ira, poets’ recitation, and end with a qawwali performance. The focal point is, however, a lengthy speech about the Islamic nature and humanistic values of Sufism delivered by Pir Ahmad Nizāmī between the reading of poems and qawwali. The popular nature of the qawwali performance attracts a wide audience, in addition to which the program is broadcasted live by the All India Radio. Thus, qawwali is instrumental in gathering a wide audience to listen to the speech of Pir Ahmad Nizāmī.
The idea of qawwali as a means of preaching is, however, fairly anachronistic. Dr. Farida 'Ali noted that in the time of Khwaja Moinuddin qawwali was already a common practice among the Sufis. According to her, the Indian environment certainly had much impact on the enthusiastic acceptance of sama and on the development of the musical idiom of what was to become qawwali. But, as such, the practice itself was well grounded already when it reached the Indian Subcontinent. The development of qawwali is connected with the name of Amir Khusro, poet, musician and disciple of Khwaja Nizamuddin, as is the development of North Indian classical music. 'Abd al-alim Ja'far Khan notes that the composition of many ragas is attributed to Khusro. Among them are ragas kafi and shahana, which are still widely performed. The invention of musical instruments tabla and sitar is also popularly attributed to Khusro. 'Abd al-alim notes, however, that these specific instruments are not mentioned in the contemporary documents. The names tabla and sitar are used, but they refer to different kinds of instruments than the modern ones. Sitar was a three stringed instrument (sih tār, ‘three strings’) used in accompanying singing and tabla (tabla) was a common name for a drum.

However different the qawwali might have been in the times of Amir Khusro, it seems plausible that he had a definite impact in the development of this musical form and that some parts of the qawwali repertoire can be his compositions. Another early personage connected to qawwali is Miyan Samat. Mi'raj Ahmad told me that Miyan Samat was the leading qawwal to reside in the khānqāh of Khwaja Nizamuddin. He was trained by Amir Khusro and many traditional qawwals trace their lineage back to him. An important member of this very lineage was Tānrās Khān, a court musician of the last Mughal emperor Bahādur Shāh Zafar. After the 1857 rebellion he migrated to Hyderabad where he was sponsored by the Nizāms. Mi'raj Ahmad attached great importance to Tānrās Khān, since he was instrumental in developing the idiom of contemporary qawwali. Among the
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traditional qawwals (qawwāl bacche), who are descendants of Tārras Khān are Mi`rāj Ahmad and the late master `Azīz Ahmad Khān Vārisī.

An important question discussed by the Chishti masters since founding of the order is the usage of musical instruments. Vāris usain referred to the recurrent mazāmīr-argumentation, according to which all the musical instruments are forbidden since mızmər is forbidden. He saw, however, that prohibition of mızmər does not prevent the usage of musical instruments altogether. In Chishti samā', only the usage of this instrument has been unanimously prohibited, but the attitude towards other instruments has been more lenient. According to Pār Ahmad Nizāmī a framed drum (daff) was used in Chishti samā already in the days of Khwaja Nizamuddin. Later on it was substituted with Dholak, and harmonium was added to the instrumentation “by the consideration of some great ones of the religion”. It seems more plausible, however, that the history of instruments in Chishti samā is not this straightforward. Mughal miniatures depicting ecstatic dervishes feature accompanists with various different musical instruments. In the older recordings of, for example, `Azīz Ahmad Khān, the sārangī, stringed instrument with approximately 40 strings, provides the melodic accompaniment along with the harmonium. As an older instrument sārangī may have been a predecessor of the harmonium. The latter does not need to be tuned for different ragas, which has given it advantage over sārangī as the primary accompanying instrument. Other instruments may have also been used, such as the above mentioned three stringed sitar.

Nowadays, the accompaniment of Dholak and harmonium, sometimes with added tabla, is the preferred combination in qawwali groups. The simplified development of accompaniment for qawwali is perhaps a corollary of the desire to emphasise the Islamic nature of the musical form through de-emphasising its musical features.
The terminology used in speaking about qawwali is based on the concept of qawwali as a religious musical form. Consequently, the qawwali terminology is connected to recitation of holy text rather than to music. The whole name of the musical form is derived from the Arabic verb qāla, ‘to say’ not from the verb referring to singing, ghannā. In Urdu the expression used for performing qawwali is qavvālī paRhnā, ‘to read qawwali’, not qavvālī gānā, ‘to sing qawwali’. Moreover, the poems performed by qawwals are usually referred to as kalam instead of a more common shīr. Kalam is a word that literally means ‘talk, utterance’ but it carries heavily religious connotations unlike the word shīr, which refers specifically to the poetry of more profane kind. One reason for the selection of these expressions is the desire to set qawwali apart from profane musical forms. Many forms of art music were connected to the courts of aristocracy and courtesans. Both were shunned by Sufis, who consequently may have wanted to emphasise this difference. A more important explanation for these terms is noted by Regula Qureshi. According to her the reason for this terminology is the fundamental Islamic belief to the supremacy of revelation in the form of word as the basis of religious life. The inviolability of the Qur’anic text, both in meaning and recitation, is projected to other religious texts as well. Among these are the poems performed in qawwali. This takes us directly to the importance of textual content of qawwali.

Poetry in Persian and Urdu

_Selecting poetry for Chishti samā’_

The poetical repertoire of qawwals is not fixed, but new poems enter it constantly, while others are rarely performed. In its core are poems which have become an integral part of qawwals’ repertoires all over the areas where qawwali is heard. Some of these classics may have been heard in samā’ assemblies for hundreds of years. They are written mostly in Persian and Hindi. These two languages have
consequently gained more prestige than the more recent languages of Sufi poetry, Urdu and Punjabi. Urdu, which is nowadays the cosmopolitan language of South Asian Muslims, has been employed in the Chishti sama only since the 20th century. Naghmāt-i samā, published in 1934 especially for qawwals, includes only Persian poems, and still in the early 1970s a group attempting to sing Urdu verses was made to leave the principal samā assembly of the 'urs festivities in Ajmer. As Qureshi notes, the incident was partly due to the newly invested divān's desire to demonstrate his power over his predecessor, who had allowed singing in Urdu. Nonetheless, it also reveals the dignity attached to Persian and Hindi poems.

The Persian poetry heard in Chishti samā comprises both classics of Persian literature and more local Indian writers. The educated Muslims of South Asia have always been acquainted with poems of Sā’dī, Rūmī, Hāfiz and Jāmī, since their writings have been studied in the course of a typical curriculum. For this reason, the works of these poets have been aptly called “madrasa poetry”. The Persian writing favourite of the Chishtis is, however, Amir Khusro. He was not only an eminent poet and musician, but also a close disciple of Khwaja Nizamuddin, which undoubtedly is behind his popularity. The poems written in sabk-i hind, ‘the Indian style’, which developed in the 16th and 17th centuries, are performed by qawwals only occasionally. One reason for this is probably the complexity of this poetic style, caused by the use of classical metaphors and images in twisted and reordered ways. This is not, however, the sole reason, since Urdu poems by Mirzā Asad Allāh Khān Ghālib (d. 1869), who brought the Indian style to Urdu writing, are still cherished in the samā assemblies. Thus, another reason for exclusion of these poems from contemporary assemblies is the diminished acquaintance of the audiences with Persian.
Early Chishti masters are often considered to have written Persian poems and an entire collection of poems ascribed to Khwaja Moinuddin, Kalam-i 'Irfan Taraz, is in wide circulation. The mystics have continued the tradition of writing in Persian in the present day as well. Even though the significance of Persian in education and literature has steadily diminished since the 18th century, understanding at least a certain amount of Persian is essential to the Sufis and their literary culture. In the sama’ assemblies the most important Persian poets of the 19th and 20th centuries are Shah Niyaz Barelvi (d. 1831) and Hasrat Haidarabadi (d. 1962), who are famous Sufis of Chishti and Qadiri orders respectively. Muammad Amad stressed in the interview that in the sama’ assemblies the usage of Persian and Hindi is a sign of sophistication and has a special aura of sanctity to it because both of these languages are closely linked to the Sufi masters of the yore.

Mystics were instrumental in making the Indian vernaculars a literary medium for Islamic literature. Urdu developed on the basis of the spoken language of Delhi region, kha 'bolî. This language spread with the invading troops also to Deccan, where the Chishti master of Gulbarga, Khvaja Bandanavaz Gesudaraz (d. 1422) wrote treatises in dakhkini, ‘the southern language’. He is also credited for introducing Persian poetic forms ghazal and masnavî into vernacular Indian poetry. These poems are naturally cherished in the dargah of Khvaja Bandanavaz, and they are sung by the qawwals in the local sama’ assemblies. Most of them have not, however, entered the translocal repertoire of the qawwals.

Urdu matured into a fully developed medium of literary expression in the beginning of the 18th century. This development took place in Delhi after Aurânzeb had annexed the Deccani sultanates to the Mughal Empire and Delhi had become the centre of Urdu literature. The Urdu poets of this period favoured straightforward expression that was based on the model of spoken language. Many of the early poets had close ties to Sufism. The Deccani poet to reside in Delhi,
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Shams al-Din Vali Allah Vali (d. 1707) had close contact with Suhrawardis in Ahmedabad and Naqshbandis in Delhi. Siraj Aurangabhadi (d. 1763), who was also of Deccani origin, was a disciple of Abd al-Ra man Chishti. From among the Delhi poets, Khvaja Mir Dard (d. 1785) was an heir to the mystical tradition of his father, the Naqshbandi master Muhammad Nasir Anbalib. Also Mir Taqi Mir’s (d. 1810) father was a famous mystic. Mir’s autobiography includes many references to the disciples of his father and the mystically tinged atmosphere of his home. Although Mir himself did not claim to be a mystic, many of his poems bear a mystical tone.

Since the 18th century Urdu has replaced Persian as the lingua franca of South Asian Muslims, and many poets have written in all the main languages used in the Chishti samai. Among them are the above mentioned Niyaz and asrat. There are also Sufi poets, who have written mainly in Urdu. The most prominent among them are Bedam Shah Varisi (d. 1936) and Kamal ahdarabadi (d. 1986). These writers are not first and foremost poets and consequently their writings are seldom found in the histories of Persian and Urdu poetry. In their case, the spiritual background of their poems seems to be more important reason for their popularity than purely artistic consideration, though many of their verses are of high literary quality. Poets with Sufi background are included into the qawwali repertoire more easily than poets without mystical ties. In Surad, for example, about 65 percent of poems are written by Sufi poets, while only 35 percent are by other literary figures, mostly Urdu poets. Still, also the latter amount is fairly high considering that the collection is designed especially for qawwals. Muhammad Ahmad pointed to the reason for this by noting that the knowledge of ideas and practices of Sufism was very widespread among the educated classes. Thus, even those, who were not practising Sufis, were able to include Sufi themes into their poems.
Another reason for inclusion of poems by Urdu writing non-Sufi poets is the fact that Urdu poetry inherited the imagery of Persian poetry. This imagery does not in itself bear clear indications on whether the poem is a mystical one or not. The emphasised role of mystics in developing the Urdu poetry may have even accentuated this feature. The mystical tradition of early writers was continued later by the poets like Bahādur Shāh Zafar (d. 1862), the last Mughal emperor and a devotee of Khvāja Qutb al-Dīn's (d. 1235) shrine, and Jigar Murādābādī (d. 1960), who had close connections to the Sufi poet Asghar Gondāvī. Poems of both these writers are frequently performed by qawwals. The selection of poetry to be sung in sama' can also be affected by the contemporary cultural atmosphere. For example, the poems of Muhammad Iqbal (d. 1938), who has posthumously become the national poet of Pakistan, are often performed by Pakistani qawwals, whereas in India they are seldom heard.

The poems are in themselves ambiguous and one may guess that mystical interpretation is primarily intended if the writer is a mystic. But what is more crucial in discussing the poetry used in Chishti sama', is the context in which a poem is used. This context is to some extent created by the musical style. Qawwali is connected to the mystical concerts of the Chishtis and the motive behind these events is experiencing mystical states. This presupposes mystical interpretation of the poems. The centrality of the musical context for interpreting a poem can be detected from the fact that the poetic repertoire of qawwali overlaps with that of certain other musical forms: many classics of Urdu poetry, notably Mir and Ghālib, are performed also by the ghazal singers like Begam Akhtar and Farida Khānān. Also the lyrics in humārī and dādārī styles of singing are very similar to the Hindi poems of qawwali repertoire. This indicates how the interpretation of poetry is connected to the context of performance. Qawwali is connected to Sufism and spirituality, while ghazal is concerned with aesthetic refinement and even sensuousness. Thus a poem of Ghālib, Zikr us parī-vash kā
aur phir bayān apnā ("Mentionis of that fairy like one, and still expression is mine"), would in qawwali acquire a spiritual meaning and in ghazal a more sensuous one.

Even more crucial to the interpretation of a specific poem, is the personal interpretation of the listener. The formal regulations required from the audience of a sama’ assembly are not monitored by anyone. Instead, they are left to the responsibility of the listeners. Similarly, the poem becomes a mystical poem only when the listener gives it a mystical interpretation. The poems sung in Chishti sama’ are seldom didactic and certainly they do not aim at building a clear system of thought. On the contrary, the poems are lyrical poems with no clear indicators as to what kind of meaning is intended. This has lead to a need to intellectually analyse the poetic images and attribute them to the different qualities of God. The question of interpretation of poems and attribution of the poetic. Khwaja Nizamuddin notes that in the day of resurrection a dervish will be questioned if he really did attribute all qualities depicted in the poems to God. The shaykh also noted that he himself used to be reminded of his own master when listening to poems. The need for interpretation has manifested also in treatises discussing the poetic imagery, among them the work aqīq-i Hindī, analysed by Francesca Orsini (2006).

Describing the nature of sama’ often seems to escape the technical analysis and Sufi writers have taken shelter in poetic images in explaining it as, for example, "nourishment for the spirits" or "an ocean bird transporting lovers to the treasures that they seek". Consequently, most Sufis have not bothered themselves with prolonged treatises on interpreting poetic images. In Favā’idal-Fu’ād, Khwaja Nizamuddin notes that every individual should always grasp the connotation of ghazals for himself instead of following someone else’s interpretation. This notion is followed by two anecdotes, featuring Bābā Farīd al-Dīn and Bahā’ al-
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DinZakariya respectively. In both anecdotes the master is impressed by a verse he
the then repeats for an extended period of time. In neither case, however, does the
master reveal what the verse denoted to him. In the end, Khwaja Nizamuddin
states that no one ever came to know their experience of the verse. In the sama’
assemblies I have observed, the shaykhs sometimes share their thoughts on some
verses, like Khvaja asan Sani, who often stops the qawwals’ singing in order to
comment on some verse. Usually, however, the responsibility of interpreting a
mystical poem in a mystical way is left to individual listeners. This has been
decisive in including a very wide array of poetry to the qawwali repertoire. Before
entering the discussion of the themes of these poems, it is necessary to shortly
consider the formal requirements of the poems written in Persian and Urdu.

Forms of Persian and Urdu poetry

In the Persian and Urdu poems the outer form of the verse is intrinsically tied to
the meaning. This is even more pronounced in a musical performance. The poems
of qawwali repertoire consist of verses that are bound together by the poetic meter
and rhymes structure. For this reason qawwali as a musical form is pronouncedly
strophic. The most important literary form of the Persian and Urdu poems heard in
sama’ assemblies is the ghazal. The rhyme of the ghazal consists of the end rhyme,
radii, which is repeated throughout the verse unchanged. The radii is preceded by
qafiya, a varying rhyme word. The rhyme scheme of the ghazal is AA, BA, CA,
DA etc. The first couplet establishes the rhyme with its both lines. In the
consequent couplets, the rhyme features only in the second line, which also
concludes the opening statement of the first line. A ghazal normally consists of
five to thirteen couplets. Each verse of a ghazal is a complete and independent
whole. Scott Kugle notes that this can be a great advantage: verses of a single
poem can communicate various, even contradictory, shades of, for example, love.
It is more typical, however, that the verses of a ghazal are connected – in addition
to metre and rhyme – by the unity of mood. The number and order of the verses of a ghazal can vary between different manuscripts. It is not surprising that the variation is even more pronounced in a musical performance. Moreover, qawwals sometimes mix verses from different ghazals with single rhyme, meter and theme into a unified whole. Generally, only the first and last verses are without an exception sung in their respective places. The first verse, matla’, is distinguishable from other verses for its repeated rhyme. A poem is also popularly referred to with its opening line. The other distinctive verse is the last verse, maqta’. This verse contains the nom-de-plume of the writer, takhallu. Except for these two verses, the qawwals are rather free to choose, which verses of a ghazal they perform, depending on the constituency and mood of the audience.

Another common poem type in qawwali repertoire is qasida, which employs the same rhyme structure as the ghazal. Qasidas written by mystics are usually poems in praise of God, Prophet Muhammad and Islamic saints. The mystical qasidas used in the present day Chishti sama are approximately as long as ghazals. Sometimes the praise of the Prophet or a saint resembles the descriptions of beloved found in the more lyrical poems and the reader/listener is left to wonder, if he is encountering a miniature qasida or a lyrical poem praising the beloved’s beauty. Qawwals seldom perform ghazals and qasidas without adjunct verses. The aim of these verses is to explain a verse or widen its metaphorical meaning.

Many adjunct items are individual verses from ghazals or qasidas, but they can also be shorter poetic forms. Among these shorter forms is qit’a, ‘fragment’. It shares the rhyme structure of ghazal and qasida, except that the first couplet does not feature the repeated rhyme. Qit’as are usually descriptive or they concentrate on a single topic. They often have a more personal tone than the ghazals. Another important shorter form is rubā’i, a quatrain. The quatrains are mostly written in different metres than ghazals or qasidas. The metre may also be different in each of
the four lines of a rubā‘i. The traditional rhyme scheme is AAXA, while more popular verses employ also the scheme ABAB. The rhyme scheme of a quatrain is closely tied to the meaning. The first two lines build a situation, a kind of thesis. The third line offers an antithesis to it, while the third line, which returns to the original rhyme, presents a synthesis. Rubā‘is seldom constitute an independent song in themselves. In a rare case, when rubā‘i is used as the main text for a song, its textual bulk is augmented with other adjunct items. In addition, qawwals use verses from masnavis as adjunct items. An important poem type, that in itself includes both the salient text and an adjunct item, is tazmīn. Tazmīn is a rather long poem. It is usually written on the basis of a ghazal or qasida as an explanation for it. Normally it is written using a five line verse called mukhammas, in which a couplet of the original poem constitutes the last two lines. The three explanatory lines derive their rhyme from the first line of the couplet. Thus the rhyme scheme is AAAAA, BBBBA, CCCCA etc. Besides the formal requirements of meter and rhyme, the poetry in Persian and Urdu utilises several rhetoric features. These will be noted, however, in discussing the themes of the poems.

Poems of praise

Poems in praise of God

A sama‘ assembly opens ideally with poems in praise of the God, hamd. This category is very fluid and Surīd includes only four Persian and five Urdu poems classified as amd. The small amount probably depends on the fact, that almost every poem praises God through metaphors. Thus, every lyrical poem could be classified as hamd. In practice this would be problematic, since the Prophet and the saints are to be praised before performing love poetry. As a result, only poems that deal exclusively with God’s majesty and unity are included in the category of hamd.
The most common hamd is a poem that has the zikr formula allāh hu as its refrain. This formula literally means ‘God He’, but it is usually understood meaning ‘God, He, is’, as in the next verse by Zāmin ‘Alī. The theme of tau ḫid, unity of God, forms the basis of Islamic thought and is elaborated here.

One day Lailā, her face beautiful as moon

Asked Qais: “Who else is searched for, save me?”

Qais reached ecstasy and spoke thus:

“It is a mystery, listen well, a moon-faced:

Neither am I Majnūn nor are you Lailā

The poems often feature the ideal loving couples, like Lailā and Majnūn (i.e. Qais) here. The verse states that neither Lailā nor Majnūn really exists, but only God is. God’s essence, though, is not in the reach of a human being, but the mystic can see Him with the help of similitude. The next verse is attributed to Khwaja Moinuddin.

This kind of light that withdraw [everything] from sight in the mirror of the soul is the vision of the essence, yet I see it with the help of similitude.

The other mood often depicted in hamds, as if to balance the majesty of God, is an intimate prayer for God’s presence. Hasrat writes:

Become the light in my eyes, become the joy in my heart

Become eternal life, and like this come to my life.

My heart is your abode, but still, where are you, my dearest

Why do you stay here and there, come to your appropriate place.
A mystic can also pray for a more ecstatic experience, using the metaphor of intoxication. One encounters the old man of the ruins, the place for drinking, as a metaphor for God or the Sufi master, depending on the context:

*O old man of the ruins, let me have a goblet too*

*Let there be your charity*

*Until the Doomsday run your wine house like this*

*Let your cup go around!*

**Poems in praise of the Prophet**

The hands are followed by na‘ts, poems praising Prophet Muhammad, who brought the conclusive revelation from God to the mankind and was the seal of the Prophets. Praising him, describing his qualities and mentioning his name is seen as establishing a spiritual bond with him, so it is only natural that his praise has occupied poets everywhere in the Islamic world. The Qur’an stresses the humanity of the Prophet and his only miracle was considered to be receiving the revelation from God. The personal qualities of Muhammad played a very small or non-existent role in this process. Nonetheless, fairly early lofty attributes were connected to him, and many collections of hadith include, for instance, descriptions of his exceptional physical beauty. This has offered the poets good material for describing the Prophet as an ideal beloved. The curved letters of the Qur’an offer a perfect way to describe the tresses and eyebrows of Muhammad:

*Your eyebrows are verses of the Qur’an, your hair is the commentary of the Qur’an*

*O, your face is our Qur’an, and you are faith, you are faith.*

This verse employs the rhetorical device of anaphora, repeating the same word, in this instance Qur’an, several times in a single verse to emphasise its meaning.
the same poem, Jami describes the Prophet’s beauty with comparison to the moon. And while in the Qur’an [6:50] God is understood to instruct the Prophet to say that he is not an angel, but only follows what has been revealed to him, Jami takes it not as a sign of inferiority, but perceives it to demonstrate that the angels envy the Prophet, despite of his humanity.

*On the earth and heaven, like the moon, you are shining, you are shining*

*Envied by the angels, light of God, still you are a human being, you are a human being.*

Although Muhammad is mentioned by name in the Qur’an only in four instances, the poets have seen signs of his beauty everywhere in the holy book. Describing the beloved with the verses of Qur’an is not in Persian and Urdu poetry limited to Muhammad alone, but still, the religious connotations of the Qur’anic verses have a stronger effect when they are connected with the Prophet. In the next verse, Jami inserts two Qur’anic citations to his verse, from 53:17 and 92:1 respectively.

*His two eyes are described by “His eye did not swerve”*

*His two locks, fragrant like amber, by “By the night when it descends”.*

Inserting Qur’anic phrases in Arabic to Persian or Urdu verses, iqtibās, is a common rhetoric feature. These phrases are treated as single Persian or Urdu words, regardless of their Arabic grammar. Using the Qur’anic citations is made possible by the fact that all the Muslims read the Qur’an in the original language, and the educated audiences would understand even oblique cases of iqtibās.

Sometimes love poems directed to the Prophet acquire an almost erotic tone, like in an Urdu verse of Bedam:

*Gentle fragrance spread and breathless (or O Bedam) world of heart became fragrant*

*When the tresses of Muhammad opened, God bless him and give his peace.*
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The usage of the blessing formulas as radif, in this instance alla'llāhu 'alayhi wa wsallam, is quite common in na’ts. If the Qur'an [33:56] tells that both God and his angels bless the Prophet; then why would not the people follow their suit? In poetry the blessing as a radif is an appropriate way to end a verse, since a blessing should always be uttered after mentioning the Prophet.

The poets have longed for Prophet Muhammad much in the same way the lovers have longed for their beloved ones:

*My heart is afflicted by the wound of your separation, O Messenger of God*

*I carry the spring of thousand gardens in my breast, O messenger of God.*

The situation, in which the breast of the poet is turned into a garden blooming with many red flowers, is a common way to describe the wounds caused by separation. One way to ease this separation is to send a greeting to Medina with the wind. Poems with some message to the Prophet constitute a special category of na’ts called salām. The next verse is attributed to Khwaja Nizamuddin and it is recited daily, when the doors of his dargāh close. Other salāms are performed in qawwali performances.

*O zephyr, turn towards Medina and recite greetings from this supplicant*

*Go around the King of Prophets9 and recite the message with great humility.*

The message of an afflicted lover is full of beauty generated by longing and pain. Khwaja Nizamuddin asks the wind to sing with the melodies of David. In poetic tradition David, the singer of the Zabūr, represents an ideal beautiful voice and melody.

*Sing together with David's melody, become acquainted with lamentation and pain*

*Recite this ghazal by Nizām, the dejected slave, in the assembly of the Messenger.*
As well as longing, the meeting with the Prophet is also a topic of poems sung by qawwals. As the whole world is illuminated by the beauty of Muhammad, a heart becomes alive through the union with him:

*The world is illuminated by the beauty of Muhammad*

*The heart became alive through union with Muhammad.*

Muhammad is not, however, the beloved of only the human beings, but also of God. Especially the night journey, *isra'*, and ascension of Muhammad, *mi'rāj*, have been seen in this light. The whole incident is deduced from two Qur'anic passages, 17:1 and 53:6. The first passage is understood to describe the journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and the second the ascension to the heaven by climbing the ladder or on the back of Burāq, a mythical steed with woman’s head and mule’s body. During the ascension the Prophet travelled through the seven spheres and finally entered the paradise and the presence of God. Gabriel, his guide, could not enter God’s presence. Only the Prophet could be as close to God as “two bows or closer” [53:9]. To the poets, the *mi'rāj* is a result of God’s desire to meet his beloved.

*It was a pleasant night and the world was peaceful*

*Attraction of the lover was affecting it.*

*He wanted to invite the beloved to the Throne*

*The eye yearned a vision, *mi'rāj* was only an excuse.*

The verse is a good example of a *qita* used in describing some event. It also functions as an introduction to a longer poem based on a verse by Sā’di. The *mi'rāj* has not been only a proof of Muhammad’s high position but also a prototype of mystical experience, that transgresses the limits of time and place.
When the Prophet returned, his bed was still warm and the tumbled pitcher had not yet leaked out. Thus, the mi'raj is an example of the mystical experience of the eternal now. Muhammad made his journey in bodily reality, while the mystics have to content themselves to journeying in the spiritual realm.

A theme with a more popular appeal in the qawwali repertoire is Muhammad’s role as an intercessor in the Day of Resurrection. This intercession, shaf’at, is in full measure the prerogative of Muhammad only. Muhammad is thought to intercede especially on behalf of the most sinful people. This has been a great solace to the members of the Islamic community and has been celebrated in several poems. In sama’ assemblies with a wider audience, the verses like the following written by Jāmī, are frequently sung.

I am sinful, I am weak, I am helpless — this is the condition

O intercessor in the day of retribution, that you are asking, you are asking.

The role of Prophet Muhammad is not limited to end of the creation, but he is present also in its beginning. In the Qur’an [33:46] he is called “a shining lamp”. This has encouraged mystics to interpret the light verse [24:35] as an allusion to the Prophet. This light of Muhammad, nūr-i muhammadī, or the reality of Muhammad, haqīqa muhammadīyya, was the first created thing and everything else was created through it. Every prophet preceding Muhammad is thus created from his light. Dāgh, whose work is often seen only in the light of his infamous relationship with a famous courtesan (Matthews & al., 97), describes the effect of the Prophet’s light in the beauty of Josef, the scent of whose shirt gave the eyesight back to Jacob:

In the beauty of Josef was your light, O Light of God

The eyesight of Jacob was cured, well done!
Ahmad Jam elaborates on the haqīqa muḥammadiyya:

*You came as the meaning of “If you had not been”, quick and swift you came*

*You came from the pure world, souls are offerings to you, welcome*

He mentions the well-known adīth quḍāṣī “If you had not been, I would not have created the spheres.” This saying is one of the most famous proofs used in referring to the unique position of Muhammad in the process of creation. The longing for the Prophet has also brought the souls into existence:

*Longing for the Prophet has brought the soul into being from the non-existence*

*Where does the search for the Prophet take [my soul]?*

The birth of the Prophet has been celebrated throughout the Islamic world since the Fatimid rule of Egypt. The festival is celebrated also in South Asia with recitations of naʿt-khwānī poetry. Some poems describing Muhammad’s birth, however, have also entered the qawwālī repertoire. Many of them, like the Urdu poem cited below, resemble the actual celebrations following the birth of the child current in the area. Bhakti poetry may have given an impetus to writing the next poem:

*When Muḥammad Mutafa was born, aunt aḥima took him to her lap and said:*

“Do light the lamps of ghee, Āmino’s darling was born!”

*In the Heaven ‘Āhā’I1 resounds, the earth sings hymns of praise.*

“This Muḥammad was born!” Gabriel calls out.

*Today the huris dance ‘camā cam’ in ‘Abd Allah’s courtyard.*

*All the prophets from Adam to Jesus came to say heartily: “Congratulations!”*

*Angels come reading blessings and stars twinkle ‘Tim Tim’*
After the praise of the Prophet, the masters of the Sufi lineage are praised in poems called manqabat (or in pl. manaqib). The Chishti lineage is traced to the Prophet through 'Ali, his son-in-law. When the sama' assembly follows the recitation of fitha for the soul of a saint, the first hymn is the qaul set to music by Amir Khusro, Man kuntu maula fa-'aliyunmaula ('Whose master I am, his master is 'Ali'). Prophet Muhammad announced this saying in the Ghadir Khumm during his farewell pilgrimage. Some qawwals recite the complete qaul, adding Anā madinatu'l-'ilm wa 'alīyun babuha ('I am the city of knowledge and 'Ali is its door') The qaul is sung by all qawwals in the same melody based on raga shuddh kalyān. It seems likely that this melody presents very old layer of qawwali tunes. The composition of Khusro includes also a tarāna:

A tarāna is a piece of composition, which utilises meaningless words as its text. Several tarānas are attributed to Khusro and they have enticed several speculations on the hidden meaning of these words. Dar and dil are Persian words and ham and tum are pronouns of Hindi/Urdu. I would nonetheless assume that no cognitive meaning is intended, but the words are suited to depict the melody the composer wants to present. Thus, they would also represent a rare example of wordless music entering the qawwali repertoire.

Since the text of the song is very short, it is often augmented with inserted verses. Qawwals have a stock of verses that can be inserted into this song. They
commonly insert verses from a qa ʿida of Niyāz, which is performed as an independent item also.

Friend of the Truth, assignee of Mutafī, ocean of graces

Imam of the two worlds, qiblā of religion and faith.

Companion in the assembly of mankind, quest in the holy assembly

Delight of the elect souls, pleasure of the pure spirits.

Another famous poem in praise of ʿAli is written by Kāmil. His poem describes the spiritual significance of ʿAli, also known as Murtaṣ, to the mystics:

What did I get due to the hem of Murtaṣ? What should I tell?

When I got ʿAli I got the Prophet, when I got the Prophet, I got God.

The way to the God goes through the Prophet, and the Prophet can be attained only through ʿAli. As the qaul mentioned above explains, ʿAli is the door to the city of knowledge, the Prophet. Another verse from the qa ʿida of Kāmil traces the way of the mystic to the station of patience (ṣabr) and satisfaction (rizā), where there are signs of the mystics travelled before him:

When I arrived to the stage of patience and satisfaction, in your footprints, in every step

There was somewhere the dust of the madmen, somewhere blood of the faithful.

If we follow the Chishti silsila, the next personage that is commonly lauded in the poems, is Khwaja Moinuddin. The fourteen masters between ʿAli and Khwaja Moinuddin are rarely met in the qawwali poetry. The only exception is Khvāja ʿUsmān Ḥārūnī, the master of Khwaja Moinuddin, whose ʿurs is celebrated in large scale in Ajmer. Khwaja Moinuddin, however, is the most widely known saint in the Indian Subcontinent, and his ʿurs festivities attract hundreds of
thousands of people to Ajmer every year. He is a saint whose fame has spread all over South Asia, and it is natural that poems in praise of him are part of the common qawwali repertoire. The poems in praise of him accord him with the loftiest of attributes. The next verses are from a poem by Niyāz, who has written some of the most popular Persian manqabats:

Master of masters, Moinuddin

Pride of existence and place, Moinuddin.

An explanation for the secret of the Truth, Moinuddin

A sign of the Signless, Moinuddin.

Since Khwaja Moinuddin is the first Chishti master to have resided in India, every subsequent saint is seen as his blessing. The next Urdu verse by an anonymous poet lists the names of the saints who followed Khwaja Moinuddin. The epithet used for Khwaja Moinuddin himself is Khvāja-yi Hindalvalī, 'the Saint who conquers India'. The title is apt, since whole South Asia is considered to be part of the wilāyat, spiritual dominion, of the saint.

Due to your blessings they are all saints, Ganj-i Shakkar, beloved Sābir

The thing that makes Nizām and Khusro saints, my Khvāja, is your blessing.

O Khvāja-yi Hindalvali!

Poetry reveals also another side of the saints. They are not only spiritual giants aloof from the world and its concerns, but they are also benefactors of humanity. Khwaja Moinuddin is commonly called Gharib Navāz, 'Nurturer of the Poor'. Many pilgrims travel to Ajmer with the hope of solace and blessing. In understanding the reverence paid to the saints, and in this particular instance, the poetry written in their honour, it is unavoidable to take verses like the one below.
into account as well. The verses are taken from an Urdu poem by Kāmil, and they describe Khvāja Gharīb Nāvāz as the shelter of those with nothing. One senses the sense of pride for having a connection with Khwaja Mo'inuddīn in the verses.

_The poor lower their glance to your doorstep_

_When every other shelter is shattered, O Khvāja!_

_By the bonds of affection! By the perfect (or Kāmil’s) connection!_

_You are ours, you are ours, our Khvāja!_

From among Khwaja Mo'inuddīn’s followers, Khvāja Qutb al-Dīn is not prominent in the poems. Even Bābā Farīḍ al-Dīn has remained a fairly local saint, and poems extolling him are common in Punjab, but seldom heard outside the region. Bābā Farīḍ al-Dīn’s two disciples, Khwaja Nizamuddīn and ṬAll Amād 光伏发电 Kāliyarī have become famous throughout the Subcontinent. Especially the former and his mausoleum in Delhi have inspired many poets.

Khwaja Nizamuddīn, also known as Mā hūb-i Ilāhī, ‘the Divine Beloved’, was learned in _tafsīr_ and hadīth, but was also sensitive to poetry and music. He also stressed sobriety in his teaching but experienced ecstatic states as well. He was by no means the only great shaykh of his times, and the role of his famous disciples was definitive in making the master’s name eternal. Among them were the historian Ḣāfaḍa Barānī, who saw the high moral standards of Delhi depending on the presence of Khwaja Nizamuddīn. Two poet-disciples, Amīr Khūṣrū and Amīr asān Sījī wrote panegyrics and lyrical poems with mystical tinge inspired by their master. The latter also noted down the discourses of Khwaja Nizamuddīn. Later, Khwaja Nizamuddīn’s descendants were sponsored by the rulers and a splendid mausoleum was erected on his grave. The poems written in praise of Khwaja Nizamuddīn are often of more lyrical character than those written in honour of Khwaja Mo'inuddīn, for example. One can only guess the reason for
this. Maybe it is Fava'id al-Fu'ād's intimate atmosphere and gentleness, traits that are absent in the malfizāt texts of previous Chishti masters. These works were written after the death of these masters, when their memory had already been hallowed by the hagiographical processes. Or maybe the reason is his association with the greatest poets of his time. The following verses from a famous qasīda written by Niyāz exemplify this lyricism:

The bedchamber of the world became illuminated as in daylight

When a moon like this rose from the earth's horizon.

Because of desire for the love of the Divine Beloved I turn like this

That the painter paints my picture into the form of a sigh.

The verses include elegant examples of mubālagha, hyperbola, one of the most frequent rhetorical features used in the Persian and Urdu poetry. In the first verse the moon is so bright, that it illuminates the world like the sun. In the second verse the lover is wasted in longing to such an extent that everything that remains of him is sighs. The theme of moon like beauty is continued in a qasīda attributed to Khusro. The poem is one of the best known Persian poems in India and Pakistan, since qawwals always sing it after the 'Id prayers, when the mosques adjacent to the shrines are full of people.

Place for celebrating 'Id for us poor is your street

Joy of seeing the moon of 'Id is your face.

The verse is as an example of tanāsab or murā'āt-i nazīr, 'the harmony of similar things'. The term refers to including several words from one sphere of meaning into one verse. In this instance, Khusro uses words connected to celebrating 'Id. The verse includes the place of celebrating ('Id-gāh), the poor people (gharibān), who gather there to receive alms, and sighting the crescent moon ('Id didan) that
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indicates the end of Ramadan. In Urdu verses the Indian influence is once again more discernible. Zāmin Nizāmi, a descendant of the saint, pictures Delhi as bride of Khwaja Nizamuddin, while the entire world follows as the bridal procession, būrāt.

_Delhi became bride and Nizamuddin Chisht is the groom_

_All the world is the wedding procession of Nizamuddin Chishti._

The most famous mangabats for Khwaja Nizamuddin are the ones written in Hindi and attributed to Khusro. These, however, will be discussed later, together with other Hindi poems. Moinuddin, ʿAbīr ʿAlāʿ al-Dīn and Nizamuddin are saints who have universal following all over the Indian Subcontinent. Other saints are praised by the qawwals in the areas surrounding their dargāhs. Bābā Farīd al-Dīn is praised in Punjab and Khvāja Bandanavāz Gesudarāz in Deccan. Two popular saints of qawwali poems, who are not part of the Chishti silsila, are Imam Husain and ʿAbd al-Qādir Iīlānī.

Husain was martyred in Karbala and is mourned by the Shia community during the month of Muharram. The Chishtis do not listen to qawwali during the twelve first days of Muharram. Instead, the qawwals recite elegies, marsiyas, during those days. In the mystical poetry, however, Husain is not remembered with grief but as a martyr of love, a faithful lover, who offered his life in the path of God. Niyāz describes the status of Husain as the king and soul of the saints. His face reflects God’s beauty and the poet takes shelter in him in the Doomsday.

_O heart, cling to the hem of the King of the Saints_

_Namely usain, Son of ʿAlī, Soul of the Saints._

_His countenance is a mirror for divine beauty_

_That face has become qibla for the faith of the saints._
Religious Discourse.

Code Mixing In Sufi Discourse & Mahfil-E-Sama

During his resurrection Niyaz puts his hope on husain

The lovers of saints are with the saints during the resurrection.

'Abd al-Qādir Jīlānī is maybe the most famous saint in the Islamic world, and poems praising him are included in the qawwali repertoire. He began his career as a preacher, but his fame as a saint and intercessor spread rapidly after his death and he became immensely popular. The Qadiri order itself never became widely popular, but places where 'Abd al-Qādir is said to have meditated exist all over the Islamic world. Poems in praise of this saint often concentrate to his lofty attributes much in the same way as the poems in praise of Khwaja Moinuddin. The following verses are written by Niyaz. The first one lists the epithets by which the saint is usually known:

The Prince, the Holder of Hand, the Greatest Help, the Divine Pole

The Beloved, Prince of the World, what a Divine Beloved!

The angels move in his entourage saying 'Give way!'

The selected from among people and jinns walk by his horse.

Lyrical poetry

In comparing different mahfils, one observes that the qawwals sing more lyrical poems when more high ranking Sufis are present in the audience. Obvious reason for this is that the lyrical poems are written in strongly metaphoric language devoid of obviously religious motifs. Attaching mystical meanings to lyrical poetry requires consequently thorough familiarity with the Sufi ideas. In discussing the themes of lyrical poetry I depart from the arrangement of Surūd. Surūd divides Persian lyrical poems into the categories of 'ishq('love'), fīrāq ('separation') and 'ilm ('knowledge'). Urdu ghazals are divided in the same way with the additional category of wa dat al-wujūd ('unity of existence'). The
category of 'ilm is especially elusive. In Urdu it contains poems of writers not known as mystics, such as Ghalib, Jigar and Mir. This category, however, overlaps with other categories, notably 'ishq and wa dat al-wujud. In the following discussion I shall divide the poems into more illustrative groups: poems on wine, disbelief, love and wa dat al-wujud.

Poems on wine

A distinctive group of lyrical poems is khamriyyāt, wine poems. Wine was very much present in the Indian courts. Qasidas praising the rulers abound in depictions of drinking scenes. Mystics seldom touched alcohol, but it served them as a poetic metaphor for the drunkenness caused by divine love. The self-forgetfulness caused by this wine becomes the aim of the mystics who have gathered in the wine house. The wine house is the khānqāh of the Sufi master where he offers intoxicating drink. Hasrat describes drinking wine as the ritual prayer of the mystics. The ritual prayer begins with takbūr, allāhu akbar. Similarly, the prayer of self-forgetfulness begins with the gurgling of the flagon:

_Wine drinkers; perform the prayer of self-forgetfulness

The gurgling of flagon became “God is greatest!” shout of the wine house._

The Sufi master of the khānqāh is the old Magus who runs the wine house. Supplications to him for more wine are the religious litanies of Hāfiz:

_I am the one, whose Sufi lodge is the corner of the wine house_

_Supplication to the old magus is my litany of morning time._

Later in the same ghazal, Hāfiz accords to the meeting with the beloved a position higher than mosque or wine house; both are only instrumental in quest for this meeting.
Religious Discourse.

Code Mixing In Sufi Discourse & Mahfil-E-Sama

Aim from my [going to the] mosque and wine house is meeting with you

I have nothing except this thought, God is my witness.

Another character in the wine house is the saqi, the youthful cup bearer. He may be the Sufi master, but often he is also God himself. Saqi is endowed with the qualities of the cruel and beautiful beloved. Sarmad, an eccentric mystic who was executed by Aurangzeb for his close relations to latter’s brother and rival Dārā Shikoh, describes the effect of saqi’s eyes. Those eyes intoxicate like wine. The ghazal, from which the Persian verse is taken, is a mubārak, congratulatory poem. Qawwals often sing this poem when a covering (cādar) is placed on the tomb of a saint during the ‘urs festivities.

If there is neither cup nor wine in the hand of the saqi

Then the wondering glances from drunken narcissus eyes are welcome!

The cruelty of the saqi is unlimited. After his coquettishness has killed the enamoured winebibber, he forms a cup out of his dust. To the lover, this is of course a blessing, since his dust can feel the touch of the beloved’s hands:

After death, Saqi, I am grateful

You formed a cup from my dust.

The mystics have always prided themselves on their drinking capacity. This is an indication of their capability to experience the mystical love. A verse by Jāmī includes a good example of mubālagha. He has drunk so much that wine comes out from his eyes, and his heart burns so intensely that smoke of roasting comes out of it. Since roasted meat (kabāb) was a common snack in the drinking parties, pairing it with wine is also a nice tanāsub.

I am so much drunk that wine comes out from my eyes

And from the heart full of desire smoke of roasting comes out.
Religious Discourse.

Code Mixing In Sufi Discourse & Mahfil-E-Sama

In wine poems even ruining the abstinence is a virtue. A verse from a ghazal attributed to Khvāja Usmān Ḥārūnī extols the virtues of unrestrained drunkenness: it is piety to dance with the cloak and turban, emblems of a pious Sufi. The situation described in the verse is sometimes seen in actual sama' assemblies, where a Sufi master dances intoxicated by poetry and music:

Happy the drunkenness, in which I ruin hundred abstinences
Bravo the piety that I dance with cloak and turban.

The person who is mocked in the wine poems more than anywhere else is the ascetic or learned shaykh. He is concerned merely with bookish learning and is not able to adapt himself to the activities in the wine house.

This is a wine house and there are drunkards here, here the prayer leader is a saqi for everyone
This is not a shrine, o venerable shaykh, here abstinence is forbidden.

Jigar Murādābādī, writer of the verse, is an excellent example on a non-mystic poet whose poems have been included in the qawwali repertoire. No doubt, Jigar's close relation to the Sufi poet Aghar Gondavī acquainted him with mystical themes. Yet, his addiction to alcohol and gambling make him an unlikely poet to be favoured by Sufis. The intertwining levels of meaning, however, have made his poems a fresh addition to the qawwali repertoire in the 20th century. The verse includes an example of ishtiqāq, using words derived from a single Arabic root in one verse. In this verse the words are 'shrine' (āram) and 'forbidden' (ārām), both derived from the root h-r-m.

Sometimes the poets are kind enough to advice the shaykh in an exasperated tone to see the futility of asceticism and realise the value of love:

O ascetic, listen to what I am saying to you, for the sake of God
Niyāz asks the shaykh in another verse to leave the confines of the madrasa of intellect and drink the wine of annihilation and selflessness without consideration of consequences. Then radif of the poem, jo ho so ho, is a common proverb in Hindi/Urdu speaking areas. Inserting a proverb to a poem as is called irsāl-i misāl.

_Leave the madrasa of the intellect and come to the wine house of love_

_Now I have drunk the goblet of annihilation and selflessness, what is to be must be._

More often than advising the shaykh, the poets are bidding him farewell. Ghalib reveals the nature of the beloved to the shaykh, who would not feel comfortable in his company anyway:

_Yes, he does not worship God. Go, he is unfaithful, too_

_Why would he, who has regard for religion and heart, go to his lane?_

Also those, who loose control after drinking only few drops, are to be thrown out from the wine house. The idea that Sufism is only for those with enough capacity, is rather common. Jigar writes:

_Who drank little and lost control, throw him out of the wine house_

_Those with a narrow vision cannot spend time here, only people of capacity can stay._

In poetry the real drunkard of the mystical love has the privilege to enter the sacred shrine(of Mecca?) also in the night, when the common public is shut out:

_I am that drunkard, for whom the shaykh of the shrine Has left the door of the shrine open at night._

While reading these poems, one should keep in mind that the Sufi masters have multiple roles in the society. While in a samā' assembly they may be intoxicated
ecstatics, they may also be learned shaykhs, hadith scholars and theologians, and practice different ascetic exercises. The metaphors of the poems still retain their charm as inducers of mystical experiences. Even more radical than wine poetry, are poems on infidelity.

Poems on infidelity

If one is surprised by the frequency of poems praising wine and drunkenness, one may be even more so due to the several poems that describe infidelity, kufr, and are frequently heard in Chishti sama’. This genre of poetry is called kufriyyät. In the poems of this genre the poet shows himself rejecting all the traditional religious inhibitions and denying the faith, usually in a very radical way. The audience of the poems encounters the conventionality of the Persian and Urdu poetry and the difference of metaphorical (majazı) and real (aqiqi) meanings. The kufr of the poems is obviously metaphorical kufr, action that would be kufr in the human realm. The real kufr, on the other hand, is something else. As has been already mentioned, most Sufis were strict followers of Islamic law. Why are they, then, charmed by the kufriyyät? One explanation may be found in the attitude that crystallises in the adage of Abū Sa‘īd ibn Abī’l-Khair “Until you have become an unbeliever (kāfir) in your self, you cannot become a believer (momin) in God”. The kufr of poems is a metaphor for turning away from the ego (nafs) towards God. The beloved for whose sake the poet abandons Islamic faith is due to his/her beauty often called an idol (but, anam). All the infidels known to Muslims appear in the poems. Khusrō’s beloved is more beautiful than the idols of Āzar, the idolater father of Abraham:

*O your beautiful face, envy of the idols of Āzar*

*Though I am praising you in every way, you are still more beautiful.*
The sign of an infidel is zunnăr, the infidels girdle or, in the Indian context, the Brahmin’s thread. Khusro boasts to be more infidel than the infidel himself in a fanciful mubalagha: He does not need even Brahmin’s thread, since each and every of his veins has become an infidel’s thread.

*I am an unbeliever of love, being Muslim is of no use to me*

*My every vein has become a string, so there is no need for Brahmin’s thread.*

Love for the idol-like beloved is the force that robs poet’s religious observance. For Kâmil it is not only his own religion and doctrine that were destroyed, but the entire universe was looted by one glance of the beloved.

*What is soul and heart in love? Religion went, doctrine went*

*Due to one coquettish glance, the entire universe was looted.*

Several poems describe how the mystic’s mind turns towards the beloved even during the Islamic rituals. The audiences hear in them also the obligation to remain concentrated on the beloved in everything they do. In the verses attributed to Khvāja Qutb al-Dīn, two central Islamic rituals, ritual prayer and pilgrimage to Kaba are both directed to the beloved:

*In a mosque, when I take my place in the row of devotion*

*My heart inclines towards the arch of your two eyebrows.*

*A pilgrim goes to circumambulate the shrine of Ka’ba*

*But my desired Ka’ba is on your street.*

A poet of Qalandari movement, Bū’Ali Shāh, continues in the same vein. To him the beloved’s face is the Ka’ba. Bū’Ali Shāh performs the rituals of circumambulation and kissing the black rock of the Ka’ba in the wine house. The verse is an example of tanāsub combining things of the same thematic sphere.
Why should I circumambulate the Ka'ba,
since the face of my friend is the Ka'ba shall walk around the wine house and kiss the feet of the intoxicated.

Like in the wine poems, the ascetic is mocked also in kufriyyāt. Khusro writes in the victorious tone about the ascetic, who has had to abandon the symbols of his continence, rosary and prayer mat:

_Since ascetic's eyes fell on your beautiful face_

_His rosary of continence is in one direction, abandoned prayer mat in the other._

In Ṣamī’s verse the hundred years of ascetic practices are destroyed when the beloved appears in the middle of the night:

_If my Friend comes out in the midnight without a veil_

_Ascetic of hundred years comes out from the mosque spoiled._

Shahīdī advises the ascetic to abandon self-restraint and restrictions in love and worship. Otherwise both love and worship are futile. The real worship is not just bowing one’s head to someone’s threshold, but to make the threshold sway when one bows one’s head on it.

_Is it love, in which there are self-restraints? Is it worship, in which there are restrictions?_

_In reality, O ascetic, only that is life that you bow your head and the threshold sways._

According to Khusro, to speak the truth is often construed as profession of unbelief (kalma-yi kufr) in this world. Khusro’s advice to keep the secrets to oneself in this world reminds the numerous verses in the end of poems, in which Rūmī exhorts silence.

_Do not speak the truth, it is profession of unbelief in this world, Khusro_
In reality, mystics followed such recommendations as little as they followed the exhortations to drink wine and reject worship. The secrets of mystical love were revealed in numerous metaphors, that still form the core of poems heard in Chishti sama'.

**Poems on love**

Love has been the underlying theme of many poems discussed thus far. Many na'ts and manqabats resemble love poems rather than gasidas. Wine is a common metaphor for mystical love, and the love of the idol-like beloved causes the mystic to lose his interest in religion and ascetic practices. In addition, actual love poems are numerous in the qawwali repertoire. As a result, majority of the poems performed in Chishti sama' deal with love.

Many Sufis have attempted to organise love into a system of states and stations. Carl W. Ernst notes that introduction of the word 'ishq, which denotes specifically passionate love, into Sufi terminology is attributed to 'Abd al-Wahid ibn Zayd (d. 792). In the 12th century, 'Ayn al-Quṭ Hamadānī (d. 1131) saw love as a religious obligation (far) for the human beings. According to Ruzbihān Baqlī (d. 1209), in the last stage of love all the distinction between the lover and the beloved, human being and God, disappear. Many mystics have considered the trust, amānat, to be love. God offered this trust to the heaven and mountains, but finally only man accepted it. Ibn 'Arabi notes that love is specifically a human attribute. He notes in al-Futūḥat al-Makkiya, that in the Qur'anic passages that mention God's love or lack of it, the objects are always the human beings. An anonymous poet elaborates on the connection of love and humanity:

*If there is no throbbing in the heart, lover is not a lover*

*If one knows nothing about the pain, he is not a human.*
The Sufis have often turned to writing poetry when they have wanted to discuss different aspects of love. Perhaps the best known Sufi poet is Maulānā Rūmī, whose gigantic dīvān speaks of love in always new metaphors.

Placing love among the stations that a mystic passes through in his way to perfection is problematic since it tends to negate the dynamism always present in love. Poetry, on the other hand, can describe separation (fīrāq, hijr) and union (vi āl), soothing memory and burning love, without making any of them the final state. In every samā' assembly, the qawwals recreate this dynamism and with a skilful selection of poems they can help the listeners in delving into the depths of mystical experience. For example, a poem on union of the lovers following a poem on separation, or a poem on kindness of the beloved after describing his cruelty, is sure to enhance the impact of the text in the listeners.

A central meditative technique of the Sufis is zikr. Zikr means both invocation and remembrance. In a widest sense, zikr comprises all the techniques that help the mystic to remember God. In qawwali poems, the power of beloved's memory is often described. The memory can be soothing, as in a qit'a written by the most notable modern Urdu poet, Faiz Ahmad Faiz. Faiz was not a Sufi and did not always even utilise the conventional imagery of Persian poetry. Still, his poems have become a part of the qawwali repertoire:

_Last night your lost memory came to my heart_

_Like spring comes slowly to the wasteland_

_Like zephyr comes softly to the desert_

_Like a sick one gets rest, without reason._
This memory is not a trivial thing to the poets. Poems in which the phantom or dream picture visits the poet abound in Persian and Urdu literature. The memory of the beloved can be almost as real as an actual meeting with him:

He comes close to me, but still does not call me

Is it little that he comes to me at least as a memory?

The memory is not always soothing, but it can also be passionate and consuming. It can be so faithful that even the death cannot erase it, as Fana writes:

Your memory is so faithful, that even after death it did not leave me

It was I who was erased in your memory, your memory was not erased from the heart.

In separation the lover hopes the beloved to come. In poetry the beloved shows affection to the rivals of the lover but ignores him totally. Niyâz sighs that roses may bloom in the morning breeze, but his bud of heart does not open. The innocent question of the second line is an example of tajahul-i 'arif, feigned ignorance of the poet: he does know, that affections of the cruel beloved are difficult to achieve.

Morning breeze may cause thousands of roses to bloom

But when will he make this one bud of heart open?

The separation causes in the lover a state that resembles delirium. In this state he forgets the rules of society, and uses all his time to roam around in search of the beloved. To the outsider this roaming is just waste of time but to the lover it bears the hope of meeting with the beloved.

I do not rove around lanes and market places in vain

I carry the ardent desire of a lover; I wander around in hope of meeting.
The lover is oblivious of his own state, sometimes crying sometimes laughing like a child in sleep.

_Sometimes I am happy, sometimes sorrowful, negligent of my own state_

_I am crying and I am laughing like a child in sleep._

One of the consequences of madness caused by love is writing poetry. Classical example of this is Majnūn, who lost his sense in love of Lailā and went to live in the desert. There he dedicated his time to composing poetry. Among the Sufi poets, Rūmī is the most famous to have composed poems in ecstasy. In the Indian realm, Sirāj Aurangābādī experienced a period of mystical madness, during which he composed many of his poems. Although Sirāj later gave up writing poetry in order to concentrate on mysticism, he is still remembered for his haunting verses that represent the Deccani style of writing. He is also known to have set many of his poems to so that they could be sung in sama’ assemblies. His verse below describes the receding of intellect to the background, when a mystic experiences love and opens to the intuitional knowledge. This knowledge is achieved through a direct experience of reality. The verse utilises words connected to studying (dārs ‘lesson’, nuskha ‘manuscript’, kitāb ‘book’, tāq’ ‘bookshelf’) in a nice tanāsub.

_It was a peculiar moment, when I studied the manuscript of love_

_The book of intellect remained on the shelf as it was placed there._

In order to experience this love, one is to loose the virtues of self-restraint and tranquillity:

_Today you have to leave the hem of patience and tranquillity_

_Today control has to become uncontrolled._
Not only the virtues of this world have to be abandoned, but the mystic has to give up all consideration for hell and paradise. The theme of love that desires no reward is central in Sufi poetry. The story of Rābi‘a, who wanted to extinguish the hell fire and burn the paradise, is may be the most famous example of this attitude. In Favā‘id al-Fa‘ād, Khwaja Nizamuddin explains a hadith, in which some believers are dragged to paradise in chains, to refer to the mystics, who loved God only for his sake and are reluctant to enjoy their reward. The theme is often elaborated in poems. A verse attributed to ‘Alī Amad ābir sees the contentment of the beloved as the guardian angel of the Paradise, Rizvān. The verse includes an ishtīqāq of the words riā ‘satisfaction’ and Ri vān, both derived from the root r-z-y.

Ahmad, the paradise and hell are forbidden to the lovers

Every moment, the satisfaction of the beloved has become our Ri vān.

If we return to the experience of love, the most common metaphor for it is fire. Love has the power to burn not only intellect but also the whole existence of the mystic. But even when the existence is burned, the love remains under the ashes:

A spark of love burned the chattels of my existence

Under the ashes of heart, my hidden burning remains.

The most famous metaphor for burning lover is the moth that flies to the candle over and over again, finally burning to death. The story is found already in al-Allaj’s Kitāb al-Tawāsfn, and it has been retold again and again by the poets in Persian and Urdu. Kāmil describes the beloved as a candle who infatuates the lover in the gathering. The central figure of the gathering is in the Indo-Muslim culture known as the candle of the gathering.

Let the gathering of him go on like this eternally

Who makes me a moth after becoming a candle himself.
In the hands of the Indian writers the image of candle and moth could become twisted, as often was the case with the writers of the Indian style. Ulvi depicts love’s burning as such a strong force that even the ocean is not able to extinguish it:

No one was saved from the burning of love

It turned even the ocean into a moth.

The beloved of the Persian lyrical poems is usually a youth, who is very conscious of his beauty. In Urdu poems the beloved may sometimes be a young unmarried woman, who is unreachable. Or she may be a courtesan, for whose attention the lovers compete. Whichever the case may be, the beauty of the beloved is one of the favourite topics of the poets, and it has incited them to depict the beloved with most fanciful metaphors. A verse by Redil offers a whole array of traditional metaphors for the beloved’s beauty:

In your sidelong glance is the dawn, in your gaze magic,

in your locks is a charm, in your figure the Doomsday

In your down a violet, in your tresses a hyacinth,

in your eyes a narcissus, on your face a rose garden.

One glance at the beloved is enough to burn the lover’s world, but when he smiles, he scatters sugar everywhere.

You burn the world if it throws an amorous glance on you.

You scatter sugar, if you just smile.

The special charm of the verse is due to its form as much as it is due to its meaning. Khusro has written the verse using tarsi, ‘studding with jewels’. This means that both lines of the verse have exactly parallel words.
Rhetorical features like this are almost impossible to convey in translation, but in a qawwali performance they are sure to make an impact on the discerning listeners. Another rhetorical feature especially suited for performance is savâl o javâb. This means that the first line of a verse includes a question and the second one answers it. Jâmi asks his beloved, what are the tears or sweat drops on the cheeks of the beloved. The beloved, whose cheeks are like roses, as we already learned from the verse of Bedîl, answers playfully that they are rose water coming out from a rose. In the performance the first half of the second line ("He smiled and said") would be repeated several times to heighten the impact of the answer in the second half ("Rosewater comes out from a rose").

I said to him: "What are these dewdrops on the cheek?"

He smiled and said: "Rosewater comes out from a rose."

Cruelty of the beloved often manifests as killing the lover. For Sa’dî the lips of the beloved are red from the blood of lovers. The lovers lie killed everywhere and the situation reminds the plain of Karbala after Imam Husain and his troops were killed.

From your sweet lips I keep drinking blood of the heart

You killed the lovers; this is the plain of Karbala.

The lover seeks to suffer in the hands of the beloved, since in the end suffering and shedding heart’s blood may cause the beloved to appear:

Jâmi, throw a drop of heart’s blood into the ocean

Breast blazing, heart burning, the moon comes out from the water.
The key to disentangling this convoluted verse of Jāmiī is the belief that pearls are formed out of rain drops that fall in to the ocean and finally find a shelter in an oyster, where they mature into pearls. This has served Sufis as a metaphor for mystic’s path. The mystic matures in separation to the love of God as the water drop becomes a pearl in separation from the rain clouds. In the verse above, Jāmiī twists the image in away that would be typical to the Indian style. If the lover sheds his hearts blood, instead of water, into the ocean, the result will not be a mere pearl but the full moon-like beloved.

Poets were not satisfied with descriptions of the unattainable beloved, but they also recognised that the beloved cannot he a beloved without the lover. Among the Sufis, a parallel thought revolved around the idea that the transcendental God is not merely an object of human being’s love, but that there is a mutual relationship between the two. The Qur’anic statement that “He loves them and they love him” [5:54] is often quoted as a proof of this. In the Islamic thought, only similar could love similar and therefore the souls had to be of divine origin in order to love God. The thought of souls’ divine origin was adapted to Islamic philosophy and mysticism from Neo-Platonic thinking. The more legally minded orthodoxy supported the gulf between the immanent soul and the transcendent God, which was also a reason to proclaim poetry and sama’ illegal since both of these could easily induce an experience of a mutual love between a human being and God.

The possibility of mutual love is celebrated in many poems that describe the lovers’ union.

It is again difficult to tell the difference between the lover and the beloved, which was the highest peak of love, for example, to Ruzbihān Baqli. It is impossible to know, who is who any more:
Religious Discourse.

Code Mixing In Sufi Discourse & Mahfil-E-Sama

I became you, you became me, I became body, you became soul.

So that no one will say after this that I am someone else, you are someone else.

The union of the lovers is not stationary. After union, the lover longs for the permanence of this meeting and mutual love. The lover derives his life from the restlessness of heart and longing in love.

The wind and sand mix in such a way that it is impossible to say whether they are united or separated, whether the lover is annihilated in the beloved (fanāʾ) or whether he remains (baqāʾ).

When a whirlwind rises in the desert, there is tumult in wind and sand:

I am annihilated in you, you remain in me, you are no one else, I am no one else.

The disappearing of the lover into the beloved brings us to the final theme of the Persian and Urdu poetry used in qawwali. This theme is wahdat al-wujūd, ‘the unity of existence’.

The mystical philosophy of Muhyī al-Dīn ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 1240) is in India commonly referred to as falsafa-yi wa dat al-wujūd, ‘philosophy of unity of existence’, or simply aswa dat al-wujūd. The term is not found in the writings of Ibn ʿArabī, but was coined by his grand-disciple Śāfi al-Dīn Farghrānī (d. c. 1300).

The philosophy of Ibn ʿArabī and his followers reached India in the 15th century and was crystallised into the slogan hama āst, ‘everything is he’. The opponents of wujūdī school mostly supported the idea of wa dat al-shuhūd, which was compressed into the slogan hama az āst, ‘everything is from him’. Among the early Chishti masters there were both proponents and opponents of wahdat al wujūd.
In the 17th century the debate on wa dat al-wujūd vs. wa dat al-shuhūd became heated in the writings of Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi (d. 1624). The Naqshbandī sub-order named after him as Naqshbandīyya-Mujaddidiyya has overshadowed every other sub-order and consequently his thoughts have spread widely among the Naqshbandīs and reform movements influenced by this particular order. In the 18th century, Shāh Valī Allah (d. 1762) attempted a reconciliation of the wujūdī and shuhūdī schools in his writings. Many Naqshbandī shaykhs, however, continued to adhere to the teachings of Ahmad Sirhindi. Among them were Khwājas Muḥammad Nāsir Andalūsī and Mir Dard, as well as Ghiyāth Yāḥyā. In a larger scale, the synthesis of Valī Allah gave the thoughts of wujūdī school certain acceptability in the intellectual life of Muslim India.

Many prominent Chishti masters have been supporters of wa dat al-wujūd since the 18th century. Subsequently many poems presenting the ideas of this philosophy have been included in the qawwali repertoire and one encounters verses on this topic even in poems written by non-Sufis. In Ibn `Arabī’s thinking the human beings and the entire creation appear in the imagination where an immutable entity (‘ayn sābita) becomes an existent entity (‘ayn maujūda). Even when the entity is manifest in the cosmos, it still retains its position as a possible thing in the knowledge of God.

**Code Mixing with Hindi / Punjabi**

In the midst of the Persian and Urdu poems, however, qawwals sing several poems in Hindi, which utilise indigenous Indian metres and poetic images. Significance of indigenous forms and themes. The Hindi poetry has in Chishti sama‘ as elevated position as the Persian poetry. This is due to the close connection of the language with Amir Khusro and his master Khwaja Nizamuddin. Moreover, Hindi is not only a regional language like other vernaculars used in poetry, but it has spread outside the immediate area where it is spoken. Hindi poetry is heard
everywhere the qawwals perform in samā' assemblies. Other vernacular poetic traditions, e.g. those in Sindhi, Kashmiri, Punjabi and Bengali are heard only in their respective areas.

The Hindi employed by the Sufi poets is not the standard Hindi of the present day, and often it is named rather vaguely as hindavi, 'an Indian language'. The variants of the language are often called pūrabī, 'the eastern language', or dakhkhini, 'the southern language'. The latter refers also to the dakhkhini urdu, the variant of Urdu prominent in the Deccan. The beginning of Sufi literature in Hindi is popularly traced back to Amir Khusro. A verse in which he describes himself as a speaker of Hindi but not Arabic is often seen as a proof of this. Subsequently a whole corpus of Hindi poems has become ascribed to him. These poems form an integral part of the repertoire of the qawwals all over the Subcontinent. Sunil Sharma notes, however, that they began to appear in the literary sources only in the 18th and 19th centuries and their language is heavily tinged with the spoken language of Delhi of those days. He does not, though, outright reject the possibility that these poems could be based on some verses by Khusro. Khusro is known to have employed Hindi words in his Persian writings and his epical and historical works reveal a deep understanding of the nature and customs of India. Moreover, Khusro hailed from his mother's side from an Indian family that had converted to Islam, and he learned Hindi from his mother. The reason why there are no Hindi poems in his collections is considered to be the lesser value attached to Hindi in comparison to Persian. Consequently, Khusro would not have considered these poems worth writing down.

The early Chishti masters were connoisseurs of both music and poetry, and poems in Persian and Hindi are attributed to them. The oldest examples of Hindi verses are found in the holy book of the Sikhs, Gurmukhī Granth Sāhib. These verses are called Farīḍ verses and their authorship is attributed to Bābā Farīḍ al-Dīn Ganj
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Shakkar (d. 1265), the predecessor of Khwaja Nizamuddin. Their authenticity has been disputed in the academic circles since 1904, when the translator of the Granth, M. A. MacAuliffe challenged their authenticity. However, Carl W. Ernst has noted in discussing the discourses of a Sufi master of Khuldabad, Zain al-Dîn Shirāzī (d. 1369), that one of Bābā Farīd’s verses cited by him is found also in the Granth. Thus the Farīd verses may well represent the oldest layer mystical Islamic poetry in Hindi.

The earliest longer Sufi work written in Hindi is probably Candāyan finished in 1379. It is an allegorical metric composition written in avadhi by the Chishti master Maulānā Da‘ūd. In the 16th century three other allegorical works were written in this language. All these works utilise the indigenous forms and imagery of the Indian poetry. Simultaneously in Deccan the local Sufis started to write poems in the form of Hindi that had spread there from Northern India with the invading troops. In addition to indigenous forms they utilised also forms borrowed from Persian. The Chishti master of Gulbarga, Khvāja Bandanāvaz Gesūdarāz wrote masnavis and ghazals in Hindi.

More than Persian forms, the Sufis favoured the indigenous forms in writing Hindi poetry. The basic form is gīt, ‘song’. Gīts are in mystical Hindi poetry as important as are the ghazals in Persian and Urdu. Gīt is metrically very free, lyrical poem. No uniform rhyme scheme is applied in the gīt, and the first line of the poem serves as a refrain throughout the poem. The most common short form is dōhā or dōhrā, a couplet. Both lines have thirteen syllables and the same rhyming word. Dohās are in the Chishti samā‘ used much in the same way as the rubā‘is and individual verses from masnavis and ghazals, as introductory or inserted verses. Dohās often paint a lyrical miniature, like the verse Khusro is said to have written after the death of his master, Khwaja Nizamuddin:

*The fair beauty sleeps in the bed, hairs fallen to her face*
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*Khusro, go home, evening has set in every direction.*

Alternatively they may express some piece of wisdom. The next verse is also attributed to Khusro and it has his nom de plume, which in Hindi is called chap.

*O Khusro, river of love flows in the opposite direction:*

*Wha rase from it, drowned; who drowned, he got across.*

In addition to this, the qawwals sometimes sing Hindi poems written in the ghazal format using Persian meters. It should be noted that Hindi poems are not just a peculiarity among the Persian and Urdu poems, but they form an integral part of the poetic corpus heard in the sama' assemblies.

In addition to prevalence of indigenous meters and forms, an important characteristic of Hindi poetry is the usage of Indian poetic imagery. The greatest difference between the Persian and Hindi poetry is the way of depicting the subject of the poems. In the Arabic poetry he is a man longing for his beloved woman. In the lyrical Persian poetry the lover is usually a man, whose beloved is a youth. In the epical poetry the lover is a man while the beloved is a woman. Urdu poetry utilises these same conventions, but sometimes poems are also addressed by men to unmarried, unattainable women or courtesans. In the Hindi poetry the lover is always a young woman, who longs for her beloved. The beloved is the woman's husband, either real or imagined. In the epic poems the woman has to endure severe affictions to attain her beloved. According to Schimmel, these affictions are a metaphor for the path of the Sufis, who have to become clear of all impurities, which include also their ego. The Arabic word for ego or lower soul, *nafs*, is feminine in gender, which must have played an important role in assimilation of the conventional female voice of the Hindi poetry. The lyrical poems often paint pictures of the heroine in varied situations during different seasons and the Hindi poems performed by qawwals resemble the songs.
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performed in different festive occasions, such as marriage. Alternatively, these poems belong to the bārahmāsa genre, which depicts nature and festivals of different seasons.

Maybe the most intriguing question concerning Hindi poems is, why were the Sufis so eager to write in Hindi and utilise the conventions of Hindi poetry? An often repeated explanation is that the Sufis wanted to present their teachings to the common people in a language and idiom they would understand. In this theory the Sufis are conceived as missionaries: they wanted to disseminate the teachings of Islam especially to the Hindus, who were slaved by the rigid caste system. In the Indian subcontinent, the liberal middle class Muslims have lately projected their values to the Muslim saints. Consequently, the Sufi poetry has become very much favoured among them. The female heroine of the Hindi poetry has made some writers even to argue that Sufis were interested to write in Hindi and other vernaculars, because they wanted to fight the patriarchal system and social injustice directed towards women.

Such lofty, but anachronistic ideas have been challenged by several researchers. Carl W. Ernst, for example, notes that Sufism was during its early phase in the Indian Subcontinent essentially a way of deepening the basic Islamic rituals by adding an inner dimension to them. It required deep acquaintance with the basic tenets of Islam, and could hardly be described as a simplification of Islamic doctrines. In discussing the Hindi poetry, Ernst further notes, that many of the Hindi poems are devoid of any overtly Islamic themes and didactic passages, which necessitates a very developed metaphorical interpretation. Otherwise these poems could be read as any other Hindi poems with no mystical themes. Thus, the theory that vernacular poetry was used in missionary work is hardly convincing. The reason for writing in Hindi is according to Ernst simply the fact that the Sufis lived in the Indian society and were influenced by it. They adopted from it items
that would fit to their mystical interpretation of Islam and aesthetic taste. It is rather an example of reception of influences in the form of poems and poetic images from the culture surrounding the Indian Sufis. These poetic images are then given a new signification by the Sufis according to their own theological and mystical thoughts. In another paper she discusses the Rushd-nāma of 'Abd al-Quddūs Gangohī(d. 1537). The text includes parallel verses in Persian and Hindi on parallel themes, but clearly shows that the writer did not conceive a hierarchy between the Hindi and Persian writing. He did not conceive Hindi and Persian fulfilling different functions, homely vs. courtly, but are a sign of a “translated Islam” in which 'Abd al-Quddūs “refracted” Sufi concepts in Indian images.

The vernacular poetry may have, though, played a role in the Islamisation of certain parts of the Indian population. The Hindi verses fix Chishti sama tightly to the Indian environment, while the Persianate poetry connects the mystical music concerts to the more cosmopolitan Persian world. Although these poems do not promote a syncretistic worldview or modern democratic values, they are significant since their imagery represent a clearly Indian component in the Chishti sama.'

**Imagery of Hindi poetry**

Poems from the hamd and na'ī categories are very few in Hindi. Surū is includes no Hindi hams and only two na'īs, neither of which is often heard in the Chishti sama'. On the other hand, numerous poems that praise the saints are found in the categories manqabat, rang and mubārak. The poems of praise in Hindi are often directed to the Indian saints of the Chishti order. The high sounding epithets met in the Persian and Urdu poems are substituted with indigenous images. It should be noted that these images do not derive from the Sanskrit aesthetics but from the folk tradition. It is customary, that poets write in Persian, Urdu and Hindi utilising the respective conventions of each poetic tradition.
Saint's title Khvāja Gharib Navāz has been assimilated to Hindi phonetics as Khāja Garīb Navāj. The female voice is dominant already in the poems of praise. An anonymous writer describes how Khwaja Moinuddin arrives to her courtyard as a bridegroom. In the Indian wedding the bridegroom arrives to the house of the bride with a group of relatives. Often this procession is a metaphor for the initiatic line, silsila, of the Sufis. In this poem also `Abd al-Qādir Jilānī is included among the Indian saints:

*Flowers from the garden of Husain*

*Ghaus al-A`zam ordered*

*Khvāja Usmān made a garland of them and brought it*

*Khvāja Qutab raised the flag*

*Shaykh Farīd came in ecstasy*

*Nizām al-Dīn and ābir sang:

*Moinuddin came to my courtyard, hey,*

*Came, hey, came and woke up my fortune!*

Among the classics known to all qawwals are the Hindi poems ascribed to Amir Khusro. His master Khwaja Nizamuddin is said to have appreciated Hindi very much. It is told that Khwaja Nizamuddin heard echoes of God's words “Am I not your Lord?” in the pūrabi language. (Khvāja asan Nizāmī in his foreword to Mu af-iBedam.) Among the Hindi poems of Khusro is the following ghī. The wife offers herself as a sacrifice to her beloved Khwaja Nizamuddin’s (here Nijām), beautiful face.

If the difference between the poems of praise and lyrical poems is sometimes difficult to detect in Persian and Urdu poetry, dividing is even more difficult in
Hindi poetry. A poem by Khusro found in *mangabat* category is actually a lyrical *git* on separation, *vīrāḥ*. The motive of honour that the beloved should protect is again repeated.

\[
\begin{align*}
& \text{Do not turn your eyes from me, I have fallen to your feet} \\
& \text{As you have made me your own, accordingly keep your promise} \\
& \text{My honour is in your hands, beloved, let there be no laughing in the world} \\
& \text{I have fallen to your feet} \\
& \text{For you there are hundreds like me, but for me you are only one} \\
& \text{Look with your mercy, do not see my faults} \\
& \text{I have fallen to your feet} \\
& \text{I forgot all due to you, do not forget me} \\
& \text{If you forget, I shall disappear from the both worlds} \\
& \text{I have fallen to your feet.}
\end{align*}
\]

Although the imageries of Persian and Hindi poetry are rarely mixed in poems or qawwali performance, there are few macaronic poems that are written half in Persian and half in Hindi. The next verses are from a poem written in ghazal format. In every verse the first line is written in Persian and the second line in Hindi. The first verse forms an exception with the first half of each line in Persian and the second half in Hindi. Maybe the need to have the Hindi ending—iyā as radīf is behind this ordering. The poems attributed to Khusro and it is along the dohā *Gorī sove sej par* ("The fair beauty sleeps in the bed") the earliest Hindi poem of Khusro to appear in literary sources in the end of the 18th century. Mixing two languages and two imageries add the poem's appeal and its ascription to Khusro has made it a great favourite in the Chishti sama. The charm of
macaronic verses is lost in translation, since parallel bilingual tradition is lost from the Western cultures.

The nights of separation long as the tresses and the day of meeting short like the life

O friend, when I do not see my beloved, how can I endure the dark nights.

Like a burning candle, like a bewildered particle, always crying for the pleasure of that moon

No sleep in the eyes, no peace in the body, since you do not come, nor send letters.

Many of the Hindi poems bear traces of folk tradition, since they are written as poems to be sung, for example, during the wedding. The songs of the groom’s party are always happy. The songs sung during the departure of bride from her parental home, bidāī, are always sad in tone. The next verses are from the most famous mystical exemplar of this genre, once again attributed to Khusro. The poem Kāhe ko byāḥī bides re is one of the examples of Sufis’ radical social attitude against child marriage and patriarchal society. They would, according to their mystical world view, interpret the poem as a metaphoric representation of, for example, turning away from the world of comfort in order to meet the beloved. Thus, they would have been used to promulgate social reform. The otherwise noble though is marred by the fact, that the child marriage and arranged marriage have not disappeared, and the departure of bride from the childhood home is still a sad, even traumatic, occasion. This is true despite the fact that all the songs sung during the bidāī repeat the same motives of lamentation, with or without the hope of joyous meeting with the husband.

Why do I have to marry outside the village

O my watching father

To my brothers you are to give one palace, two palaces
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To me you gave a foreign land

O my watching father.

When I raised the curtain of the palanquin and looked out

I had arrived to the strange land

O my watching father.

Also daily chores are part of the imagery. Fetching the water was, and in many places still is, a daily task that took time. In the next poem by Amir Khusrau, prankish Khwaja Nizamuddin breaks the earthen pot of the girl. Farida 'Ali Nizami suggested (personal communication) that the water is a metaphor for all intellectual knowledge.

A particular type of gīts is bārahmāśa poetry. Bārahmāśa means twelve months, and this poetic genre describes events and moods of the heroine in different seasons. The rainy season, sāvan, is one of the favourite seasons of poets. The rainy season is conceived as a romantic period. But it can also be a period of intense separation. If the beloved husband was not present in the beginning of the sāvan, it was likely that he would not come home before the end of the rains, since travelling during the monsoon was usually impossible. The following poem by an anonymous poet describes also the adornments of the married women, which are described in greater detail in the poetic genre called nakh sikh varnan, 'description from toe nails to hair locks'. The gaiety of the poem is enhanced through contrasting with the situation of a lonely wife who has to spend sāvan alone. In such a situation even the rainy season is scorched by the fire of separation.

O friend, my beloved has come home!

He makes this courtyard fortunate

I stood there full of hope
Having adorned the parting of my hair with henna and jasmine.

Seeing the form of my beloved

I lost my body and soul.

O friend, my beloved has come home!

Whose sävan passes with the beloved

That bride will enjoy the wedding night.

Whose beloved is not home in the sävan

Her sävan will catch fire.

O friend, my beloved has come home!

The other central theme of barahmāsa poems is spring, which after the cool winter of Northern India is welcomed with joy. The colours connected with spring are yellow and orange in their different hues. These happen to be also the colours of the Chishti order, and many masters sport at least a cap or scarf in some of these colours as apart of their attire. In the nature the mustard flower gives the yellow colour to the spring. The Chishtis celebrate in January-February a festival adapted from the Hindu calendar, vasant pancāmi. The beginnings of vasant pancāmi are traced back to Khwaja Nizamuddin, and during this festival people wear yellow scarves and take earthen pots with mustard flowers to the dargahs. During vasant pancāmi the qawwals sing poems written in celebration of the spring. The next poem attributed to Khusrō is among them:

The mustard is blooming in every forest

Flame of the forest is blooming in my courtyard

The koyals sing
And fair beauty decorates herself

Flower seller woman brought a vessel

In every forest the mustard is blooming

Many kinds of flowers she arranged

Took the vessel into her hand and come

To the door of Nizam al-Din

The colourful lover told her to come

And many years passed in every forest the mustard is blooming.

The Hindu festival holi has also found its way to the bārahmāsa poems written by Sufis. During holi people throw powdered colours and dyed water at each other. As has been noted, only two poems have a special place at Chishti sāma. The other of them is Rang, ‘Colour’. The poem describes the holi and its colours. It also describes the joy produced by the connection with the Sufi master. When the Rang is sung during the’urs festivities, it acquires very strong metaphoric value in describing how the blessings of the saint spread over the participants in the same manner as the colours of holi spread on the people celebrating the festival. The reference of Qur’an [2:138] to being dyed with God’s colour may have prompted Sufis to use this imagery. Rang is attributed to AmirKhusro.

Today there is colour, O mother, there is colour, hey!

There is colour in the house of my beloved!

Take me to the beloved, congratulate

There is colour in this courtyard today

O mother, there is colour!
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I found my master, Nizām al-Dīn Auliya’

Whenever I look, he is with me

Nizām al-Dīn Auliya’ illuminates the world

Whenever I look, he is with me

O mother, there is colour!

I have not seen another colour like this, Nizām al-Dīn

I have strolled searching in my own country and abroad

Your colour pleases my heart.

In the Hindu tradition holi is especially connected to Krishna. This can also be heard in some Sufi poems, like in the verse of Bedam. Chishtis, play holi! He has come in the form of Khāja Nizām.

The description of Khwaja Nizamuddin wearing a crown and having a syringe for sprouting water in the hand reminds the depictions of Krishna. One may be surprised to encounter poems on Krishna among the poems sung by the qawwals. This must have attracted the attention of groups unsympathetic to Sufis, as Francesca Orsini notes in discussing the work of ‘Abd al-Vāid Bilgār (d. 1608), aqā’iq-i Hindi.

Poems on wa dat al-wujūd have also been written in Hindi. It is common for modern writers to consider wa dat al-wujūd identical with the Vedantic views of the Upanishads. Hindi poems on wa dat al-wujūd, however, do not utilise philosophical concepts of the Upanishads, but are firmly rooted in the lyrical poetic tradition. The imagery used in the first line of the next verse could well be from a Persian or Urdu poem. The yellow colour of mustards, which spreads in the eyes, is a metaphor for joy and love.
notable Sufi with special connection to the saint acts as the mīr-i mahfil while her notables sit in the front rows. These mahfils often begin with recitation from the Qur'an or with a fātiha and end with du'ā by the mīr-i mahfil. Kenneth S. Avery notes that framing the samā' assembly by Qur'anic recitation in order to emphasise the devotional atmosphere is mentioned already in the writings of Ahmad al-Ghazâlî (d. 1126). During the urs festivities, these mahfils may take place directly in front of the shrine but more often they are organised in the more intimate locations, such as the Khvāja Hall built next to the tomb of Khvāja asan Nizāmî in Delhi or the khārqāhs of different Sufi masters. There are also special rooms around the shrines that are used especially for mahfils. Often these spaces are considered to have a special atmosphere conducive to listening samā'. Such places are Taq-i Buzurg in Delhi and heerî Gate in Gulbarga. The cilla-gâhs of Bābā Farîd Ganj Shakkar and Khvāja Usman Harûnî in Delhi and Ajmer respectively are favoured as well. Some dargâhs have special halls, called māhfil-khâna or samā'-khâna, for listening music. Perhaps the most formal assemblies take place in the māhfil-khâna of Ajmer. There the divān, a hereditary official whose post was established by emperor Akbar (d. 1605), supervises the occasion from a throne, while attendants dressed in Mughal outfit and armed with staffs carry the monetary offerings, nazar, to the singers. A more open mahfil is held in the urs maal of Delhi during the urs festivities at the Nizamuddin Dargah. These programs are presided over by Pir Amad Nizâmî and they are broadcasted live by the All India Radio.

In addition to common and special assemblies, qawwals sing during certain occasions connected to the rituals of the shrines. Among these rituals is the closing of the doors in the shrine of Khwaja Moinuddin. At this time the qawwals sing a
hymn in the local dialect of Rajasthan. In Delhi the local qawwals sing a salām hymn written by Khwaja Nizamuddin, when the door curtain of the shrine is lowered in the night. In both occasions only holak or daff, a framed drum, is used for the accompaniment. When acādar is brought to the shrine during the ʿurs festivities, the procession is accompanied by qawwals singing mubāraks, congratulatory songs. During the twelve days in the beginning of Muḥarram, the music is generally not heard in the Chishti dargāhs. Instead, the qawwals sing marsiyas, elegies commemorating the martyrdom of Imam Husain.

Selection of poetry in samaʾī qawwali varies. It seems, however, that the more selected the audience, the more prevalent are poems in Persian and Hindi. Also the theme of mystical love dominates in the assemblies with selected audience.

In a samaʾ assembly this order is a potential way to enhance the impact of poems. The poems of praise inspire respect and replicate the Sufi lineage, silsila, through which the divine knowledge and love is transmitted from God through Prophet Muhammad and saints to the listeners. Paying respect to these personages in mahfil-i samaʾ is obligatory, as it is obligatory for a mystic to become connected with a Sufi master. In choosing lyrical poems, qawwals may, for example, sing poems on separation (fīrāq) before singing poems on joyous union with the beloved (visāl) in order to increase the latter's impact. Finishing a performance with the theme of wa dat al-wujūd would be an effective ending. The full range of themes is, however, covered with individual poems only in assemblies where there is no more than one qawwali group performing.

The tazwīn is written in Urdu though the main poem is in Persian. It is the lover's prayer that the beloved would be kind, protect the honour of the lover at least in some way and would come with the bounty. The Persian part then changes the mood and makes the lover declare that he would like to make the beloved his guest and is ready to offer his soul and heart to the beloved. These moods are
reflected in the music, and the qawwals sing the Urdu lines in gentle tones until finally they arrive at the first line of the Persian poem, which they sing with full force.

Ardz ž dārām is part of the common repertoire of the qawwals in the Indian subcontinent, but Muammad Amad is especially famous for performing it and he knows several tazmīns to introduce the poem. His rendering of the poem usually induces immediate response from the listeners.

Inserted Verses

Not only are verses used to introduce a poem, but they are also inserted in between its verses. This is called girah jagānā, ‘to tie a knot’. The usual form for tazmīn poems is mukhammas, I am tempted to think that the last two lines were the original text on which the three lines have been written to explain the meaning. The reason for inserting a verse of a more didactic kind into a love poem is the culmination of the girah verse in the words kaj kulāh-e. In the song the qawwals stress this climax by singing the last words of the verse together. They also return to the asthāyi register while repeating the last line three times until the group leader returns to the main poem. The song is in fast tempo which reflects the rindāna, or intoxicated character of the poem. Also the girah verse with the theme of worshiping the beloved fits into this theme.

This is an example of a more elaborate girah. The last inserted verse, again in Urdu, brings the series of girahs into a climax by revealing the identity of the beloved. The Persian verse made face of the beloved the source of beauty and this verse reveals that such a beloved is no one else than Khwāja Nizamuddin, the Divine Beloved. And the incomparable colour is the colour of Khwāja Nizamuddin, which spreads over the devotees during the urs. The thematic sequencing of the girah verses is rather subtle and employs less known verses.
Extensive takrār is also employed with several units of the Persian insert. The inserts should not be too long in order not to interrupt the concentration on the main poem. In this particular instance the rupture is prevented by the continuity in both the musical and poetic metre. Every verse is in raml musaddas metre also known as masnāvī metre and they are sung in the same melody. This is in direct contrast with a conventional girah, which is sung in recitative while the rhythm recedes to the background. The poem itself, ‘Id-gāh-i mā gharībān kā-yīto, is written by Amir Khusro, and it describes the lane of the beloved as the place where the lovers may obtain similar bounty that the beggars obtain close to the ‘Id-gāhs during the ‘Id prayers. Qawwals favour this poem when they sing after the ‘Id prayers in the Chishti dargāhs. Thus, the poem is very familiar to the audiences. Before the qawwals begun singing the main poem, they had performed two introductory verses, in Persian and Urdu respectively. The verses are modelled after the example of Maulānā Rūmī’s Masnāvī. They are often connected to this particular poem, either as a rubā‘ī or a girah. This connection is due to the same metre and radif, but also to the thematic connection. Both verses describe the relationship of the poor, gharībān or muṭlisān, with the lane of the beloved.

M: un kæ

A: kūcæ mē gayā aur dī sadā

un kæ kūcæ mē gayā

2nd: un kæ kūcæ mē gaya

A: un kæ kūcæ mē gayā aur dī sadā

M: kāsā-yī

A: dil hāth mē lētā gayā
These lines contextualize the Persian verse and could be considered a tazmin. In this insert the Persian verse is turned into the words of a supplicant who has gone to the alley of the beloved. The verse explores the imagery connected to the beggars. The beggars are usually attached to some street or area, and while they go around they call out to attract people’s attention. The beggar also has the begging bowl (kasa) in hand, and finally he humbly says to the beloved that his beggars have arrived. Takrār is employed even in this insert of an insert, except in the last line which leads back to the Persian verse.

A: muflisān-em āmada dar kū-yi to
   muflisān-em āmada dar
   muflisān-em āmada dar
   muflisān-em āmada dar kū-yi to
   sha‘n ‘an allāh az jamāl-i rū-yi to

2nd: rū-yi to

A: sha‘n ‘an allāh
   sha‘n ‘an allāh
The qawwals employ extensive takrār with the words sha'n 'an allāh of the second line of the girah verse, because it indicates that the affairs of God are seen from the face of the beloved.

The ambivalent imagery of Persian and Urdu poems has, nonetheless, facilitated performing poems by these writers in sama’ assemblies. To a degree, this ambivalence is changed into mystical interpretation when the poems are performed in mystical context, in sama’ assembly and in qawwali style, which already associates with the mystical experience. In practice, the responsibility of interpreting poems on wine or infidelity in the Sufi context is left to the listeners, who are even encouraged to discover the connotations of poems for themselves.

In addition to Persian and Urdu, qawwals also sing poems in Hindi. Perhaps surprisingly, Hindi enjoys more prestige than Urdu as a language of mystical poetry. This is due to the common association of Hindi with the early Chishti masters, whereas Urdu fully matured into a medium of poetry only in the 18th century. The Hindi poems, however, are often rather simple and bear traces of folk tradition and oral transmission. The indigenous images and forms of Hindi poetry
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can be difficult to conceive as parts of the same poetic tradition as the more rigid and high-sounding Persian poetry or even the Urdu poetry which is based on Persian models. Some scholars have admitted Hindi poetry only instrumental value as a way to preach simplified Sufi message to Hindu masses. Alternatively, the female voice of Hindi poetry has been considered to propagate social change in the patriarchal society. In a similar vein, qawwali is largely explained as a tool for proselytising music loving Hindus. The explanation for the use of music and Hindi poetry, as well as for listening to poems by non-mystic writers, is not, I believe, this far-fetched. Rather, all of these are employed by the Chishtis for practical reasons: Sufis of the Chishti order conceive them beneficial for their spiritual practice.

Despite the textual orientation of Chishti sama, the poems are always set into music and performed by qawwals. The textual orientation is, however, discernible in the musical idiom of qawwali, both in modification of the musical grammar of classical Hindustani music and in its acoustic features. The musical conventions of, for example, upper and lower registers and rhythmical cycles are in qawwali used to accentuate the textual message, and through this enhance the text’s impact on listeners. This is the most marked contrast in comparison with classical Hindustani music, in which the text is employed only sparingly and even when it is employed, the delivery of its meaning is of little importance.

Qawwali lives in many forms. The form, which is in the widest circulation, is recorded popular qawwali. It differs from the traditional qawwali of sama assemblies, not only musically but also, in an even more pronounced way, in the level of the text. The texts of recorded qawwali are mostly devotional and devoid of themes elaborated in lyrical poems, such as wine, infidelity and love. Obvious reason for this is the desire to give recorded qawwali distinctively Islamic stamp, so that no danger of potentially immoral interpretation remains. The wide
circulation of recorded qawwali has also resulted in the simplification of the language of the poems and total exclusion of Persian poems that are not widely understood anymore.

The concert version of qawwali resembles samāʿi qawwali in relation to its musical idiom and textual content. In musical level, the most important difference is the emphasis on the musical traits, which are sometimes favoured in the cost of textual delivery. The repertoire of concert qawwali overlaps largely with that of samāʿi qawwali, though simpler poems with no morally suspicious themes are favoured. The aim of concert qawwali is aesthetic refinement and pleasure. The levels of aesthetic and mystical experience can never be fully separated in qawwali, but the focus of concert qawwali is more on the aesthetic side while samāʿi qawwali concentrates on the mystical side. Assemblies of samāʿi qawwali are also characterised with a more strict behavioural code, adab, than musical concerts. The adab of samāʿ assemblies aims at underlining the religious context by connecting samāʿ to the Islamic prayer ritual and also at facilitating undisturbed listening.

The different techniques of manipulating the text are employed in their full measure only in samāʿi qawwali in order to intensify the impact of the text. Many of these techniques are directly connected with the inducement of mystical states, an aspect which is absent from other forms of qawwali. In the more general level, the poems to be performed should be organised so as to proceed from poems of praise to love poems. Replicating the Sufi silsila in poems of praise contributes to the mystical interpretation of lyrical poems. The lyrical poems, again, can be so arranged that they proceed from poems on separation to poems on union and unity of existence. Although the thematic order is a potential way to increase the impact of the poems, it is followed only rarely in actual samāʿ assemblies and intensification of a text is achieved in the level of individual poems.
I have distinguished between three respective techniques in manipulating the text of an individual poem, each of which is tied to the living performance context. This has lead to their exclusion from recorded versions of qawwali. These three techniques are:

1. use of introductory verses
2. use of inserted verses and
3. extensive repetitions.

Each of these techniques has dual function. The first function is connected to the role of qawwals as musicians who earn their living by providing the mystical music in samā' assemblies of the Chishti order. In their role as professional musicians, the qawwals need to examine the audience in the course of performing in order to detect the hints on which text causes the most favourable reaction in the listeners. Accordingly, through the introductory verses the qawwals can test, what the audience would like to hear, whereas inserted verses and repetitions help in prolonging the enthusiasm of the listeners. One manifestation of enthusiasm is offering nazar to the mīr-i ma'fil, which provides for the qawwals.

The second function intertwines with the first one but is more closely connected with experiencing mystical states through listening to qawwali. Introductory verses and inserted verses expand the metaphorical nets of individual verses of the main poem and help the listeners in delving into the depths of the text. Poetic sensitivity is as important as the musical skills for qawwals, since they have to be able to combine verses from different poems into a unified whole. This can be very difficult in case they want to mix verses in Hindi with Persian and Urdu verses, since these traditions employ very different poetic images. The introductory and inserted verses are elemental in inducing mystical states in the listeners, whereas repetition is instrumental in sustaining them. The qawwals
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should repeat the textual unit, length of which varies from one word to an entire verse, as long as some listener is engrossed in a mystical state. Thus, the reason behind the different techniques of manipulating the text in samāʾī qawwālī is not motivated by aesthetic reasons but by the desire to enable the Sufi listeners to experience the divine reality.

One aspect of the textual content of Chishti samāʾ, which has been only briefly touched upon in this study, is the relation of the poems to the social and religious atmosphere at different periods of time. The qawwals have always been dependent on the patronage of Sufis, and consequently the poems they have performed mirror the attitudes of their patrons. Thus, the contextual analysis of the poems would contribute greatly to the ideological history of Islamic South Asia.

Code Mixing with Punjabi

The Sufis of the Panjab, like the Sufis of other parts of India, wrote for centuries together in the Persian language. They copied the phraseology, the similes, and, in fact, the whole system of Persian prosody and rhetoric in its entirety. Later on, the Sufis began to write in Urdu. But this Urdu looked for guidance to Persia and was so much overlaid by Persian vocabulary, phraseology, and jeux de mots, that it was really Persian diluted by an Indian language. The national culture was thus paralyzed, and national sentiments and thoughts were allotted a secondary place in their compositions. It was only in the middle of the fifteenth century that the initiative to write in the language of the people, i.e. Panjabi, was taken by a saint of the Chishti order of the Sufis. This initiator was Shaikh Ibrahim Farid, a descendant of Faridu’ddin Ganj-i-Shakar of Pak Patan. His example was followed by many, of whom Lal Husain, Sultan Bahu, Bullhe Shah, Ali Haidar, and Hashim are the outstanding and well-known figures. A considerable amount of fragmentary Panjabi Sufi poetry, of various authorship, has also been found. A
few of these poems contain the names of the writers, but not much more. We will speak of this poetry elsewhere.

The ideal of the Panjabi mystic poet was to find God in all His creation and thus attain union with Him. Thus union or annihilation in God was to be fully achieved after death, but in some cases it was gained while living. The Panjabi Sufi, like any other mystic in the world, calls God his Beloved. But the Beloved, who in Islamic countries was both masculine and feminine, here became masculine.

In Panjabi Sufi poetry, therefore, God is the Beloved and the Sufi, or the human soul, the woman separated from her lover by illusion or maya. The Sufi soul at times wails, then cries and yearns for union with the Beloved. The Sufi poet in the Panjab generally refers to three stories of perfect love in his poetry. They are the love tales of Hir Ranjha, Sassi Punnu, and Sohni Mahival, These tales of perfect love which end tragically are popular with all Panjabis.

In all the three, the heroines, Hir, Sassi and Sohni, who spent their lives in sorrow, always yearning to meet their respective lovers, were united with them in death. For a Sufi these tales have a spiritual significance. The heroines stand for the Sufi (the soul) and the heroes for God (the Beloved sought). After the Sufi has attained union with God he is no more Hir but becomes Ranjha, because for him all differences vanish away and he sees Ranjha (God) as much in his own self as in the external world. The Sufi poetry consequently is full of poems, songs, and hymns praising the Beloved, describing the pain and sorrow inflicted by separation, and ultimately the joy, peace and knowledge attained in the union.
The principal forms of Panjabi Sufi Verse

Kafi

This name is borrowed from the Persian kafiyā (meaning rhyme), and is applied to Panjabi Sufi poetry generally. Usually it is a poem on the divine attributes and sometimes on different Sufi beliefs. Kafia are found in different chandas, mostly prakrit, and in the ragas of the Panjabi musical system.

Bara mah

Bara mah is an account of the twelve months of the Panjabi year. The poet describes the pangs of divine separation in each of these months. At the end of the twelfth month he relates the ultimate union with the Almighty. Almost all Sufi poets have composed a bara mah.

Athvara

Athvara or a description of eight days. For seven days the seeker waits anxiously for God. Then when the last hope is fading he finds himself in the divine embrace on the eighth day.

Siharfi

Siharfi is an acrostic on the alphabet. It is not found in any other Indian language. As it is not of Persian or Arabic origin we conclude that it is a Panjabi form. The oldest verse of this kind is found in the Adi Granth of the Sikhs and was composed by Arjuna Dev. Later on it appears to have become a popular verse-form of the Sufis. Some of them wrote more than two or three siharfis. Siharfi precisely, is not a short poem but is a collection of short poems. The letters of the alphabet are taken consecutively, and words whose initials they form are employed to give metrical expression to the poet’s ideas.
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As a rule a siharfi is written in praise of the Beloved (God) and his attributes, but sometimes it is written to relate some legend, historical or imaginary. In Sufi literature, however, we have found only one such siharfi.

The siharfis of the Muhammadans are on Arabic or Persian alphabets. They did not compose any on the nagari or Panjabi alphabets, though Hindus of different sects have written siharfis on the Arabic and Persian alphabets.

Qissa

Qissa is another form of Sufi verse. It is generally a tragic story of two young people who Love each other madly. They are separated by parents and cruel social conventions to which they pay little attention and disregarding them try to meet each other. This disregard brings misfortune and so they die, ultimately to be united in death for eternity. Some qissas are composed on the siharfi principle; others are composed of baits, sometimes called slokas.

Bait

Bait is the corrupted form of the Arabic word bait. It is a sort of couplet poem, has very few rules and therefore has a good deal of variety. It is very popular with the Panjabis of all classes.

Dohra

Dohra is another form of Sufi verse. It is not the Hindi doha but resembles closely the chand. It has four tukks, all rhyming in the same manner. This was the favorite verse form of Hashim.

There is another form of verse common to all Panjabi religious poetry, called var. Originally var meant a dirge (var) for the brave slain in battle. But then it began to be employed in songs composed in praise of the Almighty God or some great
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Religious personage. It is composed of various stanzas called pauris, literally 'steps', which are sung by minstrels at religious shrines.

Punjabi Sufi poets

Bullhe Shah is universally admitted to have been the greatest of the Panjabi mystics. No Panjabi mystic poet enjoys a wider celebrity and a greater reputation. His kafis have gained unique popularity. In truth he is one of the greatest Sufis of the world and his thought equals that of Jalal-ud-din Rumi and Shams Tabriz of Persia. As a poet Bullhe Shah is different from the other Sufi poets of the Panjab, and represents that strong and living pious nature of Panjabi character which is more reasonable than emotional or passionate.

The superiority of Bullha's pantheistic conception of Godhead lies in the fact that he broke all shackles of country, religion, convention and sect. The integrity of the universal soul and His omnipresence so deeply convinced him that no differences existed for him. He became one with Him, the divine, and experienced that cosmopolitan joy which knows no limits and divisions. He says:

*Bullha ki jana mai kaun*

na mai moman vise masita, na mai vise kafar diu rita

na mai paka vise polita, na mai musa na phiraun

*bullha ki jana mai kaun*

na mai andar vaid kataha, na vise bhanga na sharaba

*na vise rinda mast kharaba, na vise jagan navice saun*

*bullha ki jana mai kaun*

na vise shadi na gannaki, na mai vise pulli paki

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"na mai abi na mai khaki, na mai atish na mai paun"

"bullha ki jana mai kaun"

"na mai arbi na lahawri, na mai hindi shahir nagauri"

"na mai hindu turk pashori, na mai rakhda vicc nadaun"

"bullha ki jana mai kaun"

"na mai hheu mazhab da paia, na mai adamu hava jaia"

"na mai apne nam dharai, na vicc baithan na vicc bhaun"

"bullha ki jana mai kaun"

"avval akhar ap mijana, na koi dula hor pachana"

"maitho hor na koi siana, Bullha shahu khara hai kaun."

"bullha ki Jana mai kaun."

Bullha, what do I know who I am? Neither am I a Muslim in the mosque nor am I in the ways of paganism, nor among the pure or sinful, nor am I Moses or the Pharaoh; Bullha, what do I know who I am? Neither in the books of doctors I, nor indulged I in bhan and wine, nor in the wine-house in the company of the bad, neither awake nor asleep. Bullha, what do I know who I am? Neither in happiness nor in or-row, nor in sin or purity nor of water nor of earth, nor in fire nor in air. Bullha, what do I know who I am? I am not of Arabia nor of Lahore, nor an Indian nor of the city of Nagaur, neither a Hindu nor a Muslim of Peshawar, nor do I live in Nadaun. Bullha, what do I know who I am? Neither have I found the secret of religion, nor of Adam and Eve am I born, neither have I taken a name, my life is neither settled nor unsettled. Bullha, what do I know who I am? Myself know as the first and the last, none else as second do I recognize; none else is wiser than I. Bullha, who is the true master?
Bullhe Shah stands for the unity for human welfare, of the followers of different religions and sects. He bases his argument on the fact that he sees God installed in the heart of each individual, no matter to what religion he belongs. The expression of the sentiment is simple, impressive, and beautiful.

*Hindu na nahi musliman, behie trinjhan taj abhaman*

*Sunni na nahi ham shia, sulh kai ka marag lia*

*Bhukkhe na nahi ham rajje, nange na nahi ham kajje*

*Rode na nahi ham hassde, njare na nahi ham vassde*

*Papi na sudharmi no, pap pun ki rai na ja*

*Bullha shahu har ciltage hindu tark do jen itage.*

Neither Hindu nor Mussulman let us sit to spin, abandoning pride (of religion). Neither a sunni nor a shi'a, I have taken the path of complete peace and unity. Neither am I hungry (poor) nor satisfied (rich), nor naked nor covered. Neither am I weeping nor Laughing, nor deserted nor settled. Neither a sinner, I, nor a pure one, I am not walking in the way of either sin or virtue. Bullha, in all hearts I feel the Lord, (therefore) Hindu and Mussulmans both have I abandoned.

Bullha's adoration and respect for his guru are profound. He finds no difference between God and his hadi, and sings to him in the same strain as to God:

*Pahili pauri prem di pulsarate dera*

*Haji makke hajj karn mai mukh dekha tera*

*Ai inayat qadiri hath pakri mera*

*Mai udika kar rahti kodai ka kar dera*

*Dhund shahir sabhi bhatia kasad ghalla kehra*
The first step of love (on the ladder of love) is (like) being on the pulsar. Pilgrims may perform hajj but look to your face. Come, Inayat Qadiri, and hold my hand (be my support). I am waiting, corn, some time and make a stay. I have searched the whole town, what messenger shall I send? Having mounted the palanquin of love my heart (now) palpitates; come, Inayat Qadiri, my heart desires you.

But Bulleh showed great love and reverence for his master and did not pay any heed to this objection.

To counsel Bulleh, his sisters and sisters in law have come

Pay heed to us and give up mixing with the low caste Araeen

You are a scion of Ali, the Prophet, why must you shame our fair clime.
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Those who call me Syed, are destined to hell made for them

Those who call me Araeen, have the swings in heaven laid for them

The low caste and the high caste, are created by God who cares not for family

He regards the beautiful and cherishes the not so comely.

If you wish to enjoy the glory of the Garden, go and serve the Araeen

Why bother about Bulleh’s caste? Obey the command that comes from Saeen.

\[ Ab \text{ to jaag Musaffir pyare } \]
\[ Raeen gayi laike taare \]
\[ Kar le aj karni da weera \]
\[ Mod na ho si uawen tera \]

Awake, dear traveller, you’ve got to move on.

Trailing its stars, the night is gone.

Do what you have to do, do it today.

You will never be back this way.

Another Sufi Madholal Husain was originally from Kayastha zhindus who embraced Islam in the time of Feroz Shah. His Sufism was of a peculiar type and presented a curious medley of Persian and Indian Sufism. In his mystic ideas and beliefs he was more Indian than anything else, but in his daily life he followed the style of the Persian Sufis.

\[ Par \text{ is kasabe de vice bahute alam phazol hoal } \]
\[ Par shah husain kabir Jo aye dargah ja khalooa. \]

Though in this profession many learned ones had been, yet Shah
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Husain and Kabir who came (in the profession) went and stood at the door (of God).

His verse is written in simple Panjabi, slightly overlaid with Persian and Arabic words. It excels in expression of thought and has a clear flow. In its simplicity and effectiveness it is superior to Ibrahim Farid's Panjabi. It lacks the brilliancy of Urdu poetry but is remarkable for its just proportion of words and powerful sense of rhyme. His versification is smoother, his similes more relevant, and his words simpler but more effective than those of Ibrahim. His poetry is of a less orthodox type but is not as saturated with Indian thought as would be the poetry of Bullhe Shah. Like his character, his poetry is a curious mixture of Sufi, Indian, and foreign thought. The essential feature of his poetry which strikes the reader is that it is highly pathetic and, piercing the heart, creates a mystic feeling.

Dunia to mar javana vatt na avana

Jo kich kita bura bhala to kita apna pavana.

From the world one parts as dead not to return again; whatever actions wrought (be) right or wrong, according to them he shall obtain.

Tari sai Rabba ve mai anugan hari

Sabh saiya gunvantia, tari sai rabba ve mai bai bisari

Bheji si jis bat nu piai ri soi mai bai bisari

Rai mil saiya dai rangaya piai ri mai rahi kuari

Mai sai te parbat dar de, piai ri mai kaun vicari

Kahe Husain sahelio ni amala baih khuri.

Save, O master God, me full of faults; all friends possess quail-ties (good karmas), save me, full of faults. The object for which (I) was sent, O dear that alone I
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ignored; gathering together (for spinning) my friends, O dear, have had their trousseaux dyed (for marriage); I am left unmarried (for not possessing a dowry). Of my master (God) the mountains are afraid, poor creature, what am I? Husain says, O friends, without qualities there is but disaster.

Sufis like Fard Faqir generally known as Peril Fakir for him Punjabi was Hindi as it was the language of the Hindustanis or the Indians. Whatever the name he gave to his mother-tongue, the above indicates that he was accustomed to write in Persian prose. His Panjabi verse is more or less rustic in expression but lacks that sweet flavour which rustics impart to it.

Yara sai nai satth barsa son nabi da aya

eh rasala kamil hoya hurnam diurao aya.

The eleven hundred and sixty-third year of the Prophet's era has come, and this journal is complete according to the order that had come from the start.

Hokim ho ke bain galice bauhta zulam kamade

mehantia nu kami akkhan khun uhna da khade

phar vagary lai lai jawan khauf khula nahi

fard fakira dard manda dia ikk din pausan ahi

kasabia nu maihar mukaddam jabran catti pade

bhar gariba da sir laike ape dozakh jade.

Being rulers they sit on carpets and practise tyranny; artisans. They call menial and drink their blood. By force they take them to work without fearing God, Fard the sufferer's sighs will fall on them one day. The artisans have (to pay) the first tax and they have to suffer this loss. Carrying the load of the poor on their head: they (rulers) themselves go to hell.
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In the following he speaks like a free Sufi:

Sin sunaye khalak nu kar kar masale roz

Loka de nasihata andar tere cor

Ki hoya je laddia godha kitaba nal

Farad lekha laisia rabb kadir jul julal.

*Sin*: you preach to the public, treating problem after problems each day, (you) give instructions to others and inside *you* is the thief; what avails it if the ass is loaded with books? Fard, the mighty, radiant and glorious God will take account.

Zal zikar kinday da nakar zahir khalak dikhay

Andar kart tun bundgi bahar parda pay

Mul na veed ilam nu na kar kisse saval

Farad lekha laisia rabb kadir jul julal.

*Zal*: discuss not God openly showing to the public; inside (in the heart) you should pray to Him and outside put the veil; do not in the least sell your knowledge nor question any person. Fard, the mighty, radiant and glorious God will take account.

Jo koi kindu ayke hove musalman

mul na ghannan os da na kar bura guman

kald na karna katal bhi adios iman

bajho hujat shara de diyo na azar.

Any Hindu who comes and becomes a Mussalman, do not take away his wealth nor harbour evil thought, do not imprison or slay him, for faith has brought him (to Islam); without the permit of the *shari'at* do not give (him) trouble.
A good number of Panjabi Sufi poets made attempts to create friendly feelings between the different communities by harmonizing the opposing systems. For this reason their poetry became clear to all sections of the Panjabi people. Besides, from the literary point of view also it deserved and was allotted a very high place. It retains the favor of both Hindus and Mussulmans and circulates among the masses in the form of songs, proverbs, and hymns even to this day. In short, without this strain, Panjabi literature would be poor and devoid of a good deal of its beauty and literary charm.