

SUFISM AND CURING

JACQUELINE LUCAS

M. PHIL SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY
SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES

ProQuest Number: 10672631

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 10672631

Published by ProQuest LLC (2017). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

ABSTRACT

This thesis is primarily concerned with the relationship between Sufism and curing. Other topics necessary to the understanding of this main area are additionally considered: an introduction is provided to Sufism per se, as an expression of Islamic mysticism; there is a consideration of the role of emotion in Sufism and particularly of love, which is also discussed with relevance to Middle Eastern society; then the main body of the thesis deals with the subject of Sufism and healing.

This introduction explores theology and the history of Sufism, and also anthropologists' views of Sufism and its ritual. The chapter on emotion is included as a necessary comment on one aspect of the causation of psychiatric problems: emotionality. The main subject of the thesis guides this inclusion, as it explores in detail the healing of psychiatric illness by Sufis in the Middle East and North India, beginning with a discussion of Islamic cosmology and of psychiatric illness and spirit possession, and progressing on to consider the model of Sufism as psychotherapy. This explores the central notion of Sufism and curing with some comparisons with other types of indigenous psychiatric healing. Lastly baraka, that particularly Islamic notion of 'grace', 'blessing' or 'Spiritual power' is examined, as it is upon baraka's existence that Sufi healing power is based.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	Pages	4- 7
Chapter one - What is Sufism?	Pages	8- 43
Chapter two - Sufism and emotion	Pages	44- 73
Chapter three - Medico-religious discourse	Pages	74-104
Chapter four - Psychotherapy and Sufism	Pages	105-135
Chapter five - Baraka	Pages	136-153
Conclusion	Pages	154-155
Glossary	Pages	156-158
Bibliography	Pages	159-162

PREFACE

During the three years I have been compiling this thesis, I have approached my subject from a variety of slants, but having an interest mainly in heterodoxy, the data that have struck me most particularly are those which concern branches of Sufism that are less orthodox. Examination of this type of data has led me to become concerned with the curing that some Sufis (and others) are involved with. Accordingly, though this thesis is basically about Islamic mysticism it has as its core an examination of the therapeutic aspects of Sufism. The data alone has led me in this direction, and indeed there is an entire sub-discipline in anthropology for discussions that explore the relationship between religion and medicine, especially in Islamic studies.

This thesis is entitled 'Sufism and curing'. It is mainly concerned with the healing of psychiatric illness in the Middle East and India, which subject it contextualises in the Muslim societies of these regions. The notion of psychiatric illness itself is subsidiarily explored, as this idea is a Western one, and the parameters of mental illness in the Muslim world appear to differ somewhat from those in the West. Naturally Sufism provides the *raison d'etre* for this piece of work. The thesis is predicated on its existence.

The Sufism discussed in this thesis is possibly a little unfamiliar to those acquainted, say, with Sufi poetry or hagiography. Even for anthropologists, the Sufism I am most concerned with is more 'unorthodox', more questionable *qua* Sufism than the Sufism usually studied. Also I explore peripheral religious phenomena that sometimes are called Sufi and sometimes are categorised as part of saint cults, or even of

Shamanism. Nevertheless these phenomena have a relationship with Sufism: they are essentially mystical and owe a great deal to the Sufis. Additionally I investigate the subject of spirit possession. This has a certain relevance to Sufism in that many who attend Sufi hadra for curing purposes are purported to be so possessed. Also the cults of N. and N.E. Africa (here thinking particularly of the zaar) have certain parallels with Sufism.

Certain subjects need to be discussed in such a piece of work with a subject matter like Sufism. An introduction to Sufism is provided for those unfamiliar with the subject, that deals with the history and theology necessary as a background. Also the views of anthropologists are considered, and there is a discussion of Sufi ritual, and a glimpse into the particular world of the Sufis.

Emotion is also relevant in this thesis. The emotional aspects of illness are perhaps not the most frequently discussed, but there is nevertheless a school of thought that places emotional disturbance, or emotionality, as a cause of certain diseases. It has particular relevance to psychiatric illness. This is one facet of the significance of emotion to the thesis. The other facet is the importance of emotion, particularly love, to the Sufis. Emotionalism is a frequent theme directed at Sufi ritual: Sufi ritual is said to be emotionally articulate. The sexual sublimation said to be achieved via the ritual is a relevant feature here. Sufi poetry is also redolent of the language of love. Allah is the 'Beloved' and the Sufi seeker is himself 'Friend' or the 'Lover', knocking repeatedly at the door of the Beloved to gain admittance.

An introduction to the field of medical discourse is naturally provided in this thesis as an outline of Islamic concepts of illness. Islamic cosmology is discussed to provide a background and the

an examination of various illness phenomena in the Muslim world. Here most attention is paid to psychiatric illness as this is mainly what the Sufis are called upon to cure. The crux of this thesis is the image of Sufism as psychotherapy. Various views of this postulate are considered and one particular ethnography explored in detail to elicit information that explains both the psychological world of the people in question and the position of the Sufis vis-a-vis these people. The notion of Sufism as psychotherapy is then analysed in comparison with data from N. India, and lastly there are parallels drawn with other types of curing: Shamanism and divining.

The last subject to be dealt with is perhaps the most important. It is baraka, that intangible force behind the efficacy (or purported efficacy) of Sufi cures. What baraka is remains mysterious. It can be translated or glossed as 'grace' or 'blessing' or 'spiritual power', but what indeed is it? The last chapter attempts an explanation of baraka through the consideration of certain texts that discuss various aspects of it.

Running through this thesis, like a long skein of wool, is the issue of power: the power of religion and mysticism in the Muslim world; the power of emotion; the power of the indigenous healer and, to a certain extent, the ambivalent power of the patient. Yet it is seen most vividly and most aptly in the Sufi curing ceremony as a kind of emanation, or atmosphere, that pervades, or seems to, that kind of experience. It is the power of the inexpressible, the numinous. It is the power that can perhaps produce a quasi-concrete phenomenon into which to convert itself. Here I speak of baraka.

These are the key aspects of the thesis. More could be added on a concrete level about the ethnography used and the various Sufi texts consulted. The literature covers a fairly wide spectrum of

Sufism, and the anthropology of religion and medicine. The thesis attempts a synthesis of these three fields, albeit an idiosyncratic one.

A last word could be said about the materials used. All the texts I have consulted are to be found in or around the university of London, apart from some of the most recent texts. I have used the libraries of Senate House, S.O.A.S., and the British Museum extensively.

Lastly in Chapter Two I refer to a meeting I had with Dr. Javad Nurbakhsh when he was in London last year. This interview was fairly lengthy and for me both rewarding and pleasurable, and I would like to thank Dr. Nurbakhsh for his time and his kindness to me.

C H A P T E R O N E

WHAT IS SUFISM?

The title of this chapter begs an answer. To provide it is quite a challenge, given the assortment of interpretations and analyses of Sufism available to the reader. Instead of directly answering this question I intend to introduce Sufism in such a way as to indicate its significance for this thesis is as well as its general nature. This chapter begins with a list of terms I have defined myself to help the reader along with what follows. After this there is a section on theology and historical background that provides an essential introduction to the subject. Certain concepts are outlined and several notions discussed. Thirdly there is an account of some of the preoccupations of anthropologists who consider Sufism. Fourthly there are some theoretical opinions concerning the study of Islam generally that are useful for my purposes, and lastly there is an excursion into the world of the Sufis.

It is certainly true that Sufism is an ambivalent phenomenon that can be studied particularly well in an ethnographic context to elicit a variety of data, both purely factual and also interpretive. This embeds Sufism in a social context where its definition and interpretation can be approached as a social and historical process that has temporal and spatial co-ordinates, and boundaries. I intend accordingly to examine Sufism in such contexts, but to regard it also as a topic in free-flowing discourse of religion in which it has a significant voice.

Before I begin with this chapter proper I think I should first of all outline some relevant terms that do need some explanation.

There is a glossary attached to this thesis, but a compilation of terms might be useful here. They divide neatly into three categories, (1) The Phenomenological, (2) The Experiential, (3) Those concerned with Self and Person.

Phenomenological Terms

The first term to explain is Tariqa. This Arabic word both signifies 'way' or 'path', representing the life which the Sufi leads qua Sufi, and also denotes the group of Sufis to which he belongs. (For example tariqa could be translated as 'order' of Sufis, e.g., the Mevlevi tariqa.) Two connected terms, one Arabic and one Persian, signify the Sufi centre: these are respectively zawiya and khanaqah. A loose translation could be 'lodge'.

Three related terms denote spiritual leaders. They are Sheikh and Pir, and the female equivalent of Sheikh, Sheikha (as used in Constantines 1972, shaykha.)

One term is used to denote devotees of Sufism who are not actually Sufis. This is muhibbin (see Chapter Four). Another term denotes a Sufi novice or learner: this is murid.

Five phenomenological terms describe different types of mystic. They are (1) Sufi, which denotes a Muslim mystic, a follower of the tariqa, wearer of the suf (wool). (2) Dervish (Persian) which can be used to refer to any Sufi on the Path, but is more commonly used to describe a wandering Sufi who is not affiliated with any particular centre. There are specific orders of dervishes, e.g., the Qalandari. (3) Murshid, which is an Arabic term denoting a Sufi master. (4) Khalifa, which refers to the 'successor' of the Sheikh, the 'second in command' in a Sufi group. (5) Marabout, which describes a saint (after C15th.) A reputation for being a marabout could arise from descent from the Prophet, religious learning, mystical intuition or the possession of supernatural

power.

Three terms that approximate to the phenomenological category are tasawwuf, haqiqat and baraka. The first is the term used to describe the way of the Sufi: the tasawwuf referring to the experience of Sufism. It is the word used throughout the Middle East for 'Sufism'. The second, haqiqat, denotes the circle of reality, the all-encompassing truth of Divine Reality. One of God's names is Al Haqq, the 'reality' or the 'truth'. The third, baraka, I discuss at length in Chapter Five. It is commonly glossed as 'grace' or blessing'.

Three related terms denote devils of different kinds. These are jinn zaar and sheitan. Jinn are acknowledged to exist in the Koran and are mischievous sprites with the power to harm humanity. Zaar are mainly alien invading spirits, which are basically non-islamic by nature.

Experiential Terms

Five terms are used to describe various experiences of the Sufis. They can also be more substantive and denote states of being. They are tauhid, which means unity with God, or a state of such unity; hal, which describes a state or condition one experiences on the spiritual path (or not - see Chapter Four); maqam which signifies a station, a point, achieved on the spiritual path; and lastly two connected terms fana and baqa which also denote points reached on the spiritual path, but can also be used to describe a condition (i.e., 'in fana', or 'in baqa'.) Fana and baqa are difficult to define because they have definite theological meanings, as stations on the Sufi path. Fana can be glossed as the passing away of the self; baqa as a state of permanence in the Godhead.

Four further terms have no real connection with the others, but are found in this thesis. They are wajd, which signifies ecstasy;

'ishq' which can be translated as 'passionate love'; muhabbah, which can be loosely translated as loving kindness, and jidhba, which yet again is difficult to translate, and is used as in the expression 'in jidhba', signifying a state of 'attraction' to an external phenomenon, in the sense used here, a vaguely spiritual and ecstatic phenomenon.

Dhikr is the last term in this category I would like to mention. This will be frequently used and signifies the main ritual of the Sufis. It could be explained as 'mentioning' or 'recollecting' the name(s) of God.

Self and Person

Four terms could be listed under this rubric: nafs, ruh, 'aql' and qalb. Nafs is translated as 'soul' by Schimmel (1975: 112) but is also used to denote the lower animal self. Schimmel (ibid.) refers to it as 'the flesh'. Various predicates (nafs-al-lawwama, the blaming soul; nafs mutma'inna, the soul at peace) can be used to further specify the condition of the soul. A frequent image (ibid.) is 'that of a restive horse or mule that has to be kept hungry and has to undergo constant mortification and training so that, eventually, it serves the purpose of bringing its rider to his goal'.

Ruh refers to spirit, and is often discussed along with nafs and qalb as a tripartite division of man's inner faculties with nafs as the lowest principle.

Qalb signifies the heart, which according to the Koran (Sura 49: 7 and Sura 16: 106) is the seat of faith.

'Aql' denotes reason or intellect. It is frequently mentioned in Sufi writing in contrast with 'love'.

History and Theology

The literature of Sufism encompasses a variety of academic disciplines: e.g., history, theology, anthropology. There are historical works on countries and cultures from Morocco to Indonesia written by academics with an interest in Sufism or Islam, or, possibly, just a particular region in a certain historical epoch. Sufism has spread via the medieval trading routes from Arabia to India, to South East Asia and China. The diffusion occurred between the 11th and 14th approximately: its result is more interesting.

The result of the spread of Islam and Sufism is that various locations have been suggested as the original source of Sufism. Idries Shah (1977) explores the various claims to a definitive origin for Sufism in Greek thought, in pre-Islamic Middle Eastern thought, in Indian philosophy, or even in the ideas of the Chinese Tao, concluding that Sufism is essentially an Islamic phenomenon with its roots firmly in the traditions of the Muslim world, its ideals epitomised in the life of the prophet Mohammed. (See Gellner 1981 p. 103 for an account of Sufism's origins).

The historical works often follow the lives of particular Sufi writers who have had a certain influence over the thought of Muslims in the culture where they were born. Middle Eastern works of such a kind proliferate in many languages: additionally there are the true hagiographies, and the literary scholarship surrounding the great Sufi poets such as Attar or Rumi. Figures like these are more than poets, more than religious figures even. In Foucault's terms, in his discussion of the 'author function', they could be seen as 'transdiscursive' (Foucault 1979: 153-4) as their writings have helped to create other bodies of literature, exegeses based in their works.

Thus the historical works of Sufism are accompanied by theological

discussions between Sufis, at the time the famous writers were at work, and later came the armies of orientalists delving into the literature, the history, the biographies, for their own purposes. Interpreters of the Sufi greats are legion: compilations exist in vast numbers of selected tales, poetry and sayings of the famous Sufis of the medieval Islamic period around the C12-C13th.

The theological arguments provide a field of study in themselves. Sufism being mysticism, it has always had an ambiguous relationship with Muslim orthodoxy. Al Hallaj, a famous Sufi figure was martyred for, among other things, his outrageous claims, the most notorious of which was 'ana'l-Haqq', ('I am the truth'), (see Schimmel 1975 p. 62-77 for an account of his life). Existentially and phenomenologically a person may argue such a claim: theologically it is naturally anathema. Allah is the One Supreme God, the sum of the ninety-nine attributes, the creator of all created things, subsisting and existing at the supreme apex of the created 'hierarchy of being' that is made up of matter from the most subtle to the most gross, from God, via the jinns (demons) and angels through to all earth-bound entities. In this structuring of the cosmos, truth encompasses the whole, and is, given the parameters of Islam, Allah. In a certain image, the truth is a circle, of which the Way, the Sufi path (tariqa) is a radius that pierces the circumference at one particular point alone: so the truth the Sufis obtain is but a partial aspect of the whole truth of Allah. The Sufi goal, which is either unity with God or knowledge of God, is thus a personal goal and achieves but one individual apperception of the Truth, the one Reality of Allah.

Sufism provides an evergreen source of study and interpretation for orientalists. The more abstruse Sufi authors are discovered in their dribs and drabs and the hermeneutic exercise begins anew,

accompanied by evaluations of the discovery's literary worth.

Translations abound, bringing the esoteric subject matter into the exoteric compass of English prose translation or poetic imitation.

Some renderings of the Sufi greats into English are excellent, profound, and create a poetry of value; other works popularise Sufism and produce a mish-mash of philosophy, psychology and religion that has little academic discrimination to commend it, but a world of popular appeal and an interest to the interpretive anthropologist concerned with that which can be gleaned of other cultures' values and beliefs through an iconoclastic medium such as popularism. Sufism as mysticism could be said to be an attempt to become conscious of the One Reality, whatever this may be defined as. Schimmel (1975:4) suggests it can be wisdom, light, love or nothing. It has been criticised 'because it seemed to deny the value of the human personality and to result in pantheism, or monism, thus constituting the greatest threat to personal responsibility'. (op. cit: 5). However, Ibn Arabi (d.1240) propagated the doctrine of the insan-i-kamil (the Perfect Man), which was quite influential in later Sufism. Man's relationship with God is constantly considered and reconsidered in Sufi theosophy. Man's primordial covenant with God was destined to be important to the Muslim conscience (op. cit: 24). This covenant of man to acknowledge and worship the creator was, according to Schimmel, a 'starting point for their understanding of free will and predestination, of election and acceptance'. The importance of mankind is however never underestimated in Sufism. The 'hero' figure is a key image in the theosophy of many. The image, or figure, of Mohammed as the prototype for the Perfect Man is of great significance. 'The Perfect Man' is a miniature of Reality; he is the microcosm, in whom are reflected all the perfect attributes of the macrocosm. Just as the Reality of Mohammed was the creative

principle of the universe so the Perfect Man was the cause of the universe.....For Man alone the world was made' (Arberry 1950: 101).

In addition to the Perfect Man, represented by Mohammed, another key symbol in Islam generally, so accordingly, and to a more subtle extent, in Sufism, is the Book. Sufism takes its inspiration from the Koran, which issued from the mouth of Mohammad. The Sufi significance of the Koran is (1) in its outlining of the numerous and often contradictory Attributes of God that form the basis for a large portion of mystical theories and are used with magical connections, and (2) in its enciphering of a practical and moral guidance for the life of the Muslim umma (community). Its recitation has the power to uplift the hearer to a spiritually receptive state. More esoterically, or at least, more significantly for the practical anthropologist, the suras (verses) themselves have a certain magical power, and are still used as protective charms against, and in the treatment of, disease, and witchcraft.

The 'what' of Sufism is possibly difficult to ascertain even in the classical period (9th-13th). Trimingham (1971: 200) suggests that,

'the Sufi way, whose reaches depend so much upon the individual's temperament and innate gifts, is for an elite only'.

Indeed, the mystical aspirations and longings of the Sufi greats are naturally a world away from the aims and goals of the masses. The 'degeneration' of Sufism after its classical period is discussed endlessly in the literature (Arberry 1950: 119-133). Trimingham succinctly points to the need to integrate Sufism with the large majority of Muslims in its later, consolidating phase when the Sufi orders became widespread, as emphasising this decay, or dichotomisation of Sufi mysticism:

'Sufis recognised that the majority of mankind are 'born deaf', devoid of the faculty for mystical sensitivity. The devotional techniques of the orders attempt to radiate

the same effects, give an illusion of a glimpse into Reality, to the ordinary man. So Sufis came to equate the ecstatic trance with loss of consciousness in the divine unity and this development is one of the signs of what has been called the degeneration of Sufism, but may be regarded as its adaptation to the needs and capacity of the ordinary man'.

(Trimingham 1971: 200)

The kind of Sufism personified by Uways al Qurani, the 'prototype of the inspired Sufi who has been guided solely by divine grace, knowing of the Prophet without outward connection'.

(Schimmel 1975: 28)

companion of the Prophet and key figure emulated by those who seek illumination outside the regular mystical path without the mediation and guidance of a Sheikh, might have been a blueprint for Ibn Arabi, but not for the mass of Sufistically inclined Muslims.

Differentiation was possible in early Sufism between 'voluntaristic' and 'gnostic' modes (op. cit: 6). Jami separated the mystic and prophetic spirits among the Sufis, the former being enraptured with his/her own experiences, a more ascetic type of Sufi, the latter being capable of return from ecstasy to lead others along the right path (op. cit: 7). The pivot of the Sufi way is no doubt the experience of tauhid (unity): 'to declare that God is One' (Opcit: 17), however, and in this aspect both strands of Sufism unite to appreciate the mystical experience that enables the Sufi to say that he is such.

The way of the Sufi is the tasawwuf for which Schimmel recounts a three-fold meaning: (1) according to the shari'a, the Muslim law, (2) according to the tariqa, the mystical path, (3) according to the haqiqa, the Truth.

'It is a purification on different levels, first from the lower qualities.....then from the bondage of human qualities, and eventually a purification and election on the level of attributes'.

(opcit: 16)

This language is necessarily complex as outlining a meta-physic or theosophy; also it is an aspect of Sufism that is generally submerged in the accounts of anthropologists. This may be unfortunate, revelatory of Sufism's 'decay', one could say, but possibly also redolent of the interest of the ethnographers, who for the most part are not unduly concerned with (or able to penetrate) the history, development and practice of complex, historically-elaborated theosophical systems, but rather concentrate upon their practical application. So the tasawwuf remains an anthropological conundrum: incomprehensible to the eyes of the empiricist, or even to the phenomenological observer (e.g., Crapanzano 1973) or the anthropologist concerned with narrative and biography (Dwyer 1983) who are involved in Sufi social discourse rather than in identifying the presence of the history of ideas in the anthropological present. One awaits Andrew Moyer's work on Turkish mysticism with anticipation of a different approach.

Schimmel's discussion of Sufism does seem to accentuate its amorphousness. This may be due to attributing Christian, Hindu and Buddhist influences to it in its formative period (op cit: 69-72). Its distinctive nature emerged however in the 11th-13th with the great writers (for example the theoretician Qushairi in the 11th, Ghazzali the lawyer/theologist in the same century, and the great poet Rumi and the controversial thinker Ibn Arabi by the 13th (see Schimmel 1975 and Arberry 1950). The 12th saw the formation of the great tariqas: Qadiriyya, Suhrawardiyya, and Shadhiliyya, whose spread into India and N. Africa from the key Sufi centres of earlier times in Syria and Iraq facilitated the consolidation of Sufi influence. 1502 provided another important watershed in the history of Sufism (op cit: 83). This was when Shah Ismail the Safavid won power, and marks the time from which Shi'ism became the creed of Iran, and diverged

from Sufism. In the following century important developments occurred also in India during the reign of Akbar (1556-1605). His tolerance towards syncretism provoked a hostile reaction from the sober, Central Asian Naqshbandiya (op. cit: 360 ff), who subsequently acquired a certain amount of influence in the sub continent, previously the province of the more ascetically inclined Chistiyya order of Sufis.

The politicization of Sufism was then not a new phenomenon. The martyrdom of Mansur Hallaj (912) in Iraq was partly due to his heretical declaration 'Ana'l-Haqq', (see earlier) but political involvements with the Carmathians of Bahrain, N. Sind and Multan made him suspect in the eyes of the Baghdad government, as did his association with the chamberlain Nasr al-Qushairi, a would-be reformer who favoured better administration and juster taxation in a time of powerlessness in the caliphate and instability in the bureaucracy. His implicit call for a spiritual revival might have had effects on social organisation and even on political structures in a society,

'where religious and political leaders lived in a state of stagnation with neither the strength nor the intention to revitalise the Muslim community'.

(op. cit: 68)

Later an indication will be given of the wider political significance of Sufism in its anthropological meanings. But now it is useful to note that the Sanusi order of Libya (Evans Pritchard 1949) provide a salient example of how a Sufi order can achieve much politically. The members of this particular order played an important role in the defence of Libya against both the invading Turks, and later the Italians, uniting Bedouin opposition from their key position in Libyan society as representatives of the different tribal sections. Lewis (1955/6) also demonstrates how Sufi orders can be of 'structural'

significance within a society, achieving much on a political level. Their influence on both rulers and ruled has been, therefore, of the greatest significance in the Middle East, as seen in the banning of certain practices and groups in particular countries and at certain historical periods.

Some consideration should also be given to the Sufi 'path', the esoteric means of progressing towards the goal of unity (tauhid). This union Trimmingham envisages as an emotional identification of seeker and sought in ecstasy. This ecstasy is called by Trimmingham a hal, although in Sufism proper, hal more strictly refers to the succession of illuminations, through experiencing which, the Sufi progresses a further 'stage' (maqam) towards the goal of spiritual perfection, (Trimingham 1971: 200). This ecstasy, hal, is achieved for the ordinary Sufi via participation in the dhikr ritual. Trimmingham suggests moreover that the ordinary seeker only infrequently experiences this ecstasy, but the experience provides,

'at lowest a release from the hardships of every-day existence and at a higher level some measure of freedom from the limitations of human life and a glimpse of transcendental experience'.

(ibid.)

Trimingham provides several accounts of the dhikr (op. cit: 201-7). The dhikr is the key ritual of the Sufis, and its particular manifestations differentiate on a mundane level one order from another, and on a more complex level demonstrate the exact station along the path of a group or an individual. For example, the Maulawiya encourage the sama (hearing) and have musical accompaniment to the dhikr and are renowned as the 'whirling' dervishes because of their dancing. The Naqsbandiyya on the other hand perform a silent dhikr and forbid music.*

* NOTE It should be mentioned here, however, that a number of artists and music lovers are numbered in their company - from Schimmel (1975: 365). It could be said that it is difficult to be too categorical about the manifestations of Sufism. The definitive nature of the foregoing is indicative of the reputable nature of the Orientalist sources I have been using, more than of the absolute characteristics of the information. A tendency in the literature is to base interpretations on particular treatises. Selection of an individual treatise from the Persian or Arabic will result in a certain set of data; inclusion of another treatise as source material is likely to produce a conflicting viewpoint due to the plethora of opinions, the vast amount of theological discussion and debate among the Sufis themselves during the heyday of Sufism.

The stations (maqamat) and states (hal) are numbered by various Sufi commentators and vary in different accounts. In Trimmingham's version (1971: 154) seven stages (stations) are given, after a collection of treatises entitled Ar-Rasa'il al-Mirghammiya. These are said (ibid.) to correspond to the seven valleys traversed by the wandering seekers in Attar's poem Mantiq-at-Tair, translated simply, not esoterically, as The Conference of the Birds. These valleys are translated as Search, Love, Mystic Apprehension, Detachment/Independence, Unity, Bewilderment, Fulfillment in Annihilation. Obviously, as is repeatedly stated by some commentators, Sufi language 'means' on several levels. It is partly due to the vast potential in the Arabic language for polysemy (due to the triliteral roots partially) and partly due to Sufi love for paradox, rhetorical device and allusion. One can however ascertain the purpose of progression along the 'path' through the successive stations. It is as aforesaid, purification of the 'nafs', construed and translated by Trimmingham

(1971: 155), as the 'personality self'.

The station (maqam) denotes anyone 'Standing' in the way of God and his fulfillment of the obligations appertaining to that 'station' and his keeping it until he comprehends its perfection, so far as it lies in his power. Thus the maqamat have a certain permanence and duration: a man cannot quit his station until he has fulfilled all the obligations thereof (Nasr 1980: 61). The maqamat are contrasted with the hal: according to Nasr, stations belong to the category of 'acts'; states (hal) to the category of 'gifts'. The term 'state', 'denotes the favour and grace which God bestows upon the heart of his servant', (1980: 62). Hal can come to the uninitiated even before he is spiritually disposed to the reception of grace, that is baraka. The hal can be experienced both by the beginner on the Sufi path and by the most experienced Sufi possessed of a high station.

'The expansion of the soul and the sense of joy it experiences in seeing a beautiful face or hearing a lovely melody foreshadow the hal of those travelling upon the path'.

(ibid.)

Before the maqam is reached even the novice Sufi can experience a hal which causes him to transcend his usual state of being. The maqamat are cumulative: they are states of being leading to unity, and their descriptions are many in the works of the Sufis. One of the earliest and finest (to Nasr) accounts of the maqamat is the 'Forty Stations' of the 11th. Sufi master Abu Said Ibn Abi'l Khayr. This numbers the maqam at forty, beginning with 'intention', 'conversion', 'repentance', leading to the fourth stage 'discipleship', which takes the Sufi in truth to the spiritual struggle (1980: 65ff.).

The Sufi ritual that becomes an important feature in most of the literature is the dhikr, the 'recollection' of God. Dhikr is the eighth station on the Path in this account, and is translated by Nasr

(1980: 66) as 'invocation', calling on God. The Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam defines dhikr as 'remembrance' when taking place in the mind. It is glossed as 'mentioning' when spoken. In this Encyclopaedia it is stated that dhikr is a relatively technical term, implying the glorification of Allah with certain fixed phrases repeated in a ritual order with peculiar breathings and physical movements. Nasr, appreciating that to some Sufism signifies an attempt to transform the nature of man, states that the dhikr 'finishes by becoming man's real nature and the reality with which he identifies himself' (1980: 37). This would mean that man is constantly remembering God, living in a state of pure other-worldly recollection.

'With the help of the dhikr as combined with appropriate forms of meditation (fikr) man first gains an integrated soul.....then in the dhikr he offers this soul to God in the supreme form of sacrifice'.

(ibid.)

The language is perhaps a little over emphatic, but Nasr's status as a Muslim scholar must be remembered. Later discussions of the dhikr can possibly rectify this impression and contextualise the experience in a social milieu rather than in an hermeneutic abstract. Nasr states of fana, one of the penultimate stations of the Sufi path, annihilation, the passing away of the self, and of baqa, subsistence in God, that the Sufi 'realises that he never was separated from God even at the outset', (op. cit: 37-8). In the dhikr the person should be wholly present, his/her mind kept from ~~wandering~~, centred in the heart ('that is within the body considered in its positive aspect as the 'temple' of the spirit' (ibid.)) so he can more perfectly feel the spiritual quality of the experience, a quality the Sufis constantly attempt to perfect, at least in theory.

Anthropology

As far as the development of anthropology goes, the study of Islam is new when compared, say, to the study of Australian peoples or African religions. The appeal of the exotic was possibly too strong for early anthropologists to turn to societies where religion was comparable to that of the West, at least to a certain degree, Islam being like Christianity, a religion of the Book. Also like Christianity, Islam is a revealed religion, and in it, specialists have a degree of control over the interpretation of doctrine due to their centuries old monopoly of education. The Sufis have always been involved with education: the Sufi centres (zawiya in Arabic, khanqah in Persian) have provided places of knowledge in turbulent times and still provide teaching of the Koran for the communities in which they are found. In recent years the interest in Islam has burgeoned and now there is a sizeable literature on various aspects of Islam. Anthropology is well represented in this and it is now possible to investigate both 'orthodox' Islam (that is, the Islam of mosque and ulama) and its more heterodox face. It is particularly this face of Islam with which this thesis is concerned: both popular 'folk' beliefs and heterodox Muslim opinion are considered. Additionally some attention is given to the relation between 'folk' beliefs and the Koranic revelation.

This issue possibly rests on the orthodox/unorthodox dichotomy whereby the established religious specialists of formal Islam relegate what they cannot assimilate to the outside. Possibly, but not in any absolute sense, the problem is also one of the integration of pre-Islamic beliefs into an Islamic culture, a process of Islamisation. This process was considered by I.M. Lewis (1955/6) in the case of Somaliland. He provides a study of the social functions of 'present

day' (1950's) Somali Sufism, seeking to relate these functions to syncretism between Islam and the Cushitic religion, the indigenous form of belief pre-dating Islam there.

It is interesting to note in N. Africa the prevalence of the zaar spirit cult that Lewis classifies as Cushitic, though assimilated in a way with Islam. This cult is also found in the Sudan (Constantinides 1972; Barclay 1964) and here is considered by the anthropologists studying it as Islamic unorthodoxy. The matter of classification is no doubt a question of approach: it is useful to realise that Constantinides studied the zaar some years after Lewis' work in Somaliland; so the context differed, as do Constantinides' theoretical and practical preoccupations. One could say that the historical and political milieu might throw a different light on fringe or doubtful Islamic beliefs. It is also interesting to note here that Lewis indicates a similarity between the zaar cult and Sufism: despite the fact that women also participate in Sufism in Somaliland, the zaar cult is seen to have certain correspondences with Sufism, yet cannot be said to be a pure correlative to the men's Sufism for its mainly female adherents. The zaar ritual is an expressive affair: possibly one could suggest that it is redolent of Durkheim's 'effervescence'; it is a ritual in which women don apparel of certain colours corresponding to particular spirits and dance ecstatically to tunes that also are associated with particular zaar. The zaar are familiarised: there might be the 'African' zaar, the 'European' zaar; there is even a representative of the Muslim holy man among the zaar possessing spirits (Constantinides 1972).

Lewis is accentuating the syncretism of the zaar cult and Sufism: zaar are classified by the Somali as a kind of jinn (Lewis, 1984: 156), the Islamic invading demons, or capricious spiritual beings. Lewis

uses the description of the dhikr of the Ahmadiya order of Sufis in Somaliland to indicate how closely their dhikr corresponds to the zaar dance, suggesting a syncretism that is purportedly well established in Egypt and elsewhere also. Here follows his description, taken from Barillie 1935:

'Thousands come to the tomb from all parts of Somalia. The festival lasts 15 days and culminates in a great dhikr on the last night when the pilgrims form an immense circle and to the accompaniment of singing recite their formulae in raucous saw-like voices rythmically swaying their bodies.. This continues until daybreak. Once they have got well worked up, large numbers fall foaming to the ground in induced epileptic convulsions'.

(Lewis 1984: 157)

Obviously this is neither an informed nor a sympathetic description. The excesses it recounts do somehow recall the ecstatic dancing of the women in the zaar ceremonies as recounted by Barclay (1964) and Constantinides (1972). Nevertheless the interpretation is rather bald and hardly attempts to penetrate to the meaning of the ritual. The purposes of the two rituals could also be considered: the attested purpose of the dhikr is to achieve a spiritual state. The purpose of the zaar ceremony is to exercise, or indulge, particular spirits. Lewis points to a similarity in the degree of absorption in God: Constantinides' data would seem to contradict this. The sheikha who leads the zaar ceremony is not an accepted representative of Allah as are the Sufi leaders: the whole thing is far more peripheral, I would suggest. Whether there is any absolute significance in this it is difficult to say. What it does do is make a statement about the status of women in the Muslim world.

Another instance of the syncretism of Muslim beliefs is given by M. Gaborieau in a short description of a group of Muslims called 'Les Curaute' (the bracelet makers) in the Samjur village of Nepal. Here

there are two aspects to popular religion. First is the cult of Shah Madar, celebrated at a yearly festival by the Madari fakirs. This cult originates from Makapur, near Kanpur in North India. It appears to Gaborieau to resemble N. Indian celebrations (1977: 122). The Curaute consider it to be an integral part of their religion, there being a chant praising Madar sung on the day of the presenting of the newly born infant to his parents and neighbours. For the Shah Madar festival the fakirs erect a simulacrum of the tomb of Shah Madar in the village. In the praise, two other saints are also venerated, including a Hindu deity. During the ceremony the fakirs appear to indulge in a dhikr-like ritual in which they hit themselves repeatedly and repeat invocations to the saint that are corruptions of the shahhada ('There is no God but Allah') (op. cit: 122-127).

The second aspect is the cult of Ghazi Miya. The Curaute know of his burial place but are not familiar with the legend of his marriage and death which forms the focus of an important ceremonial in Bahrraich in Bihar. The part of his tradition they concentrate upon is the annual fete held on the first Sunday in the solar month of Jyesth (May-June). Then auspicious chants are made by the women to the saint, who is famed for his ability as a curing figure, bestowing health on children and fertility on sterile women. The tomb of the saint that is in the village is a replica of that at his real resting place, around which the festival occurs. On the Saturday night of the ceremony Hindus and Muslims participate without distinction. On the Sunday the Muslims resume their festival. They place a flag on the tomb and make a sacrifice to the saint. The influence of popular Hindu cults is felt in that the principal officiant who takes the offerings is called 'pujari'; also Hindus are recruited to play musical instruments. (op. cit: 127-129).

To return to N. Africa, I would like to discuss possession again briefly. This is a somewhat misleading subject to concentrate upon. Constantinides suggests that the women who participate in the zaar cult are often accused of faking. Her interpretation of the intentions, or the latent function of the zaar ritual, is one that points to the discontent of Muslim women, especially the more wealthy ones. She suggests that they indulge in zaar cult membership to obtain attention and gifts from their husbands, though pointing out that some of the women are genuinely sick, dispirited or ill at ease, and obtain relief from the experience. Unfortunately this relief comes at a price: the ceremonies are expensive to hold, and the members become dependent on the sheikha (Barclay 1964: 264). They are bound to hold zaar ceremonies, once begun, at regular intervals.

Barclay suggests that, in Merton's terminology, as aforementioned, the manifest function of the dhikr and zaar rituals, the religious brotherhoods and the zaar cult, are quite different, but they share a common function in providing 'opportunity for emotional release through approved social means' (op. cit: 204). However, the individualistic character of the zaar ceremony proper should not be overlooked. The dhikr, though a personal meditation, does also attempt to bring a company of men to a common ecstatic experience at a single moment; the dhikr is held by the Sufis in a group with an encoded ritual arrangement and a set liturgy: in the zaar ceremony, the group aspect is, I think, subordinated to the individual. Barclay suggests that the dancing in the zaar ceremonies always gives the impression of a state of chaos and disorder in comparison with the generally orderly movements of the dhikr, where the muqaddim (officiant) is at hand to keep some kind of order or rhythm going.

Gilsenan provides a thorough account of the dhikr and the rule-

governed nature of the performance; he states that,

'the details of the performance of the dhikr are in most cases laid down for an order by the Sheikh or one of his predecessors'.

(1973: 164)

He accentuates the dual nature of the dhikr he has observed, that of the Hamidiya Shadhilya order in Egypt: the prayer to the saints, the founders of the order, is counterpointed by the reiteration of the oneness of Allah during the ritual. Both are combined in the unity of the dhikr. Absorption in the transcendent being is not the sole preoccupation of the ritual; although the request for succour from the saints does not form in any way the main climax of the ritual, they are still supplicated. They are not, naturally, allowed to overshadow the One God, nor is this aspect of the ritual dominant. (op. cit: 168).

Gilsean points out that accordingly the ritual has two directions: one other-worldly, concerned (as Nasr's account was) with the name of Allah; the other is towards this world, albeit in one specific form, to the mediating powers of the saints operating in it. Gilsean suggests that 'the ritual balances and unifies within itself the polar tensions of these two elements'. (op. cit: 169).

Basilov, in a consideration of Islam in Turkmenian society, accentuates the lack of personal control of the Sheikh, the leader of the dhikr there. He is pointing, as did Lewis, to the pre-Islamic beliefs amalgamated with Sufism in Turkmenian society, tracing heterodox, shamanistic elements in their beliefs. He suggests that Sufism there has only been assimilated in its outward aspects (Basilov 1984: 228). He indicates how the Sheikh can apparently suffer breakdown from time to time, having undergone a 'joining' with

the jinn (op. cit: 223) similar to the mystical illness a shaman must undergo before taking up his role (Parkin 1979), and is only cured of this by the dhikr. The Sheikh's unorthodox behaviour in the dhikr is reported by Basilov. In this context it is worth remembering that the dhikr was usually performed to cure the sick who have been harmed by the jinn, in cases where the prayers of the mullah, the orthodox formal Islamic leader of the community, prove ineffective (op. cit: 233).

The dhikr here is a different phenomenon apparently. It seems to be a ritual completely different from that reported by Gilsenan, Lewis and Barclay. The dhikr for these three authors, all discussing N. African Sufism, is a participant-orientated performance and though attracting criticism from those opposed to Sufi orders, there is at least a modicum of control over the Sufi's experiences. Barclay states (1964: 186-7) that although the dhikr is 'difficult to manage' when the pace of the ritual races, there is a certain symmetry and order to the experience. Cathartic it may seem, with members achieving trance, and subsequently trembling and shaking, or needing assistance from fellow Sufis.

Gilsenan stresses the rules that constrain the conduct of the dhikr. He suggests this contributes to a certain 'aesthetic tone' of the dhikr among the Hamidya Shadhilya (Gilsenan 1973: 181), and a controlled ritual performance. There is here a balance between freedom and control: possibly it is salient to mention that the membership of this order is taken from both educated and illiterate groups of people. Gilsenan suggests that the restraint, both in rule and conduct of the ritual, minimizes embarrassment for the educated while still retaining a high degree of satisfaction for the illiterate (ibid.).

If one is intent on asking why the Sufis have developed a ritual of such a kind a number of reasons therefore emerge. If interpreting the ritual, several metaphors spring to mind, perhaps the most explanatory being:

'Stravinsky has said that 'music is given to us with the sole purpose of establishing an order in things, including and particularly, the co-ordination between man and time'. This ordering and co-ordination of men and time are central to the meaning of the dhikr. The ritual pivots on the fusion in harmony of patterned rhythms in sound and movement with the organic inner bodily rhythms of the performers regulated through the prescribed forms of breathing control',

and,

'As with a musical score of course, the ritual can be read both vertically and horizontally, and in inner time and outer time.....For within the frame of the ritual and symbolic performance culturally given and outer time are suspended through the patterns of musical and rhythmical synchronisation of the chanted word, breathing and physical movement'.

(op. cit: 185-6)

Metaphor it may be, in an etic sense, but the full social meaning to the Sufis is never fully penetrated: the anthropologist can interpret so much, the apologist can explain a good deal, but the two approaches when married, provide a doubtful ground, too expressive possibly, inadequate certainly. Nasr's explanations suffice maybe on a doctrinal level: the spirituality of Sufism is underlined. To the unbeliever the imagination is given freeplay when accounts of observed dhikr are read: the disorder, the dissarray, the lack of conscious participation can surface uppermost in the mind. This coupled with the condemnation of Sufi ritual excesses by the orthodox provide a strange impression of the dhikr when contrasted with the impressions obtained from, say, reading Sufi poetry, or the descriptions of Muslim apologists. It is interesting therefore to have access to a rather 'poetic' description of the dhikr. An interpretation that stresses the 'emotionalism' of

Sufi ritual is tempting, especially when one considers also the language of Sufi poetry, redolent as it is with images of drunkenness and love, however spiritual that drunkenness, however esoteric that love. Excess and emotional extravagance are hardly virtues: they scarcely accord with the strictness of moral codes, especially that of honour, in the Middle East or with the subordination of women, classically regarded by Islam as emotional, weak creatures who must be confined to the home and its environs to curtail 'immodesty'.

John Gulick (1976) builds up a picture of a 'peril and refuge' mentality in Middle Eastern cultures: modernity being a peril, a danger, involving the decline of the highbrow Sufi orders, an immigration and emigration of peoples leading to a disruption of the tidily ordered, genealogically based land holdings in tribal areas (Lewis 1984), a proliferation of sprawling suburbs with the influx of a rural population, possibly ill-suited to urban living and mores. In this changing situation, with peasant and tribal societies becoming part of a world economy and feeling the effects of industrialisation and development, the values of spiritual growth and the place of the higher aims of the Sufi orders are questionable.

Rabinow illustrates the position of one holy dynasty in modern Morocco (Rabinow 1977), indicating how their authority has become undermined with the failure of their spiritual power, when the symbols that afforded them influence no longer have their old appeal (at least not in the persons of these particular people). Others can possibly manipulate power better: the holy dynasty can maybe fail to obtain what the people who traditionally respected it desire from the modern state. Gilsean points out that as social differentiation has increased in Egypt the tariqa has failed to reflect the breakdown

of the old system, or to offer any new accommodation to new strata in terms of attitude to the world. The orders offer no interpretation of the world that has significance to the emerging middle class or which demonstrates any significance to their social situation (Gilsenan 1973: 200-207).

In the sway of fundamentalist resurgence also, the attacks on Sufism became more vociferous. In several countries the orders were said to be un-Islamic and degrading to the faith, making it a mockery to the non-Muslim. Gilsenan is more explicit:

'The dhikr appeared to have lost its true Sufi meaning and become no more than a quasi-institutional channel for frenzy. As such it lost its roots in the collective purposes of the time'.

(op. cit: 201)

Basilov studies the syncretic Sufism in Turkmenian society in an indefinite historical period past; Lewis' study is of thirty years ago; Barclay investigated Sufism in the Sudan in the 1950's; Rabinow went to Morocco in the late sixties, also Crapanzano. It is interesting to postulate what it would show about change if one went to one of these communities now to study the same set of people and examine their adaptation to the changes in the Muslim world in the intervening years.

Theoretical Considerations

Sufism is a mysticism: this, according to the dictionary of philosophy is a spiritual and non-discursive approach to the union of the soul with God, or whatever is taken to be the central reality of the universe. The definition is of mysticism generally: Sufism, as mysticism, is also part of a Great Religion. Its tradition is bound up with the traditions of formal Islam. There are difficulties

in the anthropological consideration of any religious phenomenon, let alone mysticism, where the rational takes its leave permanently, as it were, and an interpretive fog descends. Before proceeding with the subject matter of this thesis it is wise to look at the 'what' of Sufism first, and to consider some comments about religious phenomena per se.

Certain problems arise in the study of such an area of social reality. Not the least of these is its status as an area of study. There may be a certain percentage of 'believers' among social scientists, but what happens to those who are left behind in the previously mentioned interpretive fog? The 'spiritual' is a domain to enter with care: this distinction between those who can be credulous and those no amount of enthusing will convince, presupposes a blatant dichotomisation of approaches. The facts are not as simple as this. I merely intend to raise one or two questions in the study of religion by recourse to a debate between Clifford Geertz and Talal Asad. These two thinkers lie one each side of the divide I have just mentioned. How far along the 'believing' side to place Geertz I'm not sure. Suffice it to say that he has an empathy with the spiritual that Asad lacks.

Asad expresses his concern for one constitutive problem in the study of religion in anthropology. This is attributing paradigmatic status to religions. In the study of religion and symbolism this presents a knotty problem when dealing with abstracts. I mean by this any study that is not overtly concerned with what is said or done in a particular ritual, or given in discourse by the actors. Asad (1982) explores some of the difficulties Geertz finds himself in when defining religion as;

'a system of symbols (Geertz 1971: 90) which acts to establish powerful pervasive and long lasting moods and motivations in men for formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic'.

(from Asad 1982: 239)

Asad points out that in Geertz's discussion a symbol is different from its conception (meaning), but linked to it: it is later stated that the symbol is itself the conception. The number 6, when laid out in a row of stones, say, is for Geertz a symbol. Accordingly, even as a conception, 'symbol' has an intrinsic connection with empirical events from which it is merely theoretically separable (1982: 239). The laying out of the stones is naturally an empirical event. Asad suggests that Geertz confuses cognitive questions with communicative ones, and indicates that possibly a symbol is not an object, or event which serves to carry meaning, but a set of relations between objects or events uniquely brought together as a complex, or as concepts (op. cit: 240; also Vygotsky 1962). More importantly Asad enquires what conditions explain how symbols came to be constructed; how some are established as natural or authoritative as opposed to others.

Finally he argues that the authoritative status of concepts or discourses is dependent on the socially appropriate production of other discourses and activities (ibid.).

Asad wonders how religious symbols act, questioning whether there is a distinctive set of dispositions which 'lend a chronic character to the flow of man's activity and the quality of his experience' (op. cit: 241). His is an atheist's point of view, naturally. The believer posits an internal efficacy for religious symbols and their workings; evidence for this is unavailable to the atheist.

Asad criticises Geertz centrally for confusing two levels of discourse: (op. cit: 245) 'symbols which produce dispositions and symbols which place these dispositions in a cosmic framework'. This is connected to Geertz's ambiguous conception of symbol which confuses the referential and indexical functions of the symbol (Crapanzano 1981 as quoted by Asad). Discourse involved in practice is not the same as that involved in speaking about practice. Theological discourse does not necessarily induce religious dispositions (op. cit: 243). Though Geertz may be said not to have implied the latter the confusion of two levels of analysis remains. Asad also takes Geertz to task for his notion of an independent religious perspective contrasted with those of common sense, science, and aesthetics. The optional flavour conveyed in the word 'perspective' seems very misleading to Asad when applied to common sense or science as differing perspectives. This perspectivist viewpoint confuses the idea Asad has that whereas religion is a perspective, science is not. This is mistaken if one is of the opinion that some cultures have alternative perspectives anyway: in this framework then the scientific and common sense outlooks are merely choices, alternatives, if one harks back to the 'open/closed predicament' debated by Horton and Evans Pritchard. People may have an 'awareness of alternatives', but it is only that, a choice of perspectives, rather than a belief in the absolute nature of western science. Additionally, one could trace back to Kuhn and suggest that science is not definitive anyway as its paradigms change. Newtonian physics was definitive, but with the revolution in thought produced by Einstein, science could be said to have become something different. At least one could say that it underwent a 'paradigm change'.

Asad's interest to me, apart from the argument with Geertz, is two-fold: first he highlights the importance of the idea of power in

religion. Geertz connects religious theory and practice cognitively, whereas Asad thinks that the connection is a matter of power, of discipline creating religion and interpreting true meaning: forbidding certain utterances and practices while encouraging others. Secondly he accentuates the importance of the technical, as well as the expressive, elements in religion. Asad hints that religions are rarely approached in terms of technical action, pointing to the importance of the disciplining of the body and of speech to produce religion in its variety. These disciplines are possibly the preconditions for specific forms of thought and action but they must be taught and learnt, and are therefore dependent on a variety of social institutions and material conditions (op. cit: 251).

The importance of power in Sufism is possibly under explored as a constituting notion, though implicitly it is considered in many ways. The key notion of baraka ('grace') that I intend to discuss in Chapter Five has power as part of its cultural domain: spiritual power, intermingled, possibly, with awe for that which transcends a common sense view of the world. This numinous quality of religious power may be sustained by various symbols, but it can be grasped in the social world, in the meanings and acts predicted upon that power, and in the status and influence accorded to those of a religious disposition. This type of interpretation is kept wholly within the realm of the religious: it is not the only possible kind. The idea is to retain the analysis on a concrete level when discussing power, not on a paradigmatic level where it can only be an abstract.

On this paradigmatic level power is assumed: its investigation is therefore trapped within a set framework that possibly mystifies actual social phenomena; needless to say, it need not do so. Much depends on the nature of the theorist's discourse, and his constitutive

assumptions. The separation of the two levels of discourse is possibly difficult to sustain within anthropology if language is taken to mean the sum of its rules. To revert to another strand of my concern, a discussion of the technical aspects of religion is manifest in the importance of ritual to the Sufis. Nonetheless, the rituals have an important expressive element that needs consideration also for a balanced interpretation. It is interesting at this juncture, having discussed power, to observe that in many interpretations of the Sufi dhikr power is implicit: the 'atmosphere', one might suggest, creates an impression of power of some sort. It may be the power of mystification: something that is indefinite is frequently powerful and awesome. (See Parkin 1979: 148). To the participant observer possibly, the observed experience can be sufficiently comprehended for the numinous element to subside from the forefront of one's mind.

Geertz may confuse two levels of discourse and discuss religion as a system of symbols: Ahmad (1979) assumes a trinary separation of levels of interpretation in an analysis of the religious system of Muslims in India. Ahmad is concerned with the observable world of religious practice and defines three levels within the Muslim religious system: first that of beliefs and practices traditionally described as belonging to formal or scriptural Islam; secondly that of beliefs of a more limited spread, reckoned by Muslims who hold them as much a part of their religious system as the values of the level above, though it is not necessary that they should always accord with the beliefs enshrined in Islamic scriptural texts. The third level is that usually described by social anthropologists as pragmatic or practical religion. It contains an amount of

'non-philosophical elements, such as supernatural theories of disease causation, propitiation of Muslim saints and occasionally at least deities of the Hindu pantheon or other

crude phenomena such as spirit possession and the evil eye'.

(Ahmad 1979: 51)

Most of the elements of this level are antithetical to the beliefs of the other two levels and are regarded as heterodoxy by the Muslims. It would be wrong, in Ahmad's terms, to think of this level as eliminable (*op. cit.*: 52): Muslims themselves see no contradiction between strictly Islamic, and non-Islamic practices, (*ibid.*). This is important to bear in mind given the analysis of Lewis (1955/6 and reprinted 1984). One could suggest that this illustrates a specifically 'Indian' quality of Islam, but the evidence from other Muslim groups such as I have outlined previously would suggest that it could be applied to Islam in other cultural contexts, where extremely heterogeneous elements of non-Islamic derivation still have some significance.

Ahmad suggests that the theological/philosophical elements on the one hand, and the local level syncretic elements on the other, are integrated in Indian Islam, and that this should not be surprising historically: they have come to exist as complementary and integral parts of a single religious system due to Islam's own struggle for survival in an alien environment (*op. cit.*: 53). Whether comparison with other cultures where Islam also had to fight against local custom is wise or not is a moot point: syncretism in Islam is extant in many cultural milieu, or so it would seem from my investigations. The third level of Ahmad's analysis is the most significant level for me to consider: it is useful here that Ahmad considers the actors' opinions to have significance and to be relevant for an anthropological interpretation.

A Hidden World

Before turning to other matters a word could be said about one of

the more extraordinary sides to Sufism. An assessment as to whether Sufis are miracle workers or fakes is one that is generally omitted from any kind of academic treatment of the subject, but the existence of this type of view has conspired to give Sufism a somewhat dubious reputation in some quarters. Some kind of explanation of the more overtly supernatural elements in Sufism is called for, and I think one can begin this task effectively if one consults Gilson (1982) and considers the idea that a Sufi sheikh can become a kind of 'community conscience' (1982: 140).

The premiss on which this type of opinion is based is that of the superior knowledge of the Sufi: superior or hidden knowledge is a notion of some import in the study of all mysticisms. The knowledge of the Sufi does not appear to be thought of as equivalent with mundane knowledge. The Sufis have constructed, or monopolise access to, a special knowledge which is based in the power of secrecy, the power of the hidden and of mysticism, and in the power of knowledge itself. I would like to consider how the power derived from this 'superior' knowledge is seen by people in the community, and how it can be effective as a social sanction. This provides an example of pragmatic religion and also helps in the understanding of Sufi influence in the Muslim world.

Pragmatic or practical religion is best described as the religion of most people in any society. It is the religion of the everyday where the spiritual can enter the secular. This experience is different for all members of a community as their life experiences are different, but in Sufism there is a division between the religious discourse of the Sufi leaders and that of the remainder of the group. There is additionally the religious life of those who adhere to scriptural Islam, that make up the vast proportion of people in the

Middle East.

The Sufi leaders in Muslim society have a certain status derived from their spiritual initiation and their position as inheritors of baraka from the founder of their order and from their descent, which may or may not be from Quraysh, the family of Mohammad. These two aspects of transhistorical legitimation of status, as Lewis points out, can be confusing (1955/6: 147-8). Tariqa affiliation alone is somewhat difficult to determine sometimes, and genealogical connections can be doubtful. Nevertheless legitimation of status by descent remains. The status is more the 'regard' for position in society, the justification for the Sufis to do what they do, and live where they live without challenge. Challenge comes, however, as is often seen (I shall discuss later in Chapter Five how the marabouts of Boujad are losing prestige and clients in this century (Eickelman 1976)).

To return to the question of superior knowledge. There is a contrast in Middle Eastern thought between two kinds of reality, the zahir, or outward manifestations of reality, and the batin, or inward manifestations. Sufi leaders, having achieved marifa (gnosis), or of a high station in the tasawwuf, are masters of the batin and have access to knowledge other members of the community cannot aspire to. The ordinary Sufi cannot become exactly as his leader unless exceptionally devout: the main proportion of Sufis described in the literature seem not to aspire to the heights of Sufi ecstasy but possibly this appearance is not a reality, it may well be a bias in ethnographic data collection. As I stated previously, narratives taken from people are relatively few in the anthropology of Sufism. Those taken are honed to particular purposes and these are not usually concerned with progress on the tasawwuf.

As an illustration of the significance of the batin in everyday life Gilsenan describes the horror of a young man affiliated to a tariqa in N. Lebanon (1982: 119) when his sheikh reprimanded him knowingly for becoming lax in his religious observations during a dubious liaison with a girlfriend. According to Gilsenan, the true sheikh 'knows' when a Sufi has omitted his ritual ablutions: in an interesting example Gilsenan contrasts the knowledge of a local sheikh with the 'impostering' of a visiting Syrian sheikh through an illustration showing how the visitor entertained the thought of including in his tariqa a local joker who proferred himself to the visiting dignitary in a ritually impure condition and was not reprimanded for it, or noticed as being in such a state.

Superior knowledge is slightly doubtful in this instance: Sufism is essentially a local affair within a tariqa and involves knowledge of persons as well as esoteric lore. Nevertheless the spirit of the batin was working for the Lebanese Sheikh as it enabled him to absent himself from the room in the above example to allow the visiting sheikh to destroy his reputation in the manner described. This denouement occurred after a dhikr had been held, during which the visiting sheikh began to change the normal tempo of the performance and created considerable disorder in the meeting. Superior knowledge can be glossed as 'insight' or 'intuition' maybe: the marginal nature of the Sufis in their community can be overestimated. They probably do know quite a lot of what goes on in their neighbourhoods. Their role as mediators and refuges in times of trouble place them in a powerful but equivocal position.

Gilsenan gives an interesting example of the practical significance of the Sufis' superior knowledge in the same volume. He indicates how the Sufi can be a refuge from social distancing or ostracism because

of their peculiar, unassailable and marginal position, which is possibly a 'function' of their knowledge of the batin. The example is of an extended dispute between two cousins on a matter involving honour (which could have had disastrous consequences for the families concerned if it had been made public) but which was smoothed over by one of the disputants' becoming a disciple of the local sheikh. This particular person was socially inept, had few friends and was well on the way to becoming a marginal figure without further complications to his position. His cousin was his only friend, and a dispute with him that no one could persuade them to explain or forget pushed him further into isolation from the community. Becoming a disciple of the sheikh gave him a fresh status, a comprehensible one. It enabled the community to accept him as something different; still marginal, but in an acceptable way that precluded matters of gossip and dispute with kin being dragged into the public arena (Gilsenan 1982: 124-131).

Gilsenan's argument here is to accentuate the everyday nature of the batin and zahir as notions. The society, according to Gilsenan, has a particular emphasis on 'show, manipulations of the surface and the acquisition of knowledge of what intentions lie behind it' (op. cit: 139), giving importance to the distinction between what is hidden and what is not.

The key area in which the power of the batin influences the young is that of sexuality, where the classic Middle Eastern notions of honour, modesty and purity become important and where open knowledge of indiscretions is undesirable. The constraint of the sheikh is unspecific, for no act or offender is named publicly. He is merely exposed to the knowing glance or the words of the holy man that surprise the offender. The sheikh, as aforesaid, becomes the 'community conscience' (op. cit: 140) although part of the community.

By virtue of his sheikhliness he is taken to know all that lies behind the world of appearances; unlike gossip, which has a source, his knowledge is impenetrable. It thus might be said to have a peculiarly chastising quality, if only in its effect on the psyche.

From considering a somewhat hidden world, where what is mysterious is intriguing, I now propose to turn to an aspect of Sufism that is less frequently discussed by anthropologists but has no less a bearing on the subject of this thesis. That is the topic of emotion. Some indications have been given in this chapter as to some of the more emotional aspects of Sufism, in descriptions of the dhikr for example. The next chapter examines Sufism and emotion more closely, thus probing one facet of Sufism's meaning, and also providing a link with the main concern of the thesis, Sufism and healing, as emotionality has a certain relationship with health, particularly mental health.

C H A P T E R T W O

SUFISM AND EMOTION

Introduction

Of all the subjects discussed in this thesis the place of emotion is one that requires some justification. Emotion is a difficult subject, and hitherto anthropologists have tended to avoid analysing it, or imputing it as a reason for some particular action. This is partly due to the fact that when contemplating emotional referents for social action one can be charged with psychological reductionism. Another difficulty is that of accurately expressing the emotional discourse of another culture.

In this chapter I hope to raise some wider issues concerning the anthropological treatment of emotion that suggest that emotions can indeed be studied fruitfully by anthropologists, but to underline that in such a treatment there are particular caveats to be borne in mind. Some attention is additionally paid to emotion in the Middle East: particularly the cultural expression of 'love' in Muslim society.

The emotions I wish to concentrate the reader's attention on are Muslim equivalents of love, fear and anger. This first becomes the main focus of interest for me due to the significance of it in Sufism. The second becomes relevant due to its position as a factor in the causation of illness which is frequently expressed by Muslims. Anger is considered the least. This is because it has less importance in the context of this thesis. However it must be mentioned, if only in passing. The honour and shame complex in Muslim society expresses well one cultural directioning of anger among Islamic peoples.

Before I begin to examine any data I must underline the main

difficulty in a consideration such as I intend to make. The term 'love' has several connotations in English. It is a perfect example of polysemy, which provides one with an initial sense of something problematic. Maybe this polysemy illustrates the fraught nature of this emotion: the depth and breadth of its compass. In Islam, 'Ishq and muhabba, which represent connotations of what we would express with the term 'love' are also polysemic. When discussing the texts necessary for illustration it has not always been possible to ascertain the exact connotation of the umbrella term 'love' than an author means to use. Such specification is perhaps unnecessary to that author, but would have assisted my purposes. Accordingly I hope by stating this at the outset that any confusion will be minimal. Fatemi (1978: 47) talks of 'kinds' of love, the use of 'love' as a translation here is obviously inadequate, but the data do not penetrate the problematic field of concept translation to a satisfactory depth, thus not permitting one to be more specific.

Rosaldo's data below illustrate well how western terminology fails to express the exact significance of indigenous emotional concepts. Meeker's on the other hand, point to the difficulties one can get into if umbrella terms are used to translate indigenous expressions, and if, moreover, western terms are used heuristically in an analysis of a cultural context for which they are unsuited. I find, expectedly, that the whole area is fraught with pitfalls: they issue from the lack of specification in the meaning of 'love', and the loose usage of this term in discourse.

Lastly, it is difficult to use the term 'emotion' at all with reference to Sufism. Sufi purists would demur at the association altogether: emotion would be too base or basic a concept for them to use with reference to their spiritual feelings. Yet if one intends

to attempt an understanding, an explanation even, of mystical phenomena, certain commonplace referents are essential. The mystic's experience is in a non-ordinary realm of reality and its expression is exotic possibly, opaque certainly. The language of the mystic is construed as metaphorical, allegorical in laymen's terms, or its meaning is construed literally and spiritually denied.

Anthropology and Emotion

Needham has several things to say about the study of man's inner states and emotions. He remarks: (1981: 99),

'it is all the more remarkable' (against a background of the importance of emotional attachments and aversions in history), 'that anthropologists have paid practically no systematic attention to the topic of emotion'.

He posits a reason for this, that it is,

'probably the result of an uncritical assumption that in their emotional lives human beings anywhere are by and large essentially alike'.

This naturally cannot be definitively true: the vocabulary of emotional states should surely vary, and be exceedingly useful data shedding light on little-considered aspects of societies.

Needham points to incipient investigations in anthropology of emotional life. Here,

'stress is laid upon the premise that emotions are in part at least socially defined and socially directed; that is, in certain regards there is not a free play of feeling, but society stipulates what emotions are appropriate in what circumstances'.

(1981: 101)

He puts against this statement, in another essay in the same volume, the idea that inner states are universals (op. cit: 53ff). However, after investigating this notion, he comes to the conclusion that it is not wholly true. (op. cit: 63).

He suggests that in studying inner states the ethnographer has difficulty as he learns and attempts to comprehend the indigenous psychological vocabulary: he may be tempted to,

'resort uncritically to the terms that in his own language designate the inner states that he is confident he has identified'.

(op. cit: 60)

The supposition is that the ethnographer can come to understand an 'exotic psychological classification' in its own terms, that can be used as a practical means of discriminating among the expressions and actions of individuals. Needham takes the example of a man scowling; the observer is told that he is in a certain inner state, known by a particular word that the ethnographer translates as 'angry'. In effect he had merely applied an English psychological word to a facial expression that he has assumed to convey anger. However he does not know yet the conventional significance of grimaces in this society and he cannot know by simple observance that the inner state of the man corresponds with anything he would recognise as anger.

Needham states,

'the crucial difficulty is encountered when he tries to identify the cultural signs as natural signs. This is almost certainly what he is doing if he resorts to the word 'angry' when he translates the indigenous word that describes the scowling man'.

and further,

'he will need to find out.....what are the particular circumstances that justify attributing precisely this inner state.....to the man who he infers is angry. To do so calls for a comprehensive knowledge of the values, collective representations, modes of organisation and so on which comprise the society'.

(op. cit: 61)

Needham then argues that utilising polythetic classification,

'the mode of classifying by sporadic resemblances' (op. cit: 62)
can shed light on the problem if this is used.

'then the class instances of anger need have no common feature but may even constitute what is known technically as a fully polythetic class in which no feature is shared by all its members. In that event, the principle of substitution cannot apply, and what is known of one instance cannot be imputed, by reference from the class membership, to another instance. This means that 'anger' in another civilisation is not equivalent to anger in our own. More generally the outcome is that inner states are not universals and do not in this sense constitute natural resemblances in men'.

(op. cit: 63)

This puts a powerful case for anthropology's considering emotions as Needham proposes, as social facts (op. cit: 62). It also provides the possibility of a wealth of comparative data. In psychoanalytical anthropology a well-worn argument explores the relevance of Freud's theories in the study of non-western societies. Maybe these theories can throw light on social facts, but is it valid to use them? Possibly they have some value, but here I am concerned only with the emotions, and most of all their significance in and relationship to Sufism. To show how the study of emotions can be useful anthropologically, I would like to turn to an ethnography that demonstrates this, M. Rosaldo's 'Knowledge and Passion'.

Rosaldo (1980) states in her preface that her analysis 'seeks to capture continuities in cultural form and characterise the underlying shape, or meaning' (1980 xi). She explores the 'relation between language and experience or culture'. (op cit: xiii). She was interested in her field work in how the people used their language, and about the sense of words with which they characterised and explained the nature of human action and the interest of diverse activities. She points, quite interestingly, to the way she began to be interested in the emotional life of her informants (1980: 35-36) -

'Anthropological tradition tells us that strong emotion is a sign of social import, because cultural practice generates such affects as will guarantee the constraining force of social norms upon the self. But a functional view that renders 'sentiments' the servants of 'society' has made us inclined to view 'affective' life more as a 'sign' that points to a social rule than as itself a sphere of meaning that is as public and as socially significant as the names of kin. Unable to participate directly in the emotional world of our informants, we have failed to see that personal life is shaped by terms with social implications and correspondingly that 'persons' are themselves 'constructed' in terms of shared understandings that inform the ways they act and feel'. My discussions with the Llongot suggested that for them.....talk of the emotions provided such 'constructions'.....Not cosmology, but action and response, energy and anger, were what concerned them'.

Rosaldo came to see that it was not head-hunting per se that could provide understanding of Llongot experience, but rather the

'ritual forms and everyday reflections through which Llongots communicated something of how, or why, activities like killing made good sense'.

She found the key to this was the heart, an organ which for Llongots, unites concern for thought and feeling, inner life and social context, violent anger and such desirable consequences as fertility and health. (op. cit: 36).

To explore some of the significance of this emotionally orientated discourse it is educative to probe the meaning of the 'heart' among the Llongot. This exploration will demonstrate how an approach which penetrates indigenous discourse to find the meaning in affective terminology can shed light on different aspects of the culture under consideration. These insights are not obtained through conventional analysis but they should illustrate how one can study emotional discourse in a society.

For Llongots the heart is both a physiological organ, a source of action and awareness, and a locus of vitality and will. It provides

a ground that links thought, feeling, and physical well being, and ties natural and social processes to the development of self. Rosaldo points out that in different contexts the

'heart can be equated with words for 'life' (biay), for 'shade' or 'spirit' (beteng), for 'breath' (niyek), 'knowledge' (beya) and 'thought' (nemnem)'.

(1980: 37)

In certain contexts heart is identified with beteng. As beteng the heart may leave the body during sleep to heed the call of dead or living hearts that think of them or name them. The Llongot speak of the 'flow' or 'coursings' of the heart (op. cit: 37) when alluding to depths of feeling and supposedly hidden thoughts. To be a man of 'breath' is furthermore to be a man of 'liget' - a word suggesting energy and anger and also passion, which is associated with a variety of physical processes realised in people as enthusiasm, agitation, passivity and violent action, and as motion or stillness, opening or closing, splitting, spinning, rising or falling of the heart. These motions of the heart are our emotions, and so the dynamic of human feelings, though they may vary in their intensity, are similar, no matter one's personality or situation in life.

Beya or knowledge is what gives form, sense and consequence to the motions of the heart. Beya is like the body in that it develops through a lifetime. Thus babies, lacking knowledge, can lose their hearts through fear, because they do not know, for example, that they have fallen.

Talk of the heart is accordingly talk of inner experience (op. cit: 38) but it is also a discussion of social life and public situations, describing not unconscious processes but such qualities of consciousness that inform the ways people act. Affective states are characterised

in terms that stress inherent continuities between the self and social action. Rosaldo states that

'explaining joy, a friend once said, 'your heart is gay (sipe) as if to say 'thank you', and it smiles' '

(op. cit: 39)

However, other heart states point to less pleasant types of motion. Rosaldo says,

'if angry (liget) and intent on action, our hearts may 'tense' and 'knot' themselves displaying hardened strength and purpose'.

(ibid.)

In the discussion of illness the heart comes into play. The Llongots describe illness in terms of 'uget' or bad feelings in the heart, that produce illness by discouraging eating. Similarly uget refers to the sense of resignation and withdrawal that encourages an angry or insulated person to keep a bad grievance to himself and not confide in his fellows.

Not only do one's feelings affect one's physical state, and health affect or shape the emotions, but 'the two are conceived in parallel terms' (op. cit: 42). Discourse on hearts raises questions about the continuity between one's inner life and thought and one's capacities for action. Llongot talk connects good feeling with action health and knowing sociality, and associates illness with anger,

'chaos and withdrawal, a failure to 'make sense' of action and relation, a lack of 'fit' between the self and its immediate milieu'.

(op. cit: 42)

Rosaldo infers that the Llongot use talk of the heart to

'indicate those aspects of the self that can be alienated - or engaged - in social interaction'.

She states,

'What matters in such talk is not 'psychology' as we understand it, but the 'passions' generated in a self that can always be in conflict with its environment. Concerned less with 'motivation' than with action, Llongots are interested in feelings because affective life has consequences for health, co-operation, daily labour and political debate'.

(op. cit: 43)

'Liget' is one of the key terms used by the Llongot. Bad feeling, bad health, social withdrawal and chaos are all associated with it. The energy, anger and passion attributed to liget are contrasted with more beneficial dispositions related to knowledge and health. However, Rosaldo points out that Longot attitudes to violence and anger are ambivalent: anger may be attacked because it leads to chaos and illness but they also have a healthy interest in, e.g., 'appreciation of the head hunter with dislike of men too quick to fight' (op. cit: 44). Rosaldo quotes the Llongot as saying 'if it were not for liget....we'd never work' (ibid.). But they also say 'we don't do everything because of liget' (ibid.)

Rosaldo goes on to examine the significance of liget, beya and related words. Accordingly she is probing the universe of discourse connected with knowledge and the emotions to further understanding. She found that liget was particularly rich in the associations it produced, and provided an interesting ambivalence. For people to si liget, or have anger, means that they are not fearful and shy, nor quiet.

'Liget points in human life to a readiness to be 'different' or take offence....to stubbornness and conviction, but also to the fact that one is quick-moving, youthful and active'.

(op. cit: 45)

Additionally, liget may be switched from one object to another and created when things that are opposed meet: storms can obtain liget from tobacco smoke, which makes both storms and people dizzy.

In social terms liget is given in insults and slights. It is born of envy. (op. cit: 46). Rosaldo suggests that the ambivalence surrounding liget is caused by the fact that it is multi-directional.

'Born of insult, disappointment, envy and irritation, liget is the source of motions in the heart that may, unfocused and unsatisfied, produce no more than wild violence, social chaos, personal confusion, and an ultimate passivity and loss of will. But a lack of such motion means a lack of will and purpose - and has much the same result'.

(op. cit: 47)

It is apparent from this analysis that the translation of liget as passion is insufficient, and illustrates quite well the earlier quoted statement of Needham that pointed to the difficulties of using familiar English terms to translate a recognisable instance of such an emotion in an alien society.

The Middle East

Such studies as Rosaldo's are as yet rare: the subject of emotion could be considered with good effect in anthropology given the anthropologist's willingness to penetrate indigenous concepts and psychology to a sufficient depth. As Lindholm says (1981: 248) it is easy to find examples of the trivialisation, or ignorance even, of the role of emotion in society. 'Sentiments are related to the cohesion of society' is the bare statement of Radcliffe Brown (1958: 40). Lindholm illustrates how structuralists 'see emotions as By-products of exchange relations' (1981: 248) and functionalists view

'ties of affection between sister's, son and mother's brother solely as mechanisms for linking unrelated lineages while keeping the integrity of the patriline'.

(op. cit: 248)

As Lindholm points out (op. cit: 249),

'Lacking a comprehensive theory of emotional structure, social science cannot get to the heart of human experience'.

Psychological anthropology even, he indicated, is more concerned with 'developing a method for understanding differences between populations'. (op. cit: 249).

Lindholm continues to list the contributions of anthropologists to the study of emotion: the large literature of the compadrazgo, a formal bond between co-parents in Latin America and S. Europe (op. cit: 250) 'the new interest in existential anthropology' (ibid) which has inculcated an interest in the relationship between informant and ethnographer that frequently penetrates the field of friendship in a cultural complex, but this is all.

Lindholm points to Turner's work on emotion and ritual as another forerunner of emotion studies in anthropology. Turner notices the correspondence between human and animal ritual behaviour. In both cases ritual theoretically 'channels' emotion (1969). According to Turner the symbol is the keystone of human ritual life. These are multivalent and reconcile the opposing sides of human nature: the emotional and the cognitive, or in his phraseology, the 'oretic' (or physiological) and the ideological. (op cit: 252). To quote Turner (1969: 19),

'It is hard to locate directly genetic ritualisation in man. Nevertheless, as Freud has shown, certain 'innate' drives, such as sex and aggression, when they reach public expression or threaten to do so, provoke (like grit in an oyster) the growth of elaborate cultural (symbolic) formations. In the polarisation of ritualised symbols there is a greater tensile strength and bonding power; they command both men's and their emotions and relate thought to feeling and action'.

However, Lindholm suggests that Turner is 'a bit unsure of his ground'

(1981: 252). He questions whether the drives of sex and aggression are natural or cultural.

Lindholm is concerned with an analysis of friendship. This is the second text I wish to explore briefly. He himself, in his field-work, had a deeply significant friendship with one of his informants and therefore is involved in the consideration of affect among the Swat Pathans. His theoretical position assumes an 'emotional structure' (op. cit: 267) in men,

'visualised as dialectical; and consisting of sentiments associated with separation and independence on the one hand and attachment and interdependence on the other. This emotional structure.....is seen as existing independently of any particular social structure, though it can be modified in its expression by social circumstances'.

(ibid.)

He continues that taking this structure as given, 'its elements must find some expression within the cultural framework'. (ibid).

He outlines the social structure of Swat as one in which,

'the reality in which people exist is one of individual egoism, fear of others, jealousy, hostility and contempt.

(op. cit: 268)

Lindholm is interested in the cocurrence of hospitality and refuge in Swat, and points out that these and the 'pervasive ideal of male friendship' (ibid.), though formed by social reality 'cannot be traced back to this reality'.

In his analysis of this paradox he refers back again to the two poles of the emotional structure. (ibid.) Whereas the emotional flavour of the pole of separation fits into the plan of the Swati social order, the emotions of attachment 'clash with the trend of the society at large'. He suggests that the ritual of hospitality and

the ideal of friendship must be seen within the total framework, and further argues that the ritual of hospitality,

'is a playing out of fantasy, an enactment of relations that the conditions of real life make impossible'.

(op. cit: 269)

He also argues that,

'The outpouring of affection found in hospitality and friendship relations shows the power of the underlying need, a need kept dammed up save for a few highly restricted breaches socially permitted in the wall of repression'.

(ibid.)

This example, from a Middle Eastern society, reveals in a different way the usefulness of regarding emotion as important in the analysis of society. As with Rosaldo's data, a new slant is brought to the material and new parallels can be found with social structure and social relations in their totality. The focus of such studies is not emotion per se, but socially significant expressions of emotional response, examined in a context which can further understanding of the society in question. This is achieved for Rosaldo by exploring a certain universe of discourse, for Lindholm by considering the social order with a particular analytical framework. As Needham argues (1981: 101)

'Comte proposed in 1840 that the best way to study the emotions was from the outside; and latterly this view has led to some incipient investigations on the part of social anthropology. In this approach stress is laid on the premise that emotions are in part at least socially defined and socially directed; that is, in certain regards there is not a free play of feeling, but society stipulates what emotions are appropriate in what circumstances. This makes it possible to investigate comparatively the correlations between social sentiments and certain institutions in the organisation of social life.

A third text I would like to consider in this instance has a

somewhat different flavour. Here, the concept of love is used heuristically as part of an analysis that examines certain data from Middle Eastern society. Of the three texts I have chosen, this is perhaps the least satisfactory in its treatment of emotion, but it nevertheless demonstrates how emotion can be significant anthropologically, and in a different way from the other texts.

Michael Meeker (1976) attacks social structuralist interpretations of the preference for marriage with agnates in Middle Eastern society with a discussion of what he intends to be 'meaning'. Now the use of meaning in anthropological enquiry is possibly overdetermined, but still useful facts come to light with such an interpretation, and Meeker's article is in some ways no exception. By utilising heuristic categories which have what he terms 'a semantic distinction', (1976: 401) he can point to different data in his cultural spectrum and indeed does, contrasting and comparing the cases of the Arabs and the Turks with reference to marriage choices and their meaning in a wider context than is available to the structuralist, who may take social order as a given entity and is possibly hampered by the putative existence of social 'structures'. Meeker indicates quite well the contrasting meaning of sharaf in each ethnographic case, the difference stemming from the transfer of control over women at marriage, and accordingly the importance of the individual's sharaf with respect to his married sister or daughter. Among the Arabs (1976: 388 ff.) 'a disgrace of a woman or a slander touched directly the sharaf of '*those who love*' ' (i.e., a woman's brothers, her father, and by extension, their agnates). Whereas, among the Turks, 'a disgrace of a married woman or a slander touches directly '*those who control*' ' (i.e., her husband, his father, and by extension, their agnates). From this fact Meeker explains many

cultural items: particularly the significance of the preference for FBD marriage among the Arabs. It refers, in his opinion, primarily to the sharaf that is commonly shared by the parties in question.

However excellent this explanation may be, the analytical terms upon which it is based I think are insufficient and possibly point to a contradiction in Meeker's approach. Although emphasising meaning to the detriment of structure, Meeker is not in my opinion utilising indigenous categorisation in his analysis where such categorisation would really be wise. His analysis depends heavily on the differentiation between love and significance, Meeker stating that,

'community' therefore can always be expressed in two ways, but these two expressions, 'significance' and 'love', are contrary and incompatible idioms'.

(op. cit: 385)

Meeker states of love that it has 'a contagious, unbounded quality' (ibid.). He also suggests (op. cit: 386) that 'there is only one quality of 'love' among men, but there are many 'significances' '. I think both these remarks point to an analytical weakness in his concept of love: the first statement is both loose and uncontextualised; the second is palpably untrue. His concept of love is further omitted entirely from the husband-wife relationship, which is glossed (op. cit: 387) as one of control. The different nuances that are found to 'love' in Middle Eastern society are not mentioned or analysed: one is left with an imposed, western heuristic category when the denotation of the term, or concept, is a real socially experienced feeling. Significance, his paralld term, possibly excepts such a charge for it is a purely analytical concept and does not stand in the same relationship to his data as love. It is obviously 'from without' the

society, yet because of this, its existence is indeterminate, and its referents rather hazy.

The statement about idioms quoted above indicates the equivocal position of his category 'love' when compared with the following (op. cit: 387).

'The husband and wife tie will be glossed as a tie of 'control' which will be contrasted with a tie of 'love' '.

It is evident that for Meeker 'love' is both a heuristic category and a type of tie. Does this mean that 'control' has some analytical paralleled with 'significance'? We are not told: the level of analysis and that of ethnographic data are now blurred and the distinction between love as heuristic category and love as social phenomenon not explained. It is not clear whether these terms are putatively indigenous categories or are imposed on the data by the anthropologist. The difficulties incurred by this fact have been easily explained. It is mainly a difficulty revealed when the choice of an analytical concept is paralleled by the existence in the society studied of the importance of the same concept.

Meeker points out that the meaning of 'person' in Muslim societies has been partly revealed as a concept very alien to our own: similarly the meaning of emotion and its cultural expression could be shown to be very different from ours. The difficulties he has with 'love' are a case in point. One of these is the fact that he explains its analytical significance more fully than the associations of the notion made by his informants. His analysis suffers from his heuristic use of the idea of 'love' and a corresponding failure to examine the cultural meaning of the concept itself, rather using a western concept and then adumbrating cultural meaning and expression

from this connotation of the concept. The 'love' he examines has an abstract, analytical quality that seems to separate it from emotionality of any kind. This is nevertheless undoubtedly intentional: the concept is not embedded in a culturally significant domain of indigenous discourse. It would require ethnographic data on this subject, the area where love has importance, to study the problem fully.

As a look at emotion in the Middle East would not be complete without mentioning at least in passing sentiments other than love, it is worth also considering fear. The data on this emotion (at any rate in the connotation of it found in Muslim society) provide a link with the following chapter on medico-religious discourse. Fright, as well as envy, is purported to cause disease in Islamic societies, and some description of this process is found both in Good (1977) and Myntti (1983). Myntti states (1983: 204) that an illness episode of this type 'results usually from witnessing an accident or something frightening'. Such episodes are 'commonly discussed', and an illness resulting from a fright is considered by Myntti to be a 'middle range condition between everyday and serious illness'. She suggests, interestingly, that,

'understanding fright provides insight into how people view the effect of emotions on physiology and the interconnections between body and soul'.

(op. cit: 205)

This statement is fairly significant for my purposes: it seems from this text that the emotions are bound up in the Muslim view of one's state of health. This could be borne in mind when evaluating the data of the next chapter. It must be remembered also that the emotion of envy, as evidenced in the phenomenon of the evil eye, is widely

considered to cause illness and distress (many references, e.g., Myntti 1983; Constantinides 1972). It would be wise to mention also another area of significance with regard to emotion in its Middle Eastern context. This is the honour and shame complex. Though data on this subject is convoluted enough in itself and has many drawbacks that hamper adequate discussion, the prevalence of the honour code and the associated desired state of modesty demanded of women surely could be suggested to have some emotional component. The sphere of reference for this data is the family, where all over the world the most intense emotions are concentrated, experienced and also where the effect of emotion is most evident, in disputes and quarrels. The significance of the family with regard to honour has already been hinted at in Meeker's data, where an account was given of the relationship between control and love. Honour in the Middle East could be said to be related to control, a concept which here has definite emotional components. An investigation of the emotional connotations of vengeance killings and feud would also be quite instructive, though it would be a digression in a thesis concerned mainly with religious phenomena.

Love and Sufism

If one accepts the statement that religion appeals to the emotions, allowing them expression, albeit in a spiritual direction, and that mystical religion works even more with the emotions, it is perhaps salient to examine the significance of Sufi ritual, and behaviour generally, with reference to emotional exercise and control.

Apart from the accusation from some quarters as to the 'excessive' tendency of Sufi ritual, there are at least two other spheres in Sufism where the significance of some aspect of emotion is highlighted.

The first is the importance of the 'heart' in Sufism, which has a connection with the significance of the heart generally in the Middle East. (Thinking particularly here of the framing of illness episodes in the language of heart distress as in Myntti 1983; Constantinides 1972; Good 1977). Secondly there is the emphasis on 'love' in Sufi writings. It is my intention to examine now the importance of various connotations of 'love' (used in its most inclusive English meaning) in Sufism, but beginning with a consideration of the dhikr.

The dhikr has been variously described and I have analysed the ritual elsewhere. Here I wish only to highlight the significance of some aspects of it. Firstly, the impression sometimes obtained from anthropological accounts of the ritual is one of a lack of bodily control. The participant is, maybe, in a trance state, his eyes are glazed, his body jerks. Erotic comparisons are made. Yet the ritual is indeed that: a ritual. Accordingly a modicum of control is assumed: the ritual has temporal and spatial referents, it does not occur anywhere or for an unspecified duration of time. There are varieties of intensity in its experience: the hadra of the Hamdsha might be rather higher on a scale of emotional intensity than the corresponding ritual of the Hamidiya Shadhiliya for example (if one could posit such a comparison usefully). (Crapanzano 1973; Gilseman 1973).

The experience demonstrates a 'letting out', if you like, of something. Ordinary parameters are forgotten, irrelevant, and behaviour that would not be sanctioned elsewhere is permitted. This behaviour is emotionally significant: participants express relief afterwards (Crapanzano 1973 for example); its catharsis or release demonstrates that there is something escaping here that in other circumstances is contained, repressed even. Yet the outlet is a

sanctioned outlet, and there are parameters for the participants as Gilsean shows (1973) when he indicates that there is someone to tap participants on the shoulder if their behaviour becomes excessive given the constraints of the communal ritual performance. (Gilsean 1973: 170). Control is here present, and is imposed both subjectively by the ritual actor and from the outside by a kind of adjudicator. The participant is being taught the necessary rules for participation in the dhikr: a certain catharsis is permitted. Excess, however, is not, but the excess in question has a particular meaning in this situation; it is defined in Sufic terms.

The heart is where love is experienced, through which it is felt and where it is synthesised and controlled through the mediation of the conscious faculties, Sufically speaking. The Sufi must 'exercise' his heart: 'polish the mirror of the heart' is a frequent suggestion made to those learning the Sufi way. So, the Sufi is working with the heart, using it as a tool. In Western parlance, one might state that the Sufi appears to be working with his emotions. Experience permits him the pleasure of indulging his heart, as love is demanded of him. Yet the love that is required of the Sufi is of a particular kind. Though described in sensual imagery, it is a purified kind of love that should be separated from most Western connotations of love, from love that is purely physical, based in a certain regard for a person or object.

The difficulty lies with this last: in Sufi writings, love for a love object is frequently described. I think that the KEY is that the physical emotion of love is yet again used: through physical, human love the Sufi can learn to experience the divine love that is his goal. As Javad Nurbakhsh points out (1978: 25) a few Sufi masters have considered that real, Sufi love can indeed emerge from

temporal love. As indicated, there may be some confusion between ordinary human love and the divine love as experienced by the Sufis. As Fatemi suggests (1978: 58-59) there has been an argument as to whether the wine and love imagery used by Sufi poets refers to the wines of the spirit and the love of god or whether they refer to the real wine and physical love in this world. Fatemi proposes that the orthodox Muslim regards this style as allegoric: however, interpreters of literature have diverged from this. Fatemi suggests that the allegoric view can be applied to some poets but not to others.

The types of love* acknowledged by the Sufis are various: Fatemi mentions (1978: 47) three: divine, spiritual, and natural. Nurbakhsh (1978: 24) also underlines three types, and each author is basically describing the same distinctions. For Nurbakhsh the three types are instinctive love, spiritual love and divine love. In the first the lover longs for the Beloved for his own sake. In the second, the lover longs for the Beloved for his own sake as well as for that of the Beloved. In the third the lover longs for the Beloved not for himself, but only for the sake of the Beloved. Fatemi's distinction is as follows: divine love is the love of the creator for the creature, and that of the creature for the creator. Spiritual love is found in a creature who is always in quest of a Being whose image he discovers in himself is love that has no other concern, aim or will than to be adequate to the Beloved. Natural love lastly desires to possess and seek the satisfaction of its own desires without concern for the satisfaction of the Beloved.

Fatemi (1978: 48) suggests that the real problem is to reconcile spiritual and temporal love. This reconciliation is found, according *NOTE Here using love in its broadest English sense as a rather inadequate translation of the several indigenous terms.

to Ibn Arabi, in the Sufi image of the perfect man, who embodies all three types of love. This conception of the perfect man, according to Fatemi, is a result of the concept of love and its motivating force in the world.

Nurbakhsh similarly underlines the motivating force of love in the world for the Sufis (1978: 26). He asserts that Sufis believe that the foundation of the created world is love.

'All motion, activity and light throughout the entire universe.....derive from the rays of love, and true perfection which must be sought.....through love'.

(ibid.)

Nurbakhsh indicates the theological derivation of this belief also (ibid.). He proposes that man's love is a result of God's love, love being one of God's attributes. More precisely, love is an attribute of the Divine Will, and Will an attribute of the Divine Essence. The special kind of Sufi love Nurbakhsh concentrates on is 'Eshq. The dictionary definition of this (op. cit: 23) is 'excessive love and complete devotion'. It is derived from 'ashaqah, a type of vine, which, when it winds itself about a tree, kills and withers the tree. So too, according to Nurbakhsh, does the love of the world wither up the tree of the body. Spiritual love, on the other hand, withers the root of the self. 'Eshq is most of all the supreme and most fervent type of love. It is a result of muhabbah (loving kindness) (op. cit: 24). Muhabbah in turn is higher than gnosis for Nurbakhsh, since it arises from gnosis.

According to Nurbakhsh, when 'Eshq acts on anything it is called 'will' and the creation of living beings is one of its results. On a Sufi level, God's favouring of mankind with this bounty of love means that God may burn away the lover's existence as lover and bring him to the state of fana (self-having-passed-away) (op. cit: 26).

Then, by the illumination which reveals the Divine attributes of the Beloved, the lover is pulled from the state of fana to that of baqa (permanence-in-the-Beloved). In this state the relative existence of the lover has gone and absolute existence has become manifest. So to Nurbakhsh progress in the Sufi stations is achieved directly through 'Eshq.

The one important distinction between real Sufi love and temporal love is that temporal love of all kinds arises from the beauty of transient forms. Like them it is also a passing state. Nurbakhsh points out that it is the result of 'sublimation and the refinement of sexual desire' (op. cit: 25). Real, or Divine love is,

'a profusion and a rapture from the Absolute Beloved which descends upon the heart of the sincere lover. This lover is like a moth that flutters around the beauty of the candle that is the Absolute, burning away its relative existence in His fire. The lover turns away from himself and perishes, inclines towards Him and becomes alive. When the lover is emptied of himself and becomes nothing, he finds eternal life'.

(ibid.)

Poetically this points to the power of divine love in the Sufi system of meaning. It is the motivating force behind Sufism, for as Nurbakhsh quotes (op. cit: 23), 'Sufism is a way to God through love'.

A little should be said about the antithesis of love to the Sufis, intellect. Nurbakhsh states (op. cit: 27) that in Sufi discourse intellect is signified by reason. However the perfection of love is the same as the Universal Intellect for it comes from God, who is Love and Universal Intellect, the difference between love and intellect in Sufi discourse is indicated by a short aphorism quoted by Nurbakhsh:

'Reason says 'There can be no more than three dimensions, more more are impossible'.
Love answers 'The way beyond exists and I have been there many times' '.

Additionally Nurbakhsh proposes that intellect has knowledge and eloquence, whereas love is free from both worlds (op. cit: 28). To Nurbakhsh, love is not in the realm of the sentiments and feelings for the Sufis. Rather it is an attraction of the Divine, the pull of God, exercised on the lover, towards God. Here again it is evident that Sufis do not primarily locate their type of love in the world of the emotions. It is something suprasensible, something Divine. Yet it is recognised as Love, and approximated to this type of emotional experience in explanation. 'Pull' and 'attraction' do indeed suggest the experience of an emotional type of attachment similar to that felt in physical love. However, as a Divine object is in question, the experience is spiritual and the 'love' divine love.

Next I would like to locate some of this discourse on love in an historical context. It is possibly wise, for one can then point to contradictions in time and illustrate some of the theological arguments that have raged over various aspects of love, divine and temporal, in the historical experience of the Sufis. A. M. Schimmel's account of love in Sufism is useful in this as she traces some of this convoluted history of debate. She concentrates on those mystical traditions that praise love as the highest possible state. This love is the Divine love for God previously analysed, the love that seems at odds in some ways with the usual western experience of that emotion, but has a parallel in the experience of western Christian mystics.

However as stated before this love does have elements that are derived from worldly attachments. Orthodoxy accepted muhabbah as 'obedience' in earliest times (Schimmel 1975: 131). However, the aspects of love were several and were classified differently by various authors. Among the different states of love described by the Sufis are uns (intimacy); qurb (proximity); shauq (longing);

these are only a few. God is most frequently referred to as the Beloved, and, essentially the only way of approaching the Beloved is through constant purification and qualification with the attributes of God. In this, as God for the Sufis is all-loving, love is of extreme importance. The Sufi becomes as his Beloved: he loses his earthly qualities in his love for the Supreme Other.

Another 'worldly' quality that is of extreme importance to the Sufis is suffering. The one who is in love is willing to suffer excruciating torment if he may at last approach the loved one. The lover has to remain at the door of the Beloved even if he is driven away. He welcomes death, for this itself means annihilation of the individual qualities, 'the lifting of the veil that separates the primordial Beloved from the lover created in time' (op. cit: 135). Death in this case may mean the death of one's own qualities, or actual corporal death, the latter leading the lover to the Beloved. Accordingly the mystic is willing to accept all sorts of suffering, if he is willing to accept his own death. These tribulations themselves 'were even regarded as signs of special kindness from God', (op. cit: 136).

Before the C10th, discussion of love was mainly theoretical, concerned with semantic associations. Then an attempt was made to introduce the previously described concept of 'Eshq, glossed by Schimmel as 'passionate love' (op. cit: 137) into Sufism. The inclusion of this concept into the relationship between man and God incurred opposition among most Sufis, for the concept implied 'overflowing and passionate longing, a quality that God, the self-sufficient, could not possibly possess' (ibid.). This discussion becomes more complicated with the introduction, at Baghdad about 900, of the concept of hubb udhri (platonic love).

Love appears, as A.M. Schimmel points out, as 'a strong personal and existential commitment' (op. cit: 138) among the early Sufis. Hallaj did not hesitate to put it higher even than faith (ibid.). Later in this complicated history, love was contrasted, unfavourably, with discursive reason: the mystics named those who did not know love 'cow', 'jackass', 'hard stone', based on the Koranic statement 'they are like beasts, even more astray' (Sura 7: 178). Love for the Sufis is the only legitimate way of educating the baser human qualities. For this, reason alone does not suffice. Understanding one's self involves more than reason: to accomplish it some sort of unique experience is required, like love for the Beloved, that takes one out of oneself to appreciate higher qualities than the merely human. The discourse suggests learning through the emotions and emotional experience, even if this is not stipulated as such, even if the emotional experience in question has a somewhat transcendental quality, and its object is a divine one.

The inspiration that the Sufis draw from their form of love is self evident in much Sufi poetry. Schimmel emphasises the importance of Persian and Turkish love poetry in this demonstration. As she states (op. cit: 289)

'a transcendent and absolute object is made the goal of every thought and feeling, so that love gains absolute primacy in the soul and mind of the lover'.

In these later works sometimes a transcendent love could be objectified in a human being 'in which the fullness of divine beauty and radiant glory seem to be reflected' (ibid.). As an instance there are the inspired poems of Rumi written to Shams-iTabrizi.

However, the earlier Sufis would never have accepted a human receptor of the feeling of love, aware,

'that the inclusion of a human object of love could lead to consequences that were more than objectionable, and that threatened to pollute purity of feeling'.

(ibid.)

The tradition that Sufis drew on in this instance were, (1) the claim that Muhammad had seen his Lord in a beautiful form, and (2) that he beheld Gabriel in the shape of Dahya-al-Kalbi, a handsome young man. As Schimmel points out, while a tradition according to which there are three things pleasant to look at - verdure, a beautiful face and running water - does not go beyond the usual limits of ordinary admiration of beauty, another tradition, the hadith in which Muhammad attests 'I saw the Lord in the shape of a beautiful young man, with his cap awry' was suspect in orthodox circles.

'The mystic who is completely absorbed in his love contemplates in the human Beloved only the perfect manifestation of divine beauty, which is as distant from him as God himself'.

(op. cit: 290)

The great Sufi masters of love mysticism, like Ahmad Ghazzali and Jalaluddin Rumi,

'have regarded this worldly love as a pedagogical experience, a training in obedience towards God, since the human Beloved, like God, has to be obeyed absolutely'.

(op. cit: 291)

This illustrates that the Sufis have a concern with the purpose of their feeling as well as what these feelings are concerned with. The emotions, correctly experienced and directed, channel energy in a desirable way; one learns from them salient lessons, and in the human feelings one can sometimes experience flashes of the divine. Even though Nurbakhsh denies the relationship between emotion and Sufi divine love, the relationship appears to stand in many instances.

The question is, I think, the 'use' of emotional experience as a tool for learning. Through the human emotions spiritual experience is approached, it would seem, yet the two types of experience are clearly differentiated by most commentators. It is left to the mystical poets to confuse the reader. For Rumi 'Love was the power innate in everything, working through everything and directing all things toward unification', (op. cit: 293).

Some Sufi commentators claim that the inclusion of love imagery is purely metaphorical in order to escape from charges of excess in this direction. Mir Valiuddin contrasts spiritual love with sensual love (1968). Sensual love is 'pure Nothing' (1968: 153ff.) and is far removed from spiritual love. The emotions are purified in the experience of spiritual love, and as aforementioned Nurbakhsh denies the relationship between this type of love and feeling, or emotion. The tariqa attempts to show man a Way, the way of love. The Sufi (and his Beloved) is the 'Friend', a metaphor that by its nature implies affect. Although Sufism tries to rid man of the debilitating effects of his nafs, his lower, animal self, the emotion of love cannot be strictly included as something purely base in the Sufi lexicon. Though there are base carnal desires to which love has a relationship the love of the Sufis is a pure thing, and in many ways is the apogee of the Sufi experience.

This consideration of the position of love in Sufism is necessarily brief. Illustrations from the works of the Sufis would fill many pages and yet have very little anthropological interest. To infer from Middle Eastern society to the love of Islamic mystics or from the love of the Sufis back to the cultural context is perhaps inviting; nevertheless it is not my intention to do this here. After pointing to the usefulness of studying emotion anthropologically I hope this

examination of love in Sufism has proved the relevance of considering emotion here at all.

This chapter has attempted to do two things: firstly to demonstrate the significance of studying emotion anthropologically; secondly to discuss love in Sufism. The main difficulty in both these discussions has been the creation of a satisfactory discourse within which to examine one's data. Using Sufi authors one's limitations are understandable: one is left with an entirely emic explanation. Thus one finds, for instance, that Nurbakhsh (1978) denies any emotional content in the Sufi divine love. Questioned differently by an anthropologist, perhaps another pattern would emerge. Talking to the Doctor this year I found myself that adequate questioning can bring to light the problems the anthropologist wishes to accentuate. When I went to see him I came armed with a complicated barrage of questions. When I talked with him I found myself being distracted by his fascinating remarks to ask things of another nature entirely that were just as useful, just as informative. I was able to clarify certain issues about Sufism that had previously bothered me, mainly its significance in America, and Dr. Nurbakhsh's opinion of its status as a 'psychotherapy'.

To return to the discussion in hand, concerning the problems of the data. With regard to the anthropology, one is left with the limitations intrinsic to those texts: Rosaldo returned to the field to achieve her work 'Knowledge and Passion', therefore had a certain familiarity with the culture before attempting a discussion of the indigenous discourse of significances from which the importance of emic equivalents of western emotional discourse emerged. The limitations in Meeker's article also were adequately revealed: chiefly

there was a lack of data in the field so admirably explored in Rosaldo's work.

Nevertheless I think this discussion has pointed to the usefulness of considering emotion, and particularly indigenous meanings for what westerners would term emotional experience, and the significance of 'emotional' discourse for anthropological understanding. The main problem with this field of study is the definition of the emotions themselves: even the English terms such as love, anger or fear are inadequate because they have several connotations. It is simple to say that there is a problem translating foreign emotional concepts, as Needham does, without stating the equally obvious fact that English words are also ambiguous in this area.

C H A P T E R T H R E E

MEDICO-RELIGIOUS DISCOURSE

Introduction

To begin a discussion of aspects of Middle-Eastern society that are incorporated in the wide field that Sufism touches, I turned from an outline of what Sufism is, to a consideration of Sufism's relationship with emotion. This issue points - albeit indirectly - to the next area that should be covered in an anthropological perspective on Sufism that attempts to explore various meanings, or worlds of significance, that Sufism has. This next issue I wish to consider is the field of medico-religious discourse, which encompasses to some extent the subject matter of the remainder of the thesis. As the notion that Sufism can be seen as a system of curing is a relatively little-discussed one, I think this idea can be explored in some depth.

To do this I wish to discuss three main topics: cosmology, spirit-possession and psychiatric illness, which are inter-related, and the subject matter of this present chapter does to some extent cross over into the area treated in the following chapter. However, I have selected for inclusion in this chapter data pertaining directly to illness, with most attention focussed on psychiatric disease. One article concerns itself with healers, another with traditional healing methods, and a third with insanity and spirit possession viewed as social phenomena. The fourth article is a seminal work on spirit possession which bears a certain relationship with Sufism. The remainder of the chapter concerns itself with Islamic cosmological systems and some associated material.

In the two following chapters I discuss Sufism as a type of

psychotherapy, and the notion of baraka. These two topics are easily included in the field of medico-religious discourse, and one element, that of power, is perhaps outstanding in its significance in this context. In this chapter, both those who are able to manipulate power to create social meanings and those who are to a certain extent powerless (that is the insane or mentally ill) enter the discourse on Sufism. Those who 'create' power for themselves in this way in the medico-religious field are the holy men and healers of various types, and the scholars who have originated, or created, the cosmological system on which this power is partly based. The nature of the power created by holy men and healers, however, is to some extent dependent on the continuing stream of patients who wish treatment (and vice-versa), for this legitimises the status and position of the healers. It is interesting to view the issue of traditional vs. modern medicine in this light and point as Good does (1977) to the prevalence of 'alternatives' in the medical field in the Middle East. Additionally, the mentally ill themselves are possibly making statements about power, although in serious cases inadvertently. The women in both Constantines' Sudan and Tapper's Afghanistan are creating their own kind of power in their involvement in spirit possession. The rebel or the socially incompetent also is expressing his views about power and his lack of it. He may (Tapper unpubs.) in fact seek the comfort of membership in a Sufi tariqa to ameliorate or change his lot.

Crapanzano (1973) also has a certain amount to say about the involvement of the underprivileged in Sufism's curing facility. Yet the overwhelming impression is of the power religions and cults may have, and can maybe sustain, partly through the continued support of those who need them to cure their ailments. That they also need to

express their powerlessness and obtain some sort of ratification of their position as worthwhile individuals is a corollary of this in this particular context.

Difficulties

From discussing emotion and Sufism I wish to move to another background topic that will ideally provide an introduction to the main subject of the thesis, the central issue of Sufism as a type of curing system. To preface this discussion I think it necessary to provide an outline of Islamic views of illness, and of psychiatric illness in particular. To do this it is sensible to indicate the wider tradition within which these beliefs are located historically. However, it will be seen that the popular sentiments about illness and mental disturbance are neither wholly consistent with, nor analogous to, this tradition. Neither are popular beliefs about medicine generally homogenous. These facts point to the first problem in such a discussion as I am proposing; that of levels of belief.

This problem I have dealt with elsewhere at greater length. Nevertheless it is essential to mention that it is a factor to be borne in mind. Popular beliefs tend to be syncretic. Many elements are drawn together to make up a composite whole. Accordingly it may possibly be difficult to envisage the cosmology of Islam as outlined in the local beliefs of a particular group. E. Early (1982) points out that the group she considers use a number of cultural precepts and a narrative context to negotiate the reality of an illness event and the correct curative action (1982: 1491). Additionally, she suggests that their curative system is based on the traditional humoral system, though this is not explicit (1982: 1493). Additionally, Richard Tapper, in an unpublished article,

points to the vagueness of Madozai Pashtun knowledge of the humoral system. All this emphasises the pragmatic nature of the way curing systems are actually turned into practice in the Middle East. But additionally to pragmatism there is the difference between traditional theory or cosmology and popular beliefs and practices. Good points out that in Iran popular cosmology is essentially simple (1977: 189). Also he suggests that the modern cosmology derived from traditional sources provides,

'a structure for a seeming diversity of popular beliefs about physiology, disease, and therapy in Maragheh today'.

(op. cit: 191)

The subject just discussed leads on to a further difficulty: that is the relationship between traditional and modern medicine. Good suggests (1977: 243) that 'diverse therapies may provide alternatives that explain any particular failure'. He further points to the way in which patients organise types of curing and their advantages. This is done (1) in terms of availability of the curing method, (2) in terms of proximity, (3) in terms of the particular illness for which a cure is sought and (4) in terms of the seriousness of the illness. Good states (1977: 240) that

'a first level distinction is made between illness which is dua'lix and that which is davalix, between illness to be treated by prayer and that to be treated by medicine. Medicine is used to treat an imbalance or disorder of the body. But if the illness is intractable....an old neighbourhood woman may point out 'Ay, bu davalix deyir, bu du'alixdi' ('this is no matter for medicine, this is a matter for prayers')'.

Good suggests that curative prayers are used for illnesses 'believed to have one of a relatively delimited set of efficient causes' (1977: 246). However, prayers may be used in one illness

event along with medicine. (op. cit: 246). Within the category davalix are included both 'old medicine' and 'new medicine', traditional and allopathic. Very often, or so Good suggests, old medicine is now used as therapy for non-serious ailments. However, the old medicine includes many functional equivalents to modern allopathy, and the old methods may be followed, 'if money, distance or acceptability of cure limits the pateint's access to physician's cure' (op. cit: 248). Thus it can be seen that the distinctions between modern and traditional therapies is somewhat blurred, and though the decision making process involves discrimination between the available alternatives, there is some shading of boundaries between the therapies.

The third difficulty one encounters in such data is the possible confusion of the traditional western distinction between study of physiology and metaphysics. In discussing cosmology and medicine it is well to bear in mind what Good discusses in a similar context (1977: 181). It must be remembered that although medicine is primarily concerned with corporeal man, in Islamic thought

'man stands also in a cosmic environment and is subject to forces in both the heavens and the sublunary world'.

Medicine is therefore closely linked to astrology, and because, as Al Razi said, the body is 'the instrument and implement of the rational soul.....' (Al Razi: Physick: 30), cosmology and soteriology provide the context for medical theory' (1977: 181). As Good adds (op. cit: 181), for Islamic scientists the universe was not separated into the natural and the supernatural. It was rather 'an unified hierarchy, ordered along a gradient' from things of the body to no material forces, 'from body to intellect' (Tambiah: 1970: 36). Each level of this cosmic hierarchy was related to another as an

analogue: man is the microcosm of the universe, which

'is a unified whole whose various parts are held together by the analogy which exists between them....the language with which this interrelation is expounded is that of symbolism'

(Nasr 1964 quoted in Good 1977: 179)

However, information in the cosmologies about the human body can be differentiated from cosmological elements which to us have perhaps more metaphysical than real significance. Nevertheless the facts that Islam generally propounded the 'oneness' of all types of being (many sources e.g., Nasr 1964, 1978; Good 1977) and differentiated the qualities of various kinds of being in a hierarchical way should be remembered: additionally that man was essentially seen as a microcosm of the universe in whose body all levels of the ontological hierarchy are represented (Good: 1977: 179).

Cosmology

From these initial comments I should like to move on to discuss Islamic cosmology in some detail. For this I propose to take as my source Good (1977) who himself is heavily dependent on Nasr (1964). Nevertheless Good's is probably a more concise account than the Nasr and has the advantage of being compiled by an anthropologist. Good discusses Islamic cosmology as a background to his data on illness semantics in Maragheh, Iran, and begins with an account of the derivation of the system, accentuating the extraordinary diversity of the scheme (1977: 174), marking the strangeness to the modern student of

'the juxtaposition in one scholar of astrology or alchemy with rationalist (Aristotelian, 'Peripatetic') philosophy and Galenic medicine'.

The cosmology he indicates (ibid.) was built up of elements taken

from Greek sources:

'the Ptolemaic structure of concentric spheres; the Aristotelian elements of fire, water, earth and air; and the Plotinian emanations of pure intelligences and souls'.

He later points (op. cit: 175) to the fact that these Greek phenomena were amalgamated with 'distinctly Islamic convictions'.

Good attempts to contextualise medicine within the cosmology, first introducing the theories about the nature of the universe, which, as aforesated, is thought of

'as consisting of a unity and hierarchy of being, divided primarily between the sublunary world of generation and corruption on the one hand, and on the other the cosmic spheres of the planets and the Intelligences or angels, which have perfect form and movement but neither generation nor decay'.

(ibid.)

The cosmos was,

'created by God and is a reflection of his Light and Being. It consists of a set of concentric spheres with the earth as centre. The seven planets..... follow a perfect orbit within their assigned and bounded spheres; beyond lies the sphere of Fixed Stars and the outermost sphere or Muhit. The cosmic spheres are the residence of separate Intelligences or angels'.

(op. cit: 176)

To quote Nasr as a further explanation of the outer spheres:

'Each heaven is goverened by an intellect or group of angels, moved by a soul, or group of souls, and composed of a body generated by the being which stands above it in the hierarchy of creation'.

..(Nasr 1978: 236)

Good explains the ontological hierarchy as understood by the philosophers,

'in terms of essence and existence, necessary, possible, and impossible beings; Intellect, Soul and Body; and Divine Essence, Universal Intellect, angelic substances, and psychic and subtle manifestations'.

(Good 1977: 177)

To turn to the sublunary world, Good states that it is, 'in a continuous process of 'transformation' ' (ibid.). Form and matter are 'co-dependent' (ibid.). The sublunary region is made up of four simple elements: fire, earth, air and water, which individually have a pair of basic qualities: hot, dry, cold and moist. The earth and the waters are heavy elements, and both moist. The atmosphere, a band of air, is moist in its lower altitudes and dry in the higher. This band of air is surrounded by a sphere of pure fire; naturally one would assume that this would be dry, but Good does not say. Nasr (1978: 240) states that fire is 'warm and dry'.

The beings of the plant, mineral and animal kingdoms are composed of these four basic elements. The 'constituent compounds and the forms which they take determine the nature of the being' (Good 1977: 178). Man, the other resident of the sublunary sphere, is regarded as 'unique' (op. cit. 179). This is because

'unlike other beings who represent a single level of the ontological and cosmic hierarchy, man is a microcosm of the entire universe'.

Man is material, and as other beings, is made up of an unique mixture of the four basic elements. However, he also possesses soul (nafs), or the rational faculty, for which 'soul' is a synonym in this account, that 'transcends corporeality and is open to the realm of pure form or Intellect' (op. cit: 179). As aforementioned, within man exists a peculiar individual hierarchy. This is represented by three 'souls' or 'faculties'. Here one encounters a difficulty in

terminology, but I intend to adhere to Good's translations, as the corresponding terminology in the Nasr I feel is even more confusing. The terms are metaphysical and are used to refer to the body. The system is alien to the westerner however, and confusion may arise. The term 'soul' here is a different connotation of that term from the 'soul' (nafs) mentioned previously and thus is glossed as 'faculty'. (op. cit: 179). The three 'faculties' are the 'vegetative' or 'natural', the 'animal' or 'vital' and the 'rational'. (Possibly this 'faculty' could be said to correspond to the nafs, but the correspondence is not specified by Good).

The 'natural' faculty resides in the liver: its functions are nutrition and reproduction. It is the locus of the appetites and the baser human passions. The 'vital' or animal faculty is located in the heart: it provides the 'innate heat' and 'vital breath' (op. cit: 180) to the body and is the locus of the emotions, particularly fear and anger. The 'rational' faculty is found in the brain: it produces sensation and rationality. The rational activities are ranked hierarchically

'from ^ssensation through imagination, cognition and memory, to acts of the intellect that place man in a relation to the 'intelligible worlds' '.

(ibid.)

'Thus man stands between the sensible and intelligible worlds, the world of form and matter and the world of pure forms'.

(ibid.)

Good points out that medicine concentrates mainly on the 'natural' faculties, and 'secondarily the interaction between the natural and vital faculties', (ibid.). Each person has a natural temperament which is produced by the unique balance of the four 'humors' (ibid.), the

basic elements, and the fundamental qualities (hot, cold, moist, dry) of which he is made up. Four 'humors' (blood, yellow and black bile and phlegm) are necessary in man. They are made in digestion (ibid.). Each humor possesses a pair of fundamental qualities. The temperament resulting from the ensuing individual balance is thought to be typical of 'race, climate, age and sex, as well as to each individual' (op. cit: 181). Each temperament (sanguine, bilious, atra-bilious, phlegmatic) 'structures both emotional and physiological characteristics of the individual' (ibid.). Illness is caused by over or under-functioning of the faculties and from the humoral imbalance. Myntti (1983: 145-6) suggests that this balance is 'never constant and only ideal'. Medicine attempts to stimulate the body's innate proclivity to restore its balance. Good states (ibid.)

'thus medicine's primary concern is corporeal man, conceived as a balanced set of functions interacting both within the body and with the external environment'.

From this it can be seen that Good places medicine well away from any surrounding metaphysics, although what was mentioned before about the importance of elements in the cosmology as a context for medical science must still stand.

Nasr (1964; 1978) points to the involvement of association with Sufism of the scholars who inculcated these cosmologies. However estimable S.H.Nasr may be in his own milieu, he is perhaps out of context for an anthropological interpretation. Nevertheless he has some interesting (if unvalidated) comments to make about the nature of Sufism as a metaphysical system, or possibly its metaphysical elements, and also its connection and resemblance to a form of psychotherapy. Here Nasr is highlighting metaphysical aspects of Sufi doctrine that subsist on a certain level and he links them with phenomena

from a different level of analysis, one must point out. Additionally he is a true apologist for Islam, so his remarks must be prefaced with a certain caveat. His comments might illustrate, however, how elements from Islamic cosmology may be seen in the light of a discussion of illness itself. He demonstrates how what is essentially a practical system can have points of contact with theoretical expositions in a practical manner, despite his confusion of levels of analysis.

Nasr suggests (1980) that Sufism has always included a deep psychotherapy, which, he considers, is more complex than modern psychotherapy. The Sufi therapy, in his opinion, is bound up in Islamic cosmology, and with its hierophany. The names and attributes of God (which is the hierophany) also represent the totality of the human being (cf. the ontological hierarchy subsisting in man as described by Good 1977).

Sufi doctrine, according to Nasr (1980: 33) consists of metaphysics, cosmology, psychology and an eschatology. This eschatology is apparently linked with psychology and occasionally with metaphysics. The metaphysical aspect contains (1) the nature of reality (2) the Oneness of the Divine Essence (3) the theophany of Essence (through the Divine Names and Qualities, and through the determination of different states of being) (4) the nature of man as the total theophany of the names and qualities (op. cit: 33). The doctrine of tauhid or unity forms the axis of all Sufi metaphysics.

The significance of unity is revealed in Sufism's integration of many medieval sciences into its perspective, or so Nasr states (op. cit: 34). This is because these sciences reflect 'the unicity of nature and the interrelatedness of things' (ibid.). Nasr believes that to the extent that these sciences consider the symbolic and

qualitative nature of things they ally well with Sufism (ibid.). However, this integration is a peculiar thing: the sciences nevertheless exist in their own right and Sufi contributions to them, for instance, can be interpreted in two ways, (1) as significant scientific essays, and (2) as Sufi treatises.

However, as Nasr points out (ibid.) as Sufism is based in experience, it has been able to support the natural and mathematical sciences and encourage them, according to its own perspective. Also, doubtless, as based in experience, Nasr indicates the fact that Sufism contains

'a complete method for curing the illnesses of the soul and in fact succeeds where so many modern psychiatric and psychoanalytical methods, with all their extravagant claims, fail'.

(ibid.)

To examine in a little more detail the nature of the psychotherapy Nasr explains (op. cit: 35) that in Sufism the soul is,

'presented as a substance that possesses different faculties and modes of existence, separated yet united by a single axis that traverses all these modes and planes'.

He further points to a close link between psychology and cosmology in Sufism

'so that man comes to realise the cosmic dimension of his being, not in a quantitative but in a qualitative and symbolic sense. Moreover, this cosmic correspondence objectifies the inner structure of the psyche, thereby releasing the soul from its own knots, illuminating its darker aspects, and displaying to the traveller of the spiritual path the manifold traps lying in his way, in the inner journey of the soul towards its own Centre'.

(ibid.)

Also,

'Sufi psychological doctrine lays the scheme before the adept, in both its microcosmic and macrocosmic aspects, before the actual journey is undertaken. But even the

theoretical presentation has the effect of integrating the mental and psychic plane of the person who is fully able to comprehend it'.

(ibid.)

Here one would presume that Nasr is again referring to the aforementioned hierarchical and analogic constructs in Islamic cosmology, particularly the importance of the correspondence between man and cosmos.

Psychiatric illness

To move on from an individual's opinion of Sufism's relationship with psychotherapy I would like to turn now to more concrete data that outline certain aspects of psychiatric illness in the Middle East. Firstly I will consider two articles that deal with different facets of this issue, and then will turn to a consideration of spirit possession. Lastly I wish to refer to an unpublished article that nevertheless provides some interesting data with which to end this discussion of both insanity and possession.

The first article is O. M. Ozturk's 'Folk treatment of Mental Illness in Turkey'. This discusses indigenous healing to some extent, but one obvious drawback of this piece of work is the perspective of the author, who appears to regard the phenomena he describes as somewhat strange and eccentric. He is not an anthropologist and possibly this fact is self-evident in his treatment of the data. He approaches the data with the categories and prejudices of western medicine. For instance (1964: 350) he hints that villagers he has studied fail to distinguish between magic, superstition and religion. This comment can hardly have been a considered one: it serves mainly to indicate Ozturk's ambivalent attitude to his data, and to the people who provide it.

Nevertheless, the ethnography he provides elicits some useful facts. He points out, for instance, that in the average village, people take patients to both western allopathic doctors and to traditional healers, but bodily complaints are more readily taken to the allopathic physician. He additionally suggests (op. cit: 349) that folk beliefs about illness are usually non-specific and can be applied to all sorts of ailments.

He states that all kinds of psychotic and neurotic reactions are frequently found in Turkey: the most common are schizophrenic and manic depressive illnesses (op. cit: 348). Mental illness, according to Ozturk, carries the 'usual stigma' found in western society, and he sees fit to remark that,

'cruel and inhumane treatment of patients has, however, never existed to any remarkable degree in this part of the world'.

(ibid.)

However, he does not probe the meaning of mental illness socially, or for the patients and their families.

He points significantly to the distinction between the terms deli and weli. The former glosses as 'insane', the latter as 'saint'. He suggests that this is a problematic distinction (op. cit: 349). According to Ozturk the criteria for diagnosis as insane include (1) aggressiveness, (2) instability, (3) non-conformity. A person may hallucinate or have delusions but as long as he is not destructive or very unstable he will not be considered insane, especially if the content of his experiences is religious or mystical. This ethnographic fact is interesting per se, but points not merely to a localised phenomena, but an issue that has meaning in many parts of the Middle East, if I may be permitted to generalise here. The Sufis

are frequently considered excessive in behaviour, and unlike the normal individual. The connection between sainthood and insanity can well be understood and so is possibly not the problem to others that it is to Ozturk, if the social meaning of a certain type of religiosity is borne in mind.

Ozturk has a certain amount to say about the jinns (op. cit: 350-1) and other supernatural illness causation, such as the evil eye. Jinns are prone to attack people: numerous daily activities are preceded by remarks like 'excuse me' uttered specifically for the jinns. Jinns may be seen accidentally or one may be 'struck' by a jinn following some ordinary, everyday incident such as washing one's hands or emptying water. (I will be discussing the world of the jinns in more detail in the next chapter of this thesis). The result of such contact with the jinns may be a confusional state, such as a schizophrenic reaction, a mania or a delusional depression. It was observed by Ozturk that many of the patients complained of free-floating anxiety or repetitive anxiety, and were likely to remark that 'they' (the jinns) 'are frightening me' (op. cit: 351).

Ozturk's conclusion about Turkish health practices is perhaps less informative than his ethnographic data. To quote him (op. cit: 360),

'the prevailing beliefs about illness in Turkey serve as institutional channels for the projection, displacement, and indirect expression of aggressive and other undesirable associated impulses, as well as attempts at mastering the unknown.'

Further he adds that though the aforementioned beliefs and practices reduce guilt, as atonement devices (prayers, fasting, sacrifices), they do not have a gross self-punitive element. Guilt denial is to him more significant in the framework than guilt reduction. This

tendency in Muslim belief systems has been pointed to elsewhere (see Crapanzano 1973, Pfeleiderer 1981 for examples). However, whether it is formally recognised as such by Muslims is another matter.

Ozturk, in referring to the channels of aggression is here falling into the trap that Turner became involved in (see Chapter Two of this thesis: Turner 1969) concerning drives being either innate human things, or affected by society. This is another version of the conflict between views of what is natural and what is cultural. Whichever opinion one happens to hold, the effect of human drives such as aggression takes on a different significance, and may have different influences on cultural phenomena. However, cultural determinism is perhaps the least of one's problems in this context: one is also applying (indirectly, maybe) psychological theory to anthropological data and possibly being reductionist in such an interpretation, however inviting this analysis might be.

The second text takes data from Indonesia, yet again on the subject of mental health and traditional healing. It is not my intention here to discuss modern western medicine and its effect on traditional curing systems and on the curers themselves. I hope this omission is excusable, but the subject of this thesis concentrates on traditional methods of dealing with illness, particularly that of a psychiatric kind. In this piece of work, Muslim and Hindu communities are reviewed, but here I wish to concentrate on the Muslim healers discussed. Salan and Marezki point to the syncretic nature of traditional healing in Indonesia: but two different strands exist that are quite distinct, the western methods of medical care and the loosely traditional. I will select from Salan and Marezki's data the information about healers from Patembay in

S. Sumatra, as here religion is predominately Muslim, and is influential. (1983: 383).

The first healer, Aba, began his career at twenty and took an apprenticeship with older religious healers. He alleged that after a long period of fasting he heard voices telling him to stop his fast and receive the gift of healing powers as a reward. His healing methods consisted of placing a copper key between each patient's fingers and examining the patient by touching the forehead, tracing the pulse and manipulating the diseased part of the body (op. cit: 386). Occasionally, pieces of paper, inscribed with quotations from the Koran were placed on the affected area. Evil spirits were exorcised by bathing the patient, at which ceremony the patient was required to provide white cloth, chickens and other items.

The second healer began his career when he was 6 years old. Then his advice would be administered after a spirit consultation: this facility was obtained by being 'taken away' (op. cit: 387) by the spirits for 3 days. He did not enter trance to communicate with the spirits. However, after marrying, at 17, his methods changed, and he could only cure when possessed by the spirits. Trance was achieved after calling up the spirit, and during this trance the healer spoke in a strange language. He identified illnesses by placing a broken needle on a plate and a magnet or a dagger on the affected part. After diagnosis the healer again consulted the spirits and conveyed their advice to the patient. Treatment is made up of herbs and advice.

The last healer is female, and belongs to an affluent middle class. She began healing after a 3-month illness, when she started speaking to her husband in a strange voice and announcing herself to be Cik Maris (ibid.). The spirit agreed to leave her body

conditionally, and she then told her husband that she had healing powers given to her, the persistence of which required sacrifice to be made regularly. Curing for her involved trance and possession by the spirit Cik Maris. The patient and the spirit commune and advice and herbs are usually suggested after a fee is paid. In difficult cases Cik Maris may issue an amulet. After the healer has recovered from her trance she claims to remember nothing.

Research results from this study pointed to a significance of chronicity and mental disturbance among the patients that attended healers' ceremonies and sessions. The two factors are associated by Salan & Maretzki (op. cit: 399) and they suggest that psychological factors were important in guiding the patient towards a traditional healer rather than a western medical practitioner.

Research findings indicated several things in this example. The therapeutic sessions seemed to effect an impact on the patient in a variety of ways (op. cit: 401). Often healers visited patients' homes and would observe their status, family interactions and the events of everyday life which might all provide useful information for therapy decisions. Sessions were leisurely, and relatives often accompanied the patient both for support; but also minimising privacy. Attitudes of healers to their clients tended to be paternalistic (op. cit: 402) and this to Salan & Maretzki reflected the hierarchical relationships of Indonesian society.

Symbolism was used widely, and cosmological concepts were utilised to clarify interpersonal relationships when 'treating somatic ailments' (ibid.). One patient had a repeated abscess and eventually visited a healer who told her, in trance, that the abscess was 'caused by spirits dwelling in the place where she lived' (ibid.). This particular woman had left her village against her parents' wishes to work in the city,

and the explanation aforementioned was further developed by elaborating on the manner of her leaving home. To quote Salan & Maretzki,

'she thought that these spirits could easily enter her home because of her lack of protection caused by leaving the village without her parents' blessing'.

(ibid.)

This indicates the statement of the researchers to the effect that:

'healers were conversant in using a psychological idiom of communication, even when in trance'.

(op. cit: 403)

The researchers suggest (op. cit: 404) that

'therapeutic intervention.....was in harmony with cultural symbolism, but also had non-symbolic practical components'.

These two texts illustrate several points about the relationship between the supernatural (including religion in its widest sense) and healing in the Muslim world. Elements of a causality different to that current in the west are made evident. These excerpts serve as an useful introduction to the more detailed data on Sufism and psychotherapy that will follow in the next chapter. They also indicate the significance of 'magical' thinking among traditional Muslims. Trance, for example, is mentioned several times in the latter paper, and all the methods of healing listed in the first are loosely mystical. Additionally, the writing of dua that Good mentions (1977) or papers with verses or words from the Koran inscribed upon them are seen in the first text to have therapeutic significance. In the Maragheh (Good 1977) illnesses cannot be distinctly categorised, but some kinds can be split into (1) those treatable by dua, and (2) those treatable by medicine. Good's analysis of illness and its semantics in Iran points to a less concrete meaning of illness phenomena than

is suggested by these two texts, and turns one away from such concepts as 'magical' thinking or 'mystical' thought to a discussion of categories and disease semantics. As he says (1977: 289),

'Fright may be cured by prayer, but its symptoms may be heart distress, to be cured by medicine and doctors. It becomes clear that these are not 'airtight categories' and that description of their taxonomic relationships is not adequate to describing what it means to have heart distress'.

Most of the data dealt with above were basically anthropological interpretations of events and findings from empirical research. However possibly less care than is preferable was taken with the matter of indigenous concepts and meanings. As Good points out (1977: 292-3),

'The meaning of an illness term is generated socially as it is used by individuals to articulate their experience of conflict and stress. Meanings of terms change as social conditions and the social context of their use are altered'.

Here one could bear in mind the 'deli/weli' distinction cited by Ozturk (1964 as above).

Spirit Possession

I would like to consider work on possession next. Spirit possession, and the zaar cult in particular, has several links with Sufism. It also provides a kind of therapy for the people (usually women) involved. Crapanzano and Garrison (1977) discuss spirit possession, pointing out that early observers saw nothing but psychopathology in it. The trance state, which is characterised by dissociation, was thought by early observers to be either faked or else indicative of pathology. Crapanzano & Garrison define spirit possession as,

'any altered state of consciousness indigenously interpreted in terms of the influence of an alien spirit'.

(1977: 7)

During possession, there are changes in emotional expression, perceptual distortions and hypersuggestibility. It is associated with trance (1977: 8). The trancer is lost from his socially constructed self and the interpretation of the experience is in terms of spirit influence, which is a cultural construct according to these authors.

Possession metaphors are used in Morocco for extreme rage, sexual excitement, love, morbid depressions. The dynamics of spirit possession in the restricted sense may be regarded (or so Crapanzano & Garrison suggest) as the metonymisation of a metaphorical relationship (op. cit: 10).

Spirit possession provides the believer with an idiom for articulating certain kinds of experience (Firth 1967). It renders such experience meaningful and becomes a basis for action. Although this idiom is probably structured as a language it is really more than a language as the word is used in its daily sense. The idiom is comprised of cultural units (Schneider 1968) that are interrelated in a systemic way and obtain meaning much as do the minimal units of meaning in a language, that is through their relationships of similarity and opposition to other units. Possessing spirits are the principal idiom, and whatever their ontological status, their existence is not questioned by indigenous participants any more than the existence of the human vehicle. The spirits serve as a way of articulating what the westerner would analyse as being within him, as outside him; yet strictly speaking, Crapanzano & Garrison decide there is no projection in this (op. cit: 12). Differing from paranoia, possession induces the possessed to believe that the spirits exist. Obeyesekere (1970) suggests that the possession idiom may minimise a psychotic loss of contact with the outside world, or additionally

provides a therapeutic system that involves the possibility of therapeutic intervention. The authors believe that it is wrong to emphasise pathology with reference to spirit possession.

Many Moroccans who were possessed by the spirit A'isha reported their first experience of possession when they mocked the possessed or the demon herself. However, the initiate must 'learn' to be possessed (op. cit: 15), which suggests cultural parameters for the experience. There are two kinds of curing: (1) permanent expulsion and exorcism, (2) creating a symbiotic relationship with the possessing spirit. The possessed can join a cult or become a curer himself or herself (many references: Lewis 1971; Crapanzano 1973; Obeyesekere 1977; Garrison 1977). The possessed time is thought to be a time of 'wandering'. Yet though strange to the possessed individual, the experience suggests that the spirits mirror some portion of the person; additionally, the authors suggest that the experience may be a means of articulating impossible desires.

Constantinides' thesis is a seminal work on spirit possession and demonstrates among other things that the zaar cult can be seen to be similar to Sufism (1972: 21). However, for my purposes it is interesting to examine Constantinides' data for other reasons, mainly to elucidate a little about treatment of illness in the Middle East and the predilection for a particular type of healing which has a parallel with the Sufi healing ceremonies to be described later.

Historically the zaar cult can be traced to Solomon (1972: 100) or even to Muhammad's family. The legitimising legend tells of a zaar appearing to Al Hussein and being asked by him why it entered peoples' bodies to make them ill. The zaar cult is said to involve dancing because Solomon, wishing to entice the birds (a type of devil) down out of the skies, told people to sing and dance to flatter them

down. Zaar are loosely associated with jinn or sheitan; they are a red jinn, and unlike jinn of other kinds, congregate in clean places.

Zaar cult leaders can be contrasted with another indigenous healer, the feki, (1972: 106) as the zaar cult leader is thought to be more religiously inclined than the feki. However, the feki share a certain relationship with the local tariqa (ibid.) and appear to be immensely powerful. This may be due to the fact that some disreputable fekis are thought to be in league with the jinn and can actually cause the possession they are called upon to cure. They believe in the existence of the zaar and couch their diagnoses in its terms. However, they object to zaar cult treatment.

It must be remembered that the feki and the zaar cult leader are competing with each other, and while recognising the validity of each other's diagnoses there is still an ambivalent relationship between them. This is evident from the opinion that regards fekis as impious and zaar cult leaders as religious. Additionally, the zaar cult leader believes that zaar do not like fekis and will trouble a patient further if he or she continues to consult one.

The explanations of illness causation and the reasons for distress in the Sudan may be mystical or non-mystical (op. cit: 119-122). Also, explanations may be confused and non-specific. Symptoms that resist treatment are not usually viewed pragmatically (op. cit: 121). Evil eye beliefs are widespread: as in many Muslim societies compliments are disliked because of the potential existence of unconscious or conscious envy.

The indigenous theories of spirit possession suggest that the spirits enter the victim and harm him or her from within. The possessed may exhibit behavioural disorders (op. cit: 127-8). This behaviour is usually socially tolerable, however. It provides the

sheikha, the zaar cult leader, with the basis for her initial diagnosis. Zaar spirits, unlike jinns, who are beaten out of the patient, are coaxed and cajoled in order to make them leave. The zaar are offered costumes, sweets and sacrifices, and they are sung flattering songs.

There seems to be a basis for suggesting that zaar victims are neurotics with psychosomatic symptoms (op. cit: 132). The zaar group then provides important support for the individual zaar victim, although the experience of zaar healing is naturally a personal one, and possibly has more significance as an individual experience. Constantinides suggests (op. cit: 133) that it is possible in a country like the Sudan that there is an organic base of some kind for the disorders. She notes (op. cit: 135) that in the zaar group one is dealing with the normally neurotic rather than with the mentally ill. She reports (op. cit: 143) that 31 out of a sample of 60 women linked an antecedent personal crisis with their ensuing zaar possession. There were complaints of adolescent problems, fertility and childbirth difficulties and deaths in the families involved.

The zaar cult leader makes a diagnosis in an audience with the patient. She receives the patients and listens to their complaints. She grasps the affected area, and may smell it. If there is a smell of zaar the sheikha administers incense and cross questions the zaar. When she makes her diagnosis, her statements are couched in terms of envy and anger. In order to reach a compromise with the zaar she bargains with it. The appearance of the first spirit is the true diagnostic breakthrough, but later other spirits may appear. Dreams are also significant: the sheikha may dream what it is that particular spirits require. She can communicate with the zaar, but they are the

controlling agents, who must be placated in order for the patient to get better. After the ritual is held the patient should obtain relief. Additionally, the sheikha must be ritually pure to obtain the best results out of her transactions with the spirits, and she may be either punished or loved by the zaar. As she may become possessed or fall into trance herself, she may suffer illness as a result of her work.

There are seven categories of zaar spirit;

- (1) El Daraweesh,
- (2) El Habash (the Ethiopians),
- (3) Al Bashawaat (the Pashas: administrators and doctors),
- (4) Al Arab (nomadic tribes),
- (5) The Christians/Europeans,
- (6) Al Sitlaat or Al Baracht (the ladies: who are mixed ethnically),
- (7) Al Zurus (the Blacks).

Each category of spirit demands certain particular things, and demonstrates its own peculiarities in the ritual ceremonies. Constantinides suggests (op. cit: 164) that there is a certain conservatism in the zaar group as their rituals must be exactly correct, and fit the demands of each spirit precisely. Additionally it is sometimes modelled on the tariqa ceremonies (that is, becomes more establishment-orientated).

There are public and private zaar rituals. The public one closely resembles the ceremonies of the tariqa in some respects (op. cit: 171). The rituals take place like the Sufi dhikrs at significant points in the Muslim calendar. 300 women may attend the 6-7 day ceremony.

The full zaar ritual involves an immense amount of preparation, as

costumes and sacrifices have to be made ready. The women must wear particular costumes that correspond to the particular spirit or spirits that possess them, and must change at the pertinent time if possessed by several of them. The private ritual is centred on the incense box, its opening and its passing over the patient. The main climax of the ritual is however the sacrifice that occurs afterwards. The ceremony begins with invocations of the spirits after ritual prayers. There are songs, and special rhythms associated with each spirit are played. During the ceremony the sheikha may become possessed. If she does, then she possesses a particularly strong healing power. She manipulates the affected parts of the patient, and offerings are made to the spirits.

When the sacrifice begins, the sacrificial animal is led to the arena; it is covered with a white cloth and is fumigated. The patient is in trance while the animal is slaughtered; perfume is added to the blood, and the patient leaps over either the animal or the blood 7 times. Then the blood is smeared over the patient, with particular attention being paid to the affected areas. After this, the head of the animal is opened, which is in itself a separate ritual. When the sacrifice is over, coffee is poured, and then there may be a ritual at the riverside where the remains are thrown into the water (op. cit: 212-214).

The therapy is therefore quite complex and can be boldly contrasted with the treatment of mental patients. Victims are essentially mild sufferers, and part of the ritual's importance for Constantinides is the significance of the group qua group. Like the sufi tariqas the zaar groups provide certain social benefits for those who participate.

This consideration has been quite brief and conclusions are not drawn here from the data, for I am not intent on making a comparison

between the zaar cult and the Sufi brotherhoods. The purpose of citing the data on the zaar was to illustrate a mode of healing and a type of therapeutic experience in the Middle East and to point to a certain tendency that these curing techniques seem to have: a correspondence with loosely 'religious' phenomena and some degree of loosely 'religious' meaning. Certain elements (such as the significance of and the power of prayer, and the importance of cosmology) may be elicited from the data quoted here.

Crapanzano (1973) points to the fact that in Morocco there is no distinction between physical and mental illness and it is evident from a sizeable amount of the data here presented that little significant separation does occur between physical and mental symptoms. In some cases different symptoms are taken to different practitioners, in other cases the choice of therapy seems to depend on the chronicity of the complaint or the degree to which it has previously responded to treatment. In Constantinides' example stress symptoms can be cited as physical, and certain illnesses are associated with the symptoms of mental distress. The causality of the disease is perhaps the most significant part of the illness process, supernatural causation being the most interesting and relevant phenomenon for me, given the cosmological elaborations that exist when a disease is attributed to a vaguely mystical cause. The world of the jinns and possessing spirits is here introduced to outline some popular beliefs and treatments that result from its purported existence. The next text I wish to consider discusses this further, and more will be found in Chapter Four on this subject.

After this consideration of spirit possession as discussed by Constantinides it is instructive to turn to the situation in Afghanistan. Richard Tapper is working on a paper that examines the

phenomenon with a view to its relationship with social responsibility, and additionally has comments to make concerning the nature and meaning of insanity. I will first look at the nature of insanity in Afghanistan among the Madozai Pashtun, and then consider what is said about possession.

The indigenous Pashto explanation of insanity (lewantop) is 'lack of reason' ('aql'). This is the main quality required for carrying out the male responsibilities in society. Insanity and possession both are characterised by dissociation occasionally. In this they have something in common with certain Sufi experiences also. (This refers to the behaviour found in the dhikr ritual: this type of experience - although in this instance not that of the dhikr - will be examined further in the next chapter. Also in this context, the role of Sufi leaders in the exorcism of jinn will be studied, and the interesting fact that membership of a tariqa or association with one, is the way the mentally ill deal with their condition). Insanity is characterised by a variety of speech or hearing defects and real or apparent incoherence of thought patterns. There are three main types of insanity,

- (1) mental deficiency,
- (2) people who, though obviously intelligent, make a series of erroneous decisions through lack of reason (Tapper suggests that 'irrational' is a frequent synonym for 'insane' among the Madozai),
- (3) the madness exhibited by people who appear to resent their position in society or reject the entire system,
- (4) this category includes professional criminals, who take to murder and robbery.

One term, 'lewantop' covers all categories, although it must be emphasised that 'lewantop' itself is not a category. There is a

distinction made between the categories in terms of responsibility and culpability. The first category of the insane are never considered to be responsible for their situation whereas the persons included in other categories are. However, people of all the groups mentioned are treated as mentally defective and such persons are made increasingly socially impotent and invisible.

Possession is a frequent diagnosis among the Madozai. Tapper describes in some detail the jinns that are said to afflict the possessed. He explains how men and women are said to have demons (sheytans) living within their bodies. Their object is to make mischief. Women are thought to possess more sheytans than men, and this is considered to account for their putatively more quarrelsome natures. The jinns are only one cause of illness among the Madozai that is not directly a manifestation of the will of God. The evil eye and curses also cause affliction and as in Good (1977) these ailments are treatable by dua, or prayers. Tapper states that the dua are used primarily in connection with love and marriage, but they can also be used to inflict madness, or death, or to foment quarrels. The efficacy of the dua ultimately depends on God's will, and one dua can be counteracted by a stronger one. Possession, on the other hand, is generally treated with exorcism.

Possession may or may not be accompanied by fits. Usually the behaviour of the victim is self-destructive. The jinn may speak through the victim and it appears that this phenomenon is the only symptom which occasions any untoward notice being taken of the victim. Otherwise the victim of jinn possession will be paid scant attention, and the authenticity of such an episode is frequently in doubt. However, the victim may eventually be taken to a shrine or holy man. The exorcism of the jinn is effected by first 'raising' the jinn, and

then the holy man enquires what it wants and promises to fulfil its demands if it will leave the patient alone. If the jinn will not respond, the holy man may beat the jinn (i.e. the patient). Eventually the jinn identifies itself and what it would like. This is promised, and in return the jinn is forced to swear an oath by Solomon to leave the victim. Then the jinn is required to repeat the profession of faith, by which time it is believed to have left its victim.

Tapper suggests that jinn possession is most often diagnosed in women and insanity in men. He emphasises that jinn possession explains a range of biological failures in women, and additionally in their children, who are also susceptible. The fits that may occur are frequently examined for authenticity. This is only claimed when the fit is suffered by a strong willed woman who has serious social grievances. The authentically possessed woman is active and articulate, a social rebel distinguished by her irresponsibility. Her rebellion is recognised by her family by giving her behaviour the same label - insane - as that given to male rebels who evade their responsibilities. Tapper concludes by suggesting that possession is an all-encompassing diagnosis for all women with social difficulties. It provides them with a sense of personal importance and an explanation of their grievances. Additionally, and what is possibly more interesting, Tapper suggests that among the Madozai the notion of social responsibility appears to take precedence over the ideas of sanity or insanity.

This chapter has attempted to outline an introduction to views and issues concerned with psychiatric illness and associated phenomena among Muslim peoples, and has highlighted a wider context within which the cures and diagnoses, treatments and illness episodes exist,

the context of Islamic cosmology. The association of Sufism with psychotherapy has been introduced along with the ideas of the supernatural that have some significance in the realm of medical discourse in the Muslim world. An introduction has been made to the importance of the world of the jinns which will be further considered, and certain meanings of psychiatric illness and its social significance emphasised. The framework of this chapter has essentially been a medico-religious one, thus the title for it. Further ramifications of this association, that of religion and medicine, will now be considered with particular reference to Sufism.

C H A P T E R F O U R

PSYCHOTHERAPY AND SUFISM

Introduction

Healing is carried out in the Middle East and elsewhere in contexts, and on the basis of knowledge, unfamiliar to the West. Additionally, medicine and religion, defined in the West as distinct fields of belief and action, do not correspond to distinct fields in the Middle East. They overlap each other and are distinguished in different ways. Healing, various cults and Sufism occupy similar transitional areas between them, and all these phenomena are viewed as 'peripheral' by establishment, literacy-based Islam.

Sufism to Gellner is in effect a 'residual category' (1982: 115) in which to place all kinds of Islam that are not the establishment type. Gellner suggests that under the general heading of Sufism people tend to associate sincere mystics with holy men whose relationship with mysticism is really negligible. A passage from Gellner is quite illuminating as an illustration of how one can dichotomise such a subject:

'Roughly speaking, urban Sufi mysticism is an alternative to legalistic, restrained, arid (as it seems to its critics) Islam of the Ulama Rural and tribal 'Sufism' is a substitute for it'.

(op. cit: 115)

In this chapter I am mainly concerned with urban Sufism and with a particular facet of that. The context is one of curing, and the object to elicit how one can equate Sufism with psychotherapy.

To return for a moment to Ahmad. I propose in this chapter to examine phenomena that could be included on Ahmad's third level of

beliefs and values: that of pragmatic religion. This level exhibits a certain disorder: popular beliefs are local alone, and thus in one way have a purely ethnographic interest. I am examining this level because of an interest in the Sufi curing techniques and their importance on the paradigmatic level. Examining this type of data also provides one with an insight into the place of religion in the daily lives of some, at least, of the people in the Middle East. Accordingly, I have chosen two particular ethnographies to concentrate on: in these the narrative plays a part in the analysis, and both authors concerned are attempting to approach Sufi curing as a form of psychotherapy.

There are some problems in viewing Sufi curing in this way: not least the accusation of erroneously employing Western terminology. Suffice it to say that the method is a fruitful one as it does cast a different light on religious manifestations, and given an interesting slant on Sufi ritual participation (here thinking mainly of Crapanzano 1973). It also throws into relief the comments of such authors as Nasr and Shah, who are interested in demonstrating the particular technique of Sufi learning as unique.

In addition to the two main examples I also consider Basilov's comments about the vestiges of shamanism in Turkmenian Sufism. From this and the remainder of the data I conclude provisionally that it is possible to compare Sufi healing to the divinations and curing of the Giriama as illustrated by David Parkin (1979). The interpretation he uses in this case adds more useful insights to the problem of explaining the Sufi curing system anthropologically, or at least with reference to certain theoretical perspectives. I would like to underline that I am wary of a purely paradigmatic status for my conclusions. I am undertaking an ethnographic survey of selected

texts, thus the theoretical implications are a secondary matter. I do not want to fall into the trap Asad criticises Geertz of, that of confusing levels of discourse.

Before I begin I would like to state that the treatment of discourse in the sense of reported speech and its discussion by the two main authors I am considering is essentially inadequate: the studies are not based in semantics or in linguistic anthropology, it is merely that spoken discourse is a necessary tool in their ethnopsychiatric approaches. Ethnopsychiatry should be distinguished from ethno-psychoanalysis as posited as a subject by George Devereux in several articles from the 1930's onwards and collated in book form in the late Seventies. His work contains examples from non-Muslim societies so in the context of this chapter I have left him aside. His concerns are with mental illness itself, and its relationship to mental, emotional and social behaviour disturbances in other cultures. As an ethnopsychiatrist Beatrix Pfleiderer has an approach better suited to my purposes. (Pfleiderer: 1981).

With relation to discourse and the usefulness of narratives of varying sorts in soliciting information, I cite Dwyer (1982). Dwyer's approach is to interview one individual in depth, with questions about events in his/her life, or occurrences in daily life, to elicit information about indigenous culture, and also about the individual's nexus in society, his friends, enemies, family, contacts, his worries, joys, all in all, one might suggest, his character socially defined. This approach has its critics and its followers, naturally. I think one thing it can do is to preserve the immediacy of the fieldwork situation in text form, and also indicate the relevance of spoken discourse as a medium for information dissemination. It is possibly a case of anthropology 'in the raw', from the point of view of the

reader of the text, and as such, might be interpreted by some as trivial. But as regards the anthropology of the person, and that of daily life, its findings are useful. Also it presumes the importance of language of the spoken variety (la parole): here cultural classifications and categories emerge quite usefully. Also indigenous metaphor-making can be examined, and the import of Middle Eastern polysemy could be explored. Also, origins and instances of the poetic symbolism found enciphered could be compared with poetic or emotional expression, and understood in the light of la parole as well as la langue. This would be of the greatest use in study of Sufism. It is my intention to explore my topic as part of the discourse of daily life. This involves concentrating on practical activity and the significance of curing in its social context: not merely what paradigmatic significance it has, as metaphor for psychotherapy, but what people may gain by it, and what they lose, what other options they have, whether it is part of religion alone, or thought of as medical also. It also involves emphasis on social meaning. Behind these concerns lie ideas and assumptions about the world. In these data one key notion is baraka, so from the ethnography I will move to examine this polysemic notion. I hope this and the foregoing will serve to show why a study of baraka is integral to a consideration of Islamic mysticism. In Geertz's terms it is part of the Muslim system of symbols (Geertz 1971: p.89).

The question 'what is Sufism?' is the last item I wish to return to before I commence this chapter properly. This can be more adequately posed after some sort of discussion of its popular manifestations. It is unwise to propose some unique status for any one sort of mysticism in the Islamic world: the area it covers is too vast to make sweeping generalisations to order. To centre on the curing

aspects of Sufism alone would yield a vast quantity of information. I propose to separate the doctrinal aspects of Sufism, and the rules, and place them on Ahmad's first level: the rules are enciphered, and as such, though varying from order to order, have much in common with the Islamic hadith, or traditions, and with the Koran. They are guides for action, and as they differ, could also be included on Ahmad's second level of local manifestations. One should add that 'rules' as such are different from scriptural tradition epistemologically and possibly require another domain of analysis to accommodate them. To continue with my breakdown, I should include the local variation of ritual on the second level, and the curing aspects firmly on the third level. I wish to concentrate mainly on phenomena of the third level for the remainder of this chapter.

As an introduction I illustrate from Rabinow (1977b) who, in his book on fieldwork has as one of his informants a marginal individual, Ali, a pimp, small time Sufi curer and urban vagabond. This man was part of a curing brotherhood in Sefrou, Morocco. The brotherhood is the Aissawa. Rabinow was lucky enough to be able to attend a lila (translated as 'night') where the brotherhood hold a curing ceremony at someone's invitation. The ceremony was held late at night, with the accompaniment of music and prayer reading. Rabinow's description of the event (1977b: 52ff.) exudes an atmosphere of warmth and comfort, most alien when compared with descriptions I have quoted earlier, and different from Crapanzano's accounts also.

Crapanzano's data (1973: 185-211) are factual, clinical, and possibly a little terrifying. The anthropological subject is distanced from the observer and the reader, as the author is intent on proving his point about the parallel with psychotherapy. This may be a

pedestrian way of explaining the difference: Crapanzano's account is part of an in-depth study of a band of Sufi curers; Rabinow's description of the lila is a small section of what is a rather colourful book recounting fieldwork experiences. Rabinow presumes the therapeutic nature of the dhikr (here the word therapeutic is used in its loose connotation signifying 'curative'). His language is informal, chatty even. He describes the 'very peaceful and graceful movement' (1977b: 53), and the 'mood of protective intimacy' (op. cit: 54). His informant comes to the fore of the ceremony late in the performance and slashes his forearms with his fingernails, the next day having little trace of the self-inflicted injury. He does not have a good experience, however. He has a headache, and feels unsatisfied. The patient, though, has his curing well and truly performed. This part of the ceremony seems very stylised in the account given (op. cit: 56). The Sufis alternate between behaving as aggressors and protectors of the sick person, affecting the movements of a group of lions, first assaulting, then guarding. The patient is borne aloft by the group and then set down. Rabinow additionally states, as most authors do of the women present at such ceremonies, that their movements are less graceful than those of the men, and they exhibit less control: their participation is more a case of freeplay.

Essentially this account is not given to elicit theoretical insights, it is merely to communicate the experience in discourse. The net result is the impression that Rabinow is attempting to share the experience with the reader: a difficult but not too onerous task.

The Hamadsha

The Hamadsha are members of a loosely, diversely organised

religious brotherhood which traces its spiritual genealogy back to two Moroccan saints of the late C12th. and early C 18th., Sidi ben Hamdush and Sidi Ahmed Dghugni (Crapanzano 1973: 1). They have been classified by French scholars as an extreme example of the 'confreres populaires', a degenerated form of the Sufi brotherhoods of the Muslim high tradition, corrupted by local and extraneous influences of superstition and syncretism. They are considered to be part of the cult of saints, or maraboutism, which has been generally regarded as the mark of Maghrebian Islam. The word marabout is derived from the Arabic murabit, which describes a man attached to God. For Crapanzano's purposes it seems to devine two basic institutions, the cult of saints and the religious brotherhoods.

The focus of the cult is the saints' tomb, usually a squat, white, cubelike building with a domed roof. The tombs are cared for by the saints' descendents, or by a caretaker who received alms to live on, donated by the pilgrims. The tombs are visited and venerated by men and women who come to obtain some favour from the saint such as a male child, a cure for a bout of illness or a case of spirit possession; or simply good fortune in a law suit, political asylum or just luck. A particular set of behaviours is designed to aid the pilgrims obtain blessing (baraka) from each particular tomb. Sacred springs, grottoes, trees, stones and animals believed to contain baraka and spots where jinn or devils are said to gravitate, are found near the tomb.

The brotherhoods associated with the cult of saints, or their members, whom I shall call Sufis for want of a better term, follow the tariqa of a spiritual leader or sheikh who is usually considered to be a saint. There is a great degree of variation in the organisation, function, degree of theological sophistication and ultimate

aim of the brotherhoods. The members of the more sophisticated orders are recruited from the wealthier, best educated strata of Muslim society; the members of the Hamadsha come from the illiterate classes (Crapanzano 1973: 3). As I have discussed before, all of the orders involve certain ritual acts: recitation of prayers, listening to music, dancing, all part of, or additional to, the main Sufi ritual, the dhikr. The popular orders tend to be extreme, with wild dances inducing ecstatic frenetic trances, the drinking of boiling water, the eating of spiky cacti and other defilements, charming poisonous snakes, and innumerable acts of self-mutilation. All of these are designed to effect some extraordinary psychic state which may be interpreted as union with God, or possession by a demon, or simply as hal (state, translated by Crapanzano (1973: 195) as 'temperature' in Arabic.)

Unlike the members of the more sophisticated orders, who think of their saint as a spiritual master who provides a path to God, the popular orders often consider their saint as an 'object of devotion in his own right and a source of power for their miraculous feats' (op. cit: 3).

The members of the Hamadsha brotherhood are divided into teams: a team may have a specific meeting place or lodge. Although the Hamadsha may be related historically to the mystical tradition of Islam, Crapanzano does not believe that they conceive of their goal as union with God, but rather as curing people possessed by demons. Crapanzano states that,

'to ask whether they conceive of their cures as essentially religious in nature.....is to ask a question which has no meaning for them'.

(op. cit: 4)

All activities are, he says, religious, 'in so far as they are contingent upon the will of Allah' (op. cit: 3-4).

The Hamadsha are not merely curers, but are successful in terms of the standards their society sets and in some instances in terms of the standards set by modern medicine (op. cit: 4). They are able to effect, often dramatically, the amelioration of symptoms, even their remission. Paralysis, mutism, sudden blindness, severe depressions, nervous palpitations, possession all lead the patient or his/her family to seek out their help. Many social factors additionally encourage the Moroccans of Meknes to go to the Hamadsha: possibly they may have quarrelled with a doctor, possibly they have had advice to go alone, maybe it is a matter of the type of illness that is afflicting someone. (op. cit: 134).

Crapanzano regards the Hamadsha complex as a type of therapy: this he defines from Parsons 1964 as,

'a structured set of procedures for the rehabilitation of an incapacitated individual - an individual who is, from a sociological perspective, unable to meet role expectations and effectively perform valued tasks'.

(op. cit: 5)

This pushes the analysis on to the paradigmatic level: talk of roles precludes some definition of what is meant by this statement as evidenced by social behavioural discourse. Crapanzano seems to take this terminology as given. Therapeutic procedures can be said to effect changes in the ailing individual's social situation as well as in his physical and psychological condition. Theoretically he is moved through the role of sick person and back (if the treatment works) to his original condition, and role. The ideal naturally, or perhaps not so naturally, is the restoration of his/her old self (ibid.).

The Hamadsha therapy does not aim to restore the sick person to his previous condition. Rather it provides him with a new social role and associated tasks. The individual will probably become a member of the Hamadsha group. He is,

'provided thereby with a new social identity but also with a new set of values and a new cognitive orientation'.

(ibid.)

Or so the theory goes. Possibly it is new to the individual, but as part of Meknes society it is probable that the patient will have a certain familiarity with the order and its values. This new outlook may be said to furnish the patient with a new set of symbols by which (in the case of psychogenic disorders at least) he can express those particular psychic tensions which were in part responsible for his illness. This symbolic 'set' is associated with the Hamadsha's explanation of his illness and the theory of therapy (ibid.).

The elements of explanation consist of symbols which represent both social and psychic realities for the sick person and other members of his group. They could be said to be part of Moroccan discourse. They must, theoretically at least, be congruent with postulated 'psychological needs' and sociocultural realities. This is possibly a truism. They are 'givens' in the world the individual was born in, in a certain way, and as such serve from the start to mould his reality and realise themselves in his psychic life.

Possibly this is not the case given the example of an immigrant to the city from an area where such beliefs are not current: how aware most illiterate people in Meknes are of the full significance of the Hamadsha therapy theory is also worth questioning. Nevertheless the locus of these values in a world of saints and demons in this

particular case may reflect a characteristic stance of an individual within a particular cultural tradition compared with others within his world. (These last paragraphs are heavily dependent on Crapanzano 1973: 1-11. I assume his parameters for the moment to avoid confusion. These I find adequate enough, where I disagree or question this has been discussed.)

The curing that the Hamadsha accomplish takes place at Hamadsha ceremonies. Crapanzano suggests that during these,

'a symbolic expression of incapacitating conflicts and the consequent discharge of tension which may impede social behaviour',

(op. cit: 6)

are achieved. The resolution of these conflicts, part of a highly structured process, then serves to re-establish an individual's 'motivation', to 'resocialise the deviant into the objective reality of the symbolic universe of his society' (Berger & Luckman 1967: 114, as quoted in Crapanzano 1973).

The Hamadsha beliefs are essentially a fringe phenomenon: they do not represent the majority of Moroccan society to any extent. The Hamadsha are Sunni Muslims and Arab, and do not consider themselves to be unorthodox. As heterodox as their beliefs might appear they still accept the fundamental importance of the five pillars of Islam: profession of the faith, prayer, almsgiving, fasting and pilgrimage to Mecca; and they find the origin and source of their inspiration in the Koran. Much of Crapanzano's presuppositions about illness and deviance do not fully convince me. His Parsonian interpretation of the role of the patient is far too westernised to have currency in Islamic society. Nevertheless the conclusions these suppositions lead to are well worth bearing in mind. The role of the traditional

curer is possibly well on the way to becoming obsolete: it would be interesting to return to Morocco to observe Meknes society now, fifteen years after the study was undertaken.

There are two main branches to the Hamadsha in Meknes: that of the medina and that of the shanty town, the bidonvilles. There is a distinct bifurcation of method. The medina Sufis operate mainly from lodges, whereas the bidonville Sufis are more loosely organised and perform more often in teams. Also, the bidonville teams have more of an economic focus to their curing activities: they live solely by curing and are said to obtain as much money as they can from the patients, the devotees and their families. The bidonvilles provide a social background to the Hamadsha activities that demonstrates a sharp contrast with the more settled milieu of the medina. The bidonville people have migrated from the country and may have little contact with family or friends in the new city. Nevertheless the integration of the bidonvilles and the medina is to some extent facilitated by the very structure of Middle Eastern cities: Crapanzano suggests (op. cit: 105) that there are signs of the bidonvilles becoming quarters of the city.

Accordingly the locus is in a state of change. As far as religion is concerned there is considerable hostility between the urban and the slum brotherhoods. Nevertheless Crapanzano does state (op. cit: 75) that there are a number of medina inhabitants, usually recent immigrants to the city, who are affiliated with the slum brotherhoods.

Before I examine the ceremonies as described by Crapanzano and the theory of therapy, with its accompanying world of jinns that enables it to have currency, I would like to state that I do not wholly accept Crapanzano's interpretation of the way the Hamadsha

effect their cures. I do not think that the Hamadsha necessarily provide the patients with a set of symbols with which to readjust themselves to Moroccan society. Crapanzano's interpretation is predicated upon a certain viewpoint implicitly reviewing male: female identity in Meknes society. He suggests that illness is 'feminine': that the sick, as they cannot fulfil their masculine role as providers, are in a state of neo-femininity, and in the curing rituals when they slash their heads effect a symbolic castration to become men again (op. cit: 244-9). This might be so in the resolution of the ideas of masculinity/femininity in Meknes society. The study was accomplished in a male-orientated society where values of honour, modesty etc., upholding the male line (Dwyer 1978), associating weakness, darkness, helplessness, unfaithfulness with women (Crapanzano 1973: as above) could be said to be the underpinnings of social reality.

One could suggest that Crapanzano is utilising the theories of psychoanalysis, or rather western notions of psychology, in his interpretation. Whether this is a justifiable tack is a matter for debate. Western notions of psychological medicine are the products of a particular tradition and a certain cultural milieu: if one can transport them to Morocco one cannot expect them to reveal an absolutely accurate account of data from there. It presupposes an universalism however attractive, it is of necessity what it is, the imposition of western categories of thought upon a Middle Eastern historical and cultural situation. The interpretation may elucidate some things: as I suggested previously, Moroccan society is male-dominated, but such an analysis may equally obscure other things. Crapanzano's data on women, for example is lacking in this text. If this unspoken desire for femininity is there among the Sufis and

among the people of Meknes; if indeed the sick are 'like' women, it is still necessary surely to ask people if they do indeed believe this of themselves. Dialogues would have benefitted the analysis and the reader no end: his case studies (e.g., 199-200) are brief and do not fully explore all that could have been elicited from people.

Nevertheless, women as well as men are discussed by Crapanzano. They become possessed and partake in the Hamadsha cures. To return to the symbolic readjustment mentioned earlier I feel that the Parsonian association of illness with deviance is partly to blame for Crapanzano's interpretation of this part of his data. This association ignores the salient social reality for the sick themselves, who although unable to work do not necessarily lose their position in society or their previous notion of the meaning of that position. Role can be separated from value: the values are still in existence for the sick/person, and unless that person loses these he needs no readjustment, and in all probability does not feel 'feminised'. What is at issue is the treatment of patients by those around them: the question of social discourse and the significance for him, and for those who interact with him, of the illness episode.

To return to the key area of interest for me I would like to emphasise that the treatment that Crapanzano provides of jinn possession and curing by the Hamadsha is thorough in the extreme in investigating the nature of the psychic reality that is experienced by those who seek out the Hamadsha. I still feel, however, that Crapanzano does not publish full accounts of the subjective experiences and opinions of those in this position.

The Hamadsha therapy is one of the many therapies in the Moroccan world. Apart from the Hamadsha there are other Sufi orders, and also the herbalists, the doctor, the wise woman, the exorcists, and Western

doctors. Symptomatology (op. cit: 134) plays a role in the choice of cure: also the causality, availability, cost, relations of family with practitioners, acceptance of cure, nagging by relatives, advice of diviners, current image of practitioners, whether the complaint is acute or chronic. In Morocco there is no distinction between physical and mental illness: Crapanzano divides illness into preternaturalistic and naturalistic causations. The preternaturalistic causality is further divided into that caused, (1) by jinn, (2) not by jinn. The jinn-caused illnesses produce possession, else one is merely 'struck' by the jinn. The remedy for these phenomena is to call in the Hamadsha. For diseases with preternaturalistic causation where jinn are not involved, other folk remedies such as amulet wearing, prayer reciting or the obtaining of curative prayers written especially for the sick person's affliction, are sought. These illnesses or misfortunes are those of poisoning (presumably sudden in onslaught), curses, the evil eye or witchcraft.

The world of the jinns is that of demons attested to in the Koran (Sura 72): they are referred to by the Moroccans as 'those people there' or 'those people below the ground', etc., (op. cit: 136). Jinns should be distinguished from the huge cannibalistic spirits and ogres 'afarit' and 'ghwal'. One of the most powerful 'ghwal', and the most potent member of the spirit world in Meknes is A'isha Qandisha. She is unique among the jinniya; her origin etymologically is said to derive from a temple harlot in a Canaanite cult; her husband is Hammu Quyu, derivatively the Carthaginian God Hamam (op. cit: 143). There are parallels between belief in A'isha and belief in other female spirits in other Near-Eastern societies, especially throughout the Mediterranean and in sub-Saharan Africa (Lewis 1955/6, Barclay 1964, Constantinides 1972). A'isha is a Cththonian monster,

libidinous, quick-tempered, she is supposed to strangle and assault all who do not obey her commands. Like Kali/Parvati she can be a beauty or a hag. Among the Hamadsha the grotto of Beni Rached is sacred to her. She is a seductress; men have no defence against her unless they plunge a knife into the ground. She appears to men in an experience like a dream and persuades them to have sexual intercourse with her and occasionally persuades them to enter into a strange marriage contract with her, which is told to be of advantage to them. She might convince her victim that she will help him with money, threatening him not to tell anyone of his experience. The man might repeat: 'I'll marry her. Everyone knows me. I don't want them to see me change' (op. cit: 144).

A'isha demands old clothes, uncleanliness, and restricts a man's sexual life. The special 'marriage' relationship, which does not occur too frequently, does not relate to members of the Hamadsha. In the aforementioned relationship she demands that her 'husband' wear red, black or chartreuse green. She is placated with black incense, and also with the music of Hamadsha ceremonies, the hadra, during which she is purported to appear out of the ground in front of those possessed by her. She is fond of blood and requires frequent sacrifices. (op. cit: 145).

Crapanzano analyses only the diseases caused by the jinns, dividing them into those in which the jinns cause the ailment but do not play a role in the cure and those in which they cause the ailment and play a role in treatment. These categories are not distinguished by the Moroccans and are classified by Crapanzano as firstly the explicative mode of responsibility and secondly the participational mode of responsibility (op. cit: 150). There are degrees of possession ranging from temporary possession through

being obsessed with an idea, being transfixed with fear, to someone fully possessed. Maskun, the ultimate category of jinn-affect signifies being 'inhabited' by a jinn: this is the strongest word used to describe someone possessed. A person in such a state might be said to have 'something pinching their brain', or 'their head turns' (op. cit: 154). Sudden changes in conversation are singular symptoms of Maskun. The main important distinction in the seriousness of the afflicted person's situation is between being 'struck' by a jinn and being possessed by one.

Most illnesses for which the jinn are responsible are the result of offences committed by the sufferer against the jinn. There are named and unnamed jinn: initial attack by named jinn resembles an attack by an unnamed one. When the name of the jinn is uncovered, from then on the person is considered to be dependent on the jinn. There are two types of cure for jinn possession: exorcistic or symbiotic. The former are one-off affairs whereas the latter are continuous and the patient is incorporated in the Hamadsha, and thus must undergo periodic curing. (op cit: 157-9).

The first step in a symbiotic cure is to establish the identity of the jinn. This may be done by a Hamadsha, or by an exorcist or seer. Then the curer or diviner establishes what the jinn wants from the victim; when this is accomplished it is then essential to satisfy these demands to effect the patient's recovery. Crapanzano states (op. cit: 165),

'the manifest aim of the cure is the elimination of the symptoms, and not the permanent expulsion of the jinn'.

The cures are said to be brought about by the intervention of one of the saints, commanding the jinn to leave its victim alone. However,

the most frequent explanation is in terms of baraka. The baraka of the saint, lodged in the saint's tomb, or in his person, or in the person of his descendants is said to be the cause of the cure.

The baraka may be sufficient to drive out the patient's symptoms, but this is rare in the case of an attack by a named jinn.

In these cases a patient is only affected by the baraka if he follows a regime at the command of the jinn. (op. cit: 166-8).

The explanation by the Hamadsha is more complex: the baraka of the saints enables the adepts, devotees and patients to perform the hadra (the curing ceremony), which pleases the saints and jinns alike. It also enables the musicians to play the tunes which draw the jinn into the patient and then expel it. Finally it enables the performers to enter trance and possibly slash their heads to produce blood which is pleasing to the jinniya. Crapanzano states the,

'baraka of the saints is, then, a potentialising force enabling the adepts, the devotees, and the patients to enter an extraordinary state (hal) in which they all - in varying degrees - have the ability to pass on the baraka of the saints. This baraka is the force behind the cures'.

(op. cit: 167)

Some explanation of the hadra should follow. The hadra is performed at a lila or 'night': it can be called 'sadaqa' (charity gift, or alms: op. cit: 185). The verbal form sadaq means to tell the truth, and the Hamadsha emphasise that their ceremonies must be performed with sincerity. There are complicated preparations for the ceremony. When all is complete and the guests have received hospitality the muqaddim (leader) begins the litany of prayers. Then the dhikr begins during which all the Sufi adepts sway back and forth; during this the women and children present are expected to restrain themselves, as the dhikr is 'for men' (op. cit: 192).

When excitement is at a peak the adepts stand up and begin to dance the hadra. In the 'hot' part of the hadra the men jump up and down while the women, likewise in a trance, swing their heads. The hadra is designed to lead all into an altered state of consciousness, the hal, or the jidhba. The hal has a special meaning to the Sufis. Crapanzano suggests that hal has the meaning of wajd, which the Sufis refer to as 'ecstasy'. Jidbha signifies 'attraction', and it is a more frenetic trance state. (op. cit: 195).

Women apparently fall into trance more easily than men (op. cit: 196). They are driven out of the audience by the music of one particular instrument, the ghita, into trance. They dance, then collapse. Before collapsing, the female dancer appears semi-conscious. If someone speaks to her she acts as if awakened from a dream and is slightly irritated. The men work themselves into trance slowly; their movements follow the rhythms and dance steps of the hadra and appear graceful (op. cit: 199). Subjectively, according to Crapanzano, informants report a loss of temporal and spatial orientation and of body consciousness, except in the head, which may feel swollen and itch slightly (ibid.).

If some have not had 'enough' during the 'hot' part of the hadra they will be encouraged to enter 'jidhba' in the 'cold' part of the ceremony. After the hadra is over, dinner is served, and the atmosphere is relaxed. Then the adepts say a last prayer for the patient who is usually recovered from paralysis or possession after participating in the hadra.

The ceremonies of the two different branches of the Hamadsha differ in a few respects. The bidonville ceremonies are simpler in organisation than those of the medina. The muqaddim (leaders) and the adepts play a more extensive role in inviting guests and they are

anxious to earn as much money as possible from the ceremony: accordingly they tend to invite devotees who will give generously. Here the hot part of the hadra is frequently held out of doors; there is usually trancing and head slashing. The patient is much more in evidence than he would be in a medina ceremony at this stage of the hadra, the dhikr is shorter, the cold part of the hadra is more important and, significantly, the muqaddim and the other team members do the best they can to extract as much money as possible from the audience, as they subsist from this living alone (op. cit: 210-211).

Crapanzano's explanation of the therapy suggests that the Hamadsha provide the following elements that are recognised in western psychotherapy as therapeutically effective:-

1) Group Support

This is evidenced as the group provides the patient with an interpretation of his illness, displacing guilt. The group of participants additionally are party to the therapy. The ceremony enables other members of the audience to work out their frustrations also, possibly reducing social tensions that are partially to blame for the patient's illness.

2) Patient Participation

Needless to say, the patient is involved in the cure; he helps with the preparations for the ceremony; he tends to the requirements of the guests if he is the host; he has to fulfil ritual obligations such as making a pilgrimage. All this is additional to dancing the hadra. The active nature of this role should not be overestimated, however. The patient is passive before the saints, the jinn, the adept leader, and the musicians.

3) Patient/Curer Relationship

This could hardly be recognised as significant in these cases. There is no 'transference' of the patient's traumas to the Sufis; it is deflected on to their spiritual 'agents'. Also the curer does not try to make the patient 'confess' his life's difficulties or problems.

4) Insight and Suggestion

There is no occurrence of the Hamadsha's providing either of these for the victims of jinn possession who go to them.

5) Cult Membership

This provides several facilities: putatively, a new social status, a relationship with A'isha, maybe a change in self-image, a reinforcement of trust in the Hamadsha and their world view.

6) Trance Abreaction and Catharsis

The trance is the most significant element of the Hamadsha cure, one could say. For Crapanzano, Hamadsha therapy involves the manipulation of 'images' of psychic reality. Crapanzano points to one possible comparison with the shamanistic cure described by Levi Strauss (1968) (op. cit: 222). Here the patient constructs an individual myth with elements drawn from his past, the experience providing the patient with a language by means of which unexpressed and maybe inexpressible states can be immediately articulated (Levi Strauss 1968: 198).

Whether or not it is true that a symbolic transformation is effected, it is evident that there are certain parallels with western psychotherapy. In a classificatory paradigm, also, A'isha is opposed to the saints in the cure; the healing attempting to reconcile the opposition of the two figures.

The cure demands a change in the patient's relationship with her, therefore, a change in his characteristic response to a given situation or experience. As such, the cure could be said to have psychotherapeutic overtones. Crapanzano's interpretation, though stressing the psychotherapeutic nature of the hadra experience, is essentially grounded in the subjective accounts of that experience and not necessarily its significance to the patients, as the whole complex is part of a cultural 'given' the therapy of the Hamadsha. The narratives he quotes (e.g., op. cit: 206) are designed to illustrate the experiences that have occurred: reflection on these experiences is not obtained. Additionally, the opinions of the muqaddim and the Hamadsha adepts are not elicited. The discussion is continued on a level that possibly ignores portions of potentially useful discourse. Crapanzano does not much concern himself with the meaning of the experiences to the women present to offer a more balanced picture of the Hamadsha's contextualisation in Meknes society. Despite these objections, I find the interpretation interesting in that it is the only full one of its kind, even if lacking in several spheres.

One of these spheres is, definitely the importance of narratives in such an analysis: those of the patients and the adepts alike. In a study of a shrine in Gujarat, Beatrix Pfleiderer does have recourse to the text of at least one patient's illness narrative. Here the situation is different: curing is achieved on a one-to-one basis at the dargah (lodge or shrine). The patients here are also required to suspend 'normal' belief and participate in an illness theory that involves, in this case, belief in the maleficent forces of witchcraft.

Here the mujwar (Sufi curer) receives the patient and mediates

the shrine's healing capacity. There is a suggested shamanistic residue in the ritual: the mujwar ties a red thread about the patient's neck and anoints him with peacock feathers after involving the saint of the shrine in the cure. In the ritual anointing there are passed over the patient's head 25 horses made out of cotton, said to symbolise the 125 horses of Mira Datar's army (Mira Datar being the founder of the shrine, and a successful assailant in battle). The cotton horses are passed over the patient 5 times (5 x 25 = 125, equally the number of horses in the army). There are group rituals also, involving only the peacock feathers (1981: 223).

The rituals are only steps in a process that joins the patient possessed by a spirit, to the saint. Similarly, as when the patient undergoing psychotherapy will refuse to comply with his/her analyst, the spirits are said to rebel against the saint's influence and become obstinate. This obstinacy may reflect the patient's unwillingness to undergo the cure, which is manifested in the patient's reluctance to approach the interior of the saint's tomb, in the first stage of his/her encounter with the Sufis.

Pfleiderer suggests (op. cit: 225) that the social function of the trance into which the patients fall (if it can be said to have a social as well as a personal function) is to allow the patient's relatives to hear all the utterances of their sick kinsman/woman during a semi-conscious state when the victim is supposedly unaware of what is happening. It is suggested that the spirit starts speaking during the trance to reveal its identity. There is a change in the victim's voice, and a difference in the patient's nature, representing the personality of the possessing spirit. (ibid.). The patient in this example is not essentially concerned with the cure: it is a matter of a conflict between the spirit and the saint. The victim

incurs no blame for the invasion, which is both a relief, and an important part of the therapy. It is interesting to note that an allopathic doctor was observed by Pfleiderer at the dargah seeking a cure for a relative (op. cit: 225). Also, that the dargah is used by Hindus, Sikhs, Parsees and Christians as well as Muslims (op. cit: 198).

Shamanistic Healing

In the face of the foregoing data, concerning belief in the spirit world, and the role of spirits in popular Sufism to uphold credence in a supernatural reality, it is interesting to examine the case of Turkmen society described historically by V.N. Basilov. He is at pains to point out that the syncretism of belief among the Turkmen illustrates the remaining importance of shamanistic influences despite conversion to Islam. To summarise Basilov's data, the dhikr among the Turkmen is performed to cure the sick harmed by spirits. It is performed mainly by a privileged descent group called the Atas. The Sheikh is the key figure in the dhikr: he falls into a frenzy and may hit his head against the framework of his tent, or perform miraculous feats. If curing, he may, or may not, beat the sick person across the face and throw him against the tent frame. In trance, the Sheikh loses all sensibility. He is believed to be endowed with keramat (the Arabic karamat) which is translated as the 'force' of the saint by Basilov (Basilov 1984: 232).

There is a widespread belief that the Sheikh has helping spirits at his service, some animal, some human. These are the jinn. They are purported to tell him of the future, and to help him to drive away spirits from the sick. It is interesting to note that obtaining

help from the jinn per se is unKoranic in the extreme. The patient can hypothetically be cured only if the Sheikh's 'troop' of jinn is stronger than those causing the disease. Struggling against a superior force of jinn could expose the Sheikh to the risk of madness himself, or even jeopardise his life.

Thus Basilov suggests that the Sheikh has much in common with the Shaman (op. cit: 232-3): trance, animal familiars, a jinn illness that does not abate (but is cured by ritual participation) yet is contained, and continues from time to time once rapport with a spirit has been established firmly. Occasionally the Sheikh suffers breakdowns when he can only lie down covered with blankets and can neither eat nor drink. He is cured by the dhikr alone. The possession by helpful spirits, inheriting these, and the ability to tell fortunes and cure lunatics are apparently features of Turkmenian shamanism. Basilov states that the very ritual of curing has some features in common with shamanistic performance: thus both shaman and Sufi tell the colour of the wool of the animal to be sacrificed for propitiation of the spirits (op. cit: 257). From the point of view of the Nokhuri Turkmen the difference between the shaman and the Muslim hodja is virtually nil. This is understood more easily if it is borne in mind that the last shaman among them was descended from a Muslim hodja. To the question 'Who is the stronger, the hodja or the shaman?' some believers replied 'The stronger is the one whose troop of jinns is larger' (op. cit: 238).

Parallels can also be found with Sufi curing in the activities of the Muslim bakhshi, a kind of shamanistic healer found in Afghan Turkestan (Slobin & Centlivres 1971). There is a direct reference to Sufism firstly: the bakhshi invokes the spirits of Sufi pirs at the beginning of the ritual he uses, for aid. He is called upon,

secondly, to cure illnesses that others have difficulty with, mainly of a psychiatric kind. Thirdly, there is a certain technique that he employs that is similar to one reported by Pfleiderer (1981) and Basilov (1984) in that the bakhshi strikes the patient during the ritual. Lastly there is a parallel with the data from Basilov (1984) in that the bakhshi has control over spirits, to the extent that his method involves the removal of a possessing spirit from a patient either into himself or into the organs of a sacrificial animal, or into an inanimate object.

There are several correspondences between the Sufi cures and the divination of illness by the several shaman quoted by David Parkin in his article 'Straightening the Paths to the Wilderness'. Here the diviner, not the curer, is the focus of the analysis. The performance, or psychodrama, is the event of diagnosis, much as the example of Pfleiderer, where the key ritual reveals the name of the possessing spirit. However, the progress from a 'tangled state' (1979: 147) to a state of sequential ordering is also similar to the condition of the patient in Meknes before and after he assimilates the Hamadsha theory of therapy and cure. The diviner among the Giriama begins his divination with confused, jumbled speech, and guides himself and the patient through his spirit familiars to recognition of the area of the patient's body afflicted with disease. Here physical as well as mental illness is involved, as in some of the Sufi examples. Outside spirits are normally found to be the cause of disease: once the diviner has discovered the affliction and its cause he can prescribe remedies and treatment.

The divination progresses firstly by establishing links between the patient's home and the outside world to ascertain conflicting sources of distress that have been produced. Secondly the diviner

probes the body. Finally a foreign element is interpreted as having entered 'home' (that is, the patient's body). The merging, jumbled ideas at the start of the divination settle into separate areas through the idiom of following different parts of the body (op. cit: 150-4).

There is a process at work here revealing individual creativity: the jumbled ideas show different interpretations, but give way to sequential ordering and a limited interpretation that finally ascertains the cause and divines the cure of the sickness. The spirits order and classify in advising the curative materials and methods as the diviner turns chaos into order with aid of the spirit world. During the process of reality negotiation the patient guides the diviner by his responses: in this situation, unlike the Sufi curing situation, there is mutual dependence between the participants.

Comment

1) Boundary Shifts and Crossed States

Parkin suggests that the states involved in divination, 'crossed states' (Parkin 1979: 147) could possibly be similar to instances of boundary confusion as in Douglas (1966). (Here these states are taken to signify states of sexual identity confusion paradigmatically, mental confusion syntagmatically). This idea could be applied to the 'states' experienced by both the Moroccans of Meknes (Crapanzano 1973) and that of the Turkmen Sheikh (Basilov 1984) and also the states of the people who attend Mira Datar Dargah (Pfleiderer 1981). It might be a slight exaggeration to include the majority of women who seek out the zaar cult in N. Africa in this paradigm. The reporting of their 'states' does not truly give the impression of boundary confusion (Constantinides 1972; Barclay 1964;) though the inclusion in the zaar

spirit world of 'foreign' spirits (e.g., the European, The Black African etc.) would point to the importance of boundaries between the indigenous society and the outside world, epitomised by alien intrusion seen as dangerous and translated into the idiom of possessing spirits. These 'boundaries' are crossed by the medium of the belief in the zaar: by believing in the zaar, one could suggest, one is acquiescing in a 'paranoia' of the outside world, crossing over from 'normality' into neurosis, maybe. However, this is a tentative exposition, and relies on imputing western psychological jargon to a non western cultural setting. One can, nevertheless extend the suggestion of boundary confusion to the zaar in this way.

The application of this idea of boundary confusion to the aforementioned 'states' (of mind, one might suggest) further associates phenomena of Ahmad's third level together, albeit analytically (Ahmad 1979) as Lewis' comparison of the zaar cult with Sufism does (1955/6). Possibly this 'association' says more about that degeneration of Sufism that Arberry so admirably analyses (1950) than anything else. The association speaks volumes of historical change, naturally, which leads on quite nicely to the applicability of Douglas' suggestion, that of the importance of cultural boundary shift.

Social groups are empowered to erect boundaries, between that which is permissible for their members and that which is not. As a corollary, they are also able to persecute those who cross such boundaries. In times of boundary change those who find themselves left on the wrong side of a new boundary become the victims of this persecution. What was once acceptable no longer is. The revival in fundamental Islam this century is a case in point: the altered opinions of excess in worship and religious experience can therefore be seen as a case of boundary change. Possibly some of the less

'orthodox' Sufis could suffer as the persecuted in this case as on the unorthodox end of a continuum from extreme finicky orthodoxy to heterodoxy.

Leading from this are several interesting ideas about the people of Meknes. Here the Hamadsha and their devotees do not enjoy a 'good' reputation. This may have multivalent meaning but here I take it to indicate that they are not socially esteemed by the majority of the town's population. They are stereotyped generally as 'black' (1973: 85-6). The excessive behaviour of the hadra and the association with A'isha and the world of the jinns lend a certain awe, intermingled with incomprehension, amazement or plain dislike, of Hamadsha activities in the eyes of better educated Moroccans. Also the association of the Hamadsha with curing, as well as their mysticism, could produce an ambivalence in attitude towards them on the part of the other inhabitants of Meknes. Curing ability and baraka signify power: the power of the batin as a resource not accessible to others. One way this unknown can be challenged is by affording a low status, an equivocal status, to the possessors of the power of the batin and by refusing to acknowledge the possessors of such power as socially desirable persons.

It is impossible to be categoric about why the Hamadsha are frowned upon by other Moroccans in Meknes. There are several suggestions here. In addition the habit of the bidonville teams of maximising their gains from their curing sessions cannot improve the general reputation of the Hamadsha. It would be interesting to have access to opinion and ethnography on the Hamadsha's position vis-a-vis Meknes society at large, or some other aspect of city life in Meknes. This would yield data that provided a more balanced picture of daily

life and preoccupations in Meknes.

2) From Disorder to Order

Among the Giriama the patient has a chance of becoming a diviner as the patient in Meknes can become a member of the Sufi tariqa. The prevalence of narrative in the Giriama cures is a decided difference to the Sufi cures, especially Crapanzano's data. (Here by narrative I refer to the telling of narrative by the patient, not use of narrative in interpretation). However, the theoretical argument, that the diagnosis is achieved at a level closer to the orderless networks of deep structure semantics (1979: 159) has some relevance. In the Giriama divination there is a movement from deep structure (disorder) to surface (order) underlying the diviner's speechstyle and narrative theme. The curing speeches of the patients at the Mira Datar Dargah exhibit a similar tendency: the narratives are persuaded out of the patients as part of a ritual ceremony beginning with the anointing. Through these narratives, and ritual, the patient and curer negotiate a reality out of a ritual discourse, an amount of which is the spoken narrative of the patient. These seem to be classic cases of jumbled speech. Patient and curer progress through this process to the divination of the spirit's identity. Cure can then be effected with further ritual anointing or by other methods. There is a similar movement from disorder to order in the narrative; it is formless, but from it the Sufi can identify the spirit that is causing the problem. There is a parallel concern with confused states and confused language.

The parallel is a loose one, but it exists. The 'bricolage' Parkin discusses as being the shaman's talent is creative, yet it has its own scientific status in its particular terms. Similarly

the method of the Sufis is essentially creative, involving personal, individual expression in dancing and trance as part of the cure, or the recitation of an illness narrative. Though routinised in ritual, each experience is unique and individual, as is a divination. The parallel possibly fits the Indian case better than the Moroccan, as spoken discourse is provided in at least one instance as data by Pfleiderer. In Crapanzano's account, divination occurs prior to the main curing ceremony, which seems to provide (as well as personal satisfaction and relief for the patient) group support and a certain catharsis. However, the progression from a tangled state, awesome and power-exuding (because, as Parkin suggests, similar to boundary confusion (1979: 148)) to a straightened one still exists. In the Moroccan case the progress is apparently on a physical plane rather than through discourse, one might suggest. The element which provides the underlying structure for the cure is naturally missing in this consideration. That is the importance of baraka. To this I now intend to turn.

CHAPTER FIVE

BARAKA

Definitions

There are several areas of life, both for the religious and for the not so religious in the Muslim world, where the notion of baraka enters. Many authors who discuss Middle Eastern topics consider baraka, and from a variety of perspectives. All place it at some point in their analyses. In a discussion of mystical Islam the notion is central. It provides Sufis with a great deal of their moral authority; it is tied in with the social acceptance of their status and role; it is involved in their curing, in the workings of their miracles, and in the consensus about their daily lives and actions. Nevertheless its manifestations are somewhat differently interpreted. One can suggest that it is both an idea and an entity, for example. It is not a case of mere ethnographic variation, though this does have some importance. It is also a difference in each author's terms of reference when analysing religious phenomena.

Definitions of baraka abound: it is a real, objective phenomenon in many studies. Geertz provides a description of its significance:

'Literally, 'baraka' means blessing, in the sense of divine favour. But spreading out from that nuclear meaning, specifying and delimiting it, it encloses a whole range of linked ideas: material prosperity, physical well-being, bodily satisfaction, completion, luck, plenitude, and, the aspect most stressed by Western writers anxious to force it in to a pigeon-hole with mana, magical power. In broadest terms, 'baraka' is not, as it has so often been represented, a parapsychical force, a kind of spiritual electricity - a view which, though not entirely without basis, simplifies it beyond recognition. Like the notion of the exemplary centre, it is a conception of the mode in which the divine reaches into the world. Implicit, uncriticized, and far from systematic, it too is a doctrine. More exactly, it is

a mode of construing - emotionally, morally, intellectually - human experience, a cultural gloss on life. And though this is a vast and intricate problem what this construction, this gloss comes down to, so at least it seems to me, is the proposition (again of course, wholly tacit) that the sacred appears most directly in the world as an endowment - a talent and a capacity, a special ability - of particular individuals. Rather than electricity, the best (but still not very good) analogue for 'baraka' is personal presence, force of character, moral vividness....The problem is to decide who (not only among the living but among the dead) has it, how much, and how to benefit from it'.

(Geertz: 1968: 44. From Crapanzano 1973: 19-20)

Crapanzano (1973: 19) has certain criticisms to make of this view. He reckons Geertz's encapsulation of its meaning is 'impressionistic' and 'romantic'. He believes it to be important to see how it manifests itself, or is believed to manifest itself, a view I share. He states pointedly,

'Although baraka is indeed in certain circumstances a quality, not always as positive or beneficial by either Moroccan or Western standards as Geertz's definition might lead us to believe, it has at times, in the popular imagination at any rate, a more independent existence - and, in either case, a logic of its own which, as we shall see, must be situationally understood'.

(Crapanzano 1973: 20)

This I have been attempting to do as far as I can: the 'independent' existence of baraka is possibly captured quite well in Crapanzano's language and his methodology in examining the concept.

Geertz's definition conveys accurately the impalpable nature of the phenomenon, expressing its intangibility. However, one can be more concrete about it, as Geertz is also, by stating that he thinks it is a 'doctrine'. Things, places, people, situations, can all possess baraka. It can be contagious, passed from hand to hand. It is glossed as grace, power of a spiritual kind, blessedness. Baraka is usually thought of as being obtained (1) by membership of a

holy lineage, (2) by religious service and contact with a highly endowed individual. Crapanzano (1973: 118-25) mentions two types of baraka (1) institutionalised, (2) personal. The former is passed agnatically. The latter is contagious, not heritable. Personal baraka depends on individual merit, and accordingly some persons have more of it than others. The baraka of the Hamadsha team members may be separated into,

- 1) that obtained from the saint in the same manner as a pilgrim, this type being translated into some potential or actual state of being, and
- 2) that possessed as a follower of the saint.

It is a moot point to consider here whether the patient actually receives baraka as a concrete phenomenon, or merely benefits from the baraka of the saint. It is certain that the patient receives something, or at least, believes that he has done so. (Crapanzano 1973; Kurin 1983; Geertz 1968). It is more accurate, I think, to postulate that what the patient receives is the effect of baraka in the shape of healing or, in the case of a supplicant, not a patient, in the shape of the amelioration of some unfortunate condition. Repeated visits to a shrine or repeated curing rituals are after all often necessary to obtain permanent relief. Baraka is not particularly infallible, and supplicants accept that one may have to continue one's visits if baraka is to be transferred successfully. All kinds of ritual taboos may have been broken.

Despite what has been said, it may be implied in some of the data that it is indeed baraka itself that has been passed to a patient, or into some object.

Baraka and its effects are positive, and so can be contrasted with negative power, such as that contained in curses or the Evil Eye.

It includes the possibility of resisting evil forces, and accordingly enables the recipient to develop potential, especially for good.

It blesses the recipient and brings out the best in him or her. It can be associated with both productiveness and effectiveness:

these benefits result directly from divine favour shown towards the recipient of the baraka.

Baraka in Action

Baraka (Crapanzano: 1973) is transformed into a potential state of health which will be actualised only if the patient follows a set regime. It enables the devotee to perform the hadra healing ceremony, enables the musicians to play their tunes, lets the performers slash their heads, causes the adepts to enter trance (hal) during which they have the ability to pass on the baraka of the saint. The baraka actualises the cure, and to achieve this, the follower must be in an extraordinary state (Crapanzano 1973: 167). Often merely the presence of an adept in trance is sufficient to pass on baraka.

The passage of baraka often involves the incorporation of vomit, polluted water or other undesirable materials. Baraka can also be passed on in semen. Women, however, cannot pass it on. After its passage from person to place or supplicant it can no longer be transferred. The individual, on receiving baraka, receives something: good fortune, potential good health, business success, or fertility, for example. It can be passed in exchange for wealth, as part of a redistributive system. Crapanzano suggests (op. cit: 226) that when the saint endows the patient with baraka he is communicating the symbolic equivalent of semen: virility, or the principle of patrilineality, by which one can 'revitalise the feminized': the feminized being in this case the sick, as hitherto discussed, (see Chapter Four).

Baraka is exhibited as a significant element in the exchange system. The Muhibbin give wealth to the adepts and obtain baraka. The adepts in turn work for the saint, giving what they have collected to the saints through the mizwar and obtain baraka. The mizwar redistributes the wealth (op. cit: 119-20). The people provide for the mizwar and the children of the saint in order that they in turn may provide for the pilgrims. Accordingly the system is redistributive. Crapanzano suggests (op. cit: 121) that the passage of baraka mirrors and in a sense potentialises the passage of wealth in a redistributive system which serves ideally to care for the poor and ailing. The emanating, intermediate nature of baraka as existing somewhere between the ordinary mortal and God, or between people and objects is dealt a heavy blow by Kurin (1983). In a study of 'The Structure of Blessedness' in Abdullah Shah Ghazi's shrine in Pakistan he attempts a view that concentrates on the system of interpretation used by the actors themselves, a method missing from the foregoing data. He wishes to point to the 'positional and relational message in the context delimited and envinced by such interpretations' (1983: 313).

Here again one is faced with another gloss for baraka, blessedness. The sympathetic approach of Kurin underlines one important aspect integral to any consideration of mysticism, that of emotion. Geertz indicates how there is a difference between religion experienced and religion remembered, and that the religious man is working in everyday life without the immediate perception of the 'really real'. The point I think is justifiable: the nature of religious experience could be said to be one of 'feeling' for the spiritual, Geertz's religious perspective. Geertz postulated a social and psychological basis for the religious perspective: the psychological is not intrinsically the subject for an anthropological discussion, whereas the emotional can be,

as its focus is both subjective and objective, emotions entering the world in mood, behaviour and attitude, one might suggest (Geertz 1968: 110-111).

To return to Kurin: 'blessedness' (baraka) here is a transcendent spiritual quality originating from Allah. It is beneficial to humans and cooling in its effect. It

'flows constantly and continuously; it is identified with the spirit (ruh) of humans at all times and is available to all through various types of actions'.

(Kurin 1983: 314)

Some humans, for example, the saints, are particularly receptive to this flow. They have the ability to channel and direct this flow in such a way as to allow for the concentration of blessedness as well as its dispersal.

Kurin's language is explanatory: the offerings taken to the shrine serve as 'vehicles' through which the supplicant may benefit from the saint's blessing. These 'vehicles' as well as the supplicants themselves must be processed (op. cit: 316) to allow for the flow of blessedness. The supplicants must perform ritual ablutions 'to open up a channel through which blessedness may flow' (ibid.). The material offerings are mixed, or burnt, or absorb certain qualities as a catalyst for the combination with blessedness. Ingested by humans, the blessedness is thought to cool and relieve the supplicant in a variety of physical, emotional mental and spiritual ways. Human actions have similar results: 'cooling' actions are performed also so the actor becomes a receptacle for blessedness. These actions when performed entail a certain emotional release: the prayer and supplication given by the supplicants at the shrine are thought to be redolent of ishq: this is an intensely felt giving up of oneself

that occurs in the prayers at the shrine, so Kurin believes (op. cit: 318). The supplicants wail and weep, their bodies throb and they grasp for the coffin, kiss and caress it. 'Ishq is an intense, energetic, giving, hot form of love.

'It is this emotion, rooted in the heart at the meeting point of body and spirit which seems to serve as the catalyst, as the means by which human action can be united with and felt as divinely blessed'.

(ibid.)

'The cool spirit of Allah, focused by the saint, and the spirit of the supplicant, under the gaze of the saint, are united by a heating process - in this case, intense love'.

(ibid.)

(For a further consideration of 'ishq see Chapter Two of this thesis).

As well as obtaining blessedness, women come to be cured of jinn possession, a process Kurin also interprets as a heating/cooling one. The 'hot' jinn is exorcised out of the women by 'hot' gyrations, in a 'cool' place with deep intent. Kurin therefore suggests that the offerings and supplicants are components 'in tension' (op. cit: 320). The manipulation of the blessing at the same time may be seen as an attempt to resolve this tension by allowing for the controlled relief or 'cooling' of the unresolved condition. This resolution is accomplished by linking the offerant through the offering with Allah's spirituality through that of the saint (ibid.). To achieve this resolution the offering undergoes a catalytic process, generally heating, which effects a separation of the hot/cold components.

This interpretation Kurin attempts to fit with Van Gennep 1960 and Turner 1969. Offerings, he suggests, come from a state of human affairs in which,

'basic conditions of objects, actions and bodies exist in dualistic form - combining materiality and spirit, hot and cold.....humanity and animality. While such a state of affairs may be deemed normal or natural for those who live in it, it does not mean that such is accepted without some degree of equivocation'.

(op. cit: 321)

It is interesting to note in this light that dargah (lodge) is translated as 'threshold' on occasion, and that this might well accord with a Turnerian view of the 'liminality' of a shrine, a locus of transformation, where the spiritual 'can become personal and substantiated' (op. cit: 322).

Kurin points out that the blessedness is differentiated and assimilated after leaving the shrine. If the flow is a good one and a meeting of spirituality and animal humanity effected, the undesirable condition may be resolved and transformation achieved. If this is not the case a return visit to the shrine may be necessary (ibid.).

Accordingly this treatment of hot and cold oppositions with reference to the process of the incorporation of baraka suggests that emotionality does have a part to play in the subjective experience of those seeking blessing. The Sufis attempt to subdue the nafs (animal impulses) and purify their hearts of base motives to enjoy only pure spiritual love for God. This love surely does involve some emotional participation, if of a spiritual kind. The 'ishq description by Kurin is definitely the description of an emotional state: emotion would become a key to the interpretation of religion and spiritual phenomena if one were trying to explain its cultural construction.

One of the most interesting fields for an examination of baraka is that of the Sufi legends. All Sufi orders, marabouts and saints are surrounded in legend and folk tale. Crapanzano interprets and analyses the tales of the founders of the Hamadsha order in depth,

finding all kinds of psycho-social factors at work in their legends. The obtaining of baraka by Sidi Ali in his opinion presumes the feminisation of the saint: he obtained baraka by a ruse: he went to the house of his master and blinded his slave woman. The saint was angry and evicted Sidi Ali, though touched him on the arm. After this episode the older saint fell sick. Due to the blinding ruse Sidi Ali was able to obtain a bucket of the saint's vomit, which he drank and thus imbued the saint's baraka. Crapanzano suggests (1973: 49) that the incorporation of baraka is analogous to insemination (this connects with the nursing of babies: mothers' milk is purported also to contain baraka). He adds that power obtained by ingesting bodily secretions is a frequent fantasy associated with the pollution of these secretions, and the admitted opinion of the defilement of the sexual act. The saint was deemed to have 'become pregnant' with baraka (op. cit: 50) and is gradually recognised as a saint - this being equivalent to a period of gestation. Crapanzano hints at a hidden desire on behalf of the Moroccan male for feminine characteristics especially on the part of the Sufis. In this, added to the suggestion that the sick patients who seek out the Hamadsha are also undergoing a process of feminization and defeminization in the experience of their cure, the theory is credible. One may add that the interpretation ignores the female side of things: there is no analysis probing whether or not Moroccan women have hidden desires for male characteristics. Also the analysis does not consider what is particularly special about the Moroccan situation for this to apply here and not elsewhere, when legends such as that involving the ingesting of vomit are the norm among Sufi tales of obtaining baraka.

It is worth mentioning that Pastner also illustrates the use of

story telling, miracle and baraka as part of the same complex. He repeats the tale of one of the well known Zikri pirs securing his reputation by a quasi-miracle. Although this particular pir had been through many fasts he only achieved his reputation as a holy man after he stopped a train on which he had been refused a seat by his baraka (Pastner 1978: 241).

A frequent motif in Sufi history has been the trial of strength between spiritual leaders. Basilov (1984: 237) recounts occurrences of such behaviour. Pastner (1984: 306) shows how a Zikri pir uses his baraka against a rival. Simon Digby (unpubs.) explores Sufi encounters with Yogis during the 'contact' period of Indian history between Hinduism and Islam. These are taken from Sufi hagiography and have varying forms:

- (1) tales of the voluntary conversion of Yogis,
- (2) magical contests in which Yogis were subjugated by Sufi pirs then converted with a subsequently high spiritual station,
- (3) regionally significant tales where conversion of the Yogi is accompanied by the replacement of an erstwhile Hindu shrine or sacred place with a Sufi shrine,
- (4) tales involving the Yogi who offers a gift,
- (5) tales including casual reference to the lore of the Yogis.

Additionally there are plenty of legends in Turkey of similar confrontations between Sufi pirs and Christian holy men, (personal communication).

Dale Eickelman also explores the significance of baraka in the lives of the Sherqawa in Morocco. Eickelman appears to regard baraka as a physical substance which can be obtained by physical contact with a marabout or his shrine, and can be taken away from clients again if they reveal their acquisition of baraka to others. Here

baraka is involved in secrecy: (Eickelman 1976: p. 160) Eickelman suggests that the foregoing fact is the reason why tribesmen are often reluctant to speak openly of their dealings with marabouts and their descendants: knowledge of these ties by hostile third parties can threaten their efficacy. This makes a patent statement about the nature of religious patronage.

Eickelman illustrates how marabouts can lose their baraka. In the 1970's marabouts began to cease visiting their clients. Then the size of their offerings diminished. They realised they were faced on such occasions with the open opposition of the emerging group of reformist Muslims, and the tribesmen themselves. In such circumstances the marabout lacked full control over the conditions of his public exposure, suffered loss of prestige, and hence of his reputation for baraka. Here baraka is linked with right social action on behalf of the Sufis and their clients: the marabout is 'tied' to God and men: the obligations to men affect his relationship with God. In this interpretation the social appears to relect the spiritual.

As baraka can be lost, so it can be preserved by correct conduct. The marabout maintains a social distance from all but the most prestigious of his clientele: the current marabout is seen about the town of Boujad, but there are none of his clients in the place. Here no-one pays him any attention. On busy market days he confines himself to the house, to which there is controlled access. Direct rejection of access to those who cannot afford to pay for his prayers is considered improper, but too frequent involvement with such clients would dilute the economic and status base necessary to maintain his marabout's reputation for baraka, (op. cit: 179).

Eickelman considers baraka among the Sherqawa to resemble the 'ethos of competitive settlement among merchants' who wait for God to bring them business rather than openly solicit it, so as to avoid overt friction between themselves (op. cit: 180). Eickelman points out that the Sherqawa were evasive when asked if a particular marabout had baraka. To them the proof of baraka is the existence of clients who act as if a particular marabout has it. Eickelman further suggests that this approximates to a 'pure example of Weber's concept of charisma' (ibid.). The difficulties for maintaining reputation for the one remaining Sherqawa marabout are compounded, for example as in obtaining revenue from pilgrims. This is particularly difficult for as some groups sever ties with him and others reduce the size of their offerings he is still expected to maintain his reputation for unrestrained generosity in entertaining them.

To retain pilgrims the marabout has in recent years added music and female dancers for their entertainment, but the numbers still decline; a pending inheritance dispute may bring about the division of the large house he uses to entertain guests. If this dispute goes against him he will lose most of the manifest symbols of his baraka, according to Eickelman. Unlike his predecessors his reputation is practical rather than mystical: up until the 1930's marabouts were deemed to be able to change themselves into lions, the uncle of the present marabout being reputed to have had this ability. The current marabout does not: this demystification means that current marabouts are more liable to censure for their practical activities and immediate behaviour. (op. cit: 181).

Stephen Pastner likewise underlines the temporality of baraka and accordingly the actions of the Sufis in many spheres. To quote

him:

'since the time of the Prophet, the maintenance of local level Islamic tradition has been in the hands of lesser men: and it would be incorrect to assume that such figures, no matter how supposedly imbued with divine blessing or power and the ascetic values of the medieval Sufis, from whom they derive their theological roots, are themselves always exempt from the same competitive drives that motivate their lay followers'.

(Pastner 1978: 232)

In a last look at the Middle Eastern literature before I sum up it is educational to review the social significance of baraka. It is united in a meaningful sequence with miracle working, as it predicates this occurrence, issuing as it does from Allah to imbue the everyday world with the sense of the transcendent. Gilsenan discusses baraka quite thoroughly (1982). He emphasises that miracles are potentially dangerous as they oppose the given order of things (Gilsenan 1982: 77). This in a spiritual universe is possibly untrue. Nevertheless one can accept that disruption of causality is in essence subversive: however the nature of acceptance of causality can be doubted in certain cases (Crapanzano 1973: 134)

Gilsenan postulates that miracles are a refuge of the dominated, an essential part of the discourse of the poor. (1982: 77). He suggests that it is not unusual for the politically influential to discredit miracles: the powerful in this context can be equated with the divine. Those who possess political power will naturally seek to monopolise the miraculous to ensure their dominance, and acts of a miraculous nature not by them destabilise their power base potentially.

Predicated on a generally accepted, universal common-sense view of the world, it is obvious that miracles involve a significant

shift in social meaning. Given the conception of a dual nature of reality (zahir/batin; as discussed earlier) this shift is a shift of emphasis from the world of common sense to an unseen hidden universe, that nevertheless enters the everyday in the Muslim world. Miracles break everyday routine to illustrate the unseen at work.

Gilisenan points to the disconnection and unpredictability of the lives of, for example, the urban Muslim poor. Many members of the Sufi orders, poor, illiterate, with sporadic work chances and lacking social and financial resources, lead disconnected, discontinuous lives that are unpredictable in the extreme, though they believe that they are not so. Hidden determination and continuity in their lives may be a function of the secret purposes of the divinity, manifested through the 'visible' actions of the divine power through, frequently, the holy man's deeds and words. These manifestations occur in the miracles and acts of blessing and grace.

In this paradigm of interpretation the saint can be a lens through which the Muslims see. Gilisenan underlines in their terms and his own the hazards and changes that play a part in the lives of ordinary people. Those who do not belong to the orders or have anything to do with them frame rather a different interpretation of the world. This is concerned only with those everyday lives of the Sufis and the people who are affected by them. For Gilisenan baraka is 'at the core of the apprehension of the world in symbolic-conceptual terms'. (op. cit: 90). It is held to produce ecstasy and that same ecstasy is seen as proof of baraka's presence. The presence of the saints in this theoretical perspective provides powerful and symbolic experience of this reversal of daily realities, of the dominant sets of categories that serve in this culture to

to interpret and structure the world and life within it. This perspective is set against that of the non-miracle worker; though religious, these people do not participate in the continuous working of baraka: even as Sufi devotees they are part of the spiritual world, yet act in the everyday reality of Muslim life. The batin is the prerogative of the highly endowed and as such, in Gilisenan's terms, is a resource, access to which is limited for the ordinary Sufi.

Gilisenan points to the variations in the nature and operations of baraka within Near Middle-Eastern society. He looks for an answer in

'the degree of directedness by which people experience the operation of power and determining forces in their lives and those areas that are relatively unstructured in terms of everyday life'.

(op. cit: 109)

Gilisenan is attempting a wide generalisation from a number of concrete examples. He illustrates how in N. Lebanon baraka did not seem to be so important: there was a closure of sheikhly groups and a restricted social interaction between strata: he suggests that this degree of ideological and social control coupled with direct workings of power and sanction combined to explain the sense of the 'problematic' (op. cit: 111) force of baraka, so significant in many places. Among the Muridya of Senegal Gilisenan suggests that grace = work (ibid.). These peasant producers experience baraka as a highly structured and directed ideological power, a religious technology. Baraka here, as in N. Lebanon, is excluded from the religious domain per se, or rather 'harnesses' it, to refer to Gilisenan's terminology again, as a

'basic legitimating concept to an institution that is defined as in essence religious but also constitutes a highly organised political and economic unit'.

(ibid.)

Baraka among the Muridya is part of an exchange complex: we can see how in Meknes among the Hamadsha the workings of baraka are part of a redistributive system; here it is constituted in a direct relation of murid (pupil)/sheikh (leader, master). In N. Lebanon it is conceived as being an opposition between religious specialists and worldly rulers, operating in a kind of tension between domains and dynasties (op. cit: 112). In Cairo among the Hamidiya Shadhiliya order of Sufis, baraka enables the devotees to create visions of the baraka of their founder and to watch for the signs of its operation in their world: the signs of grace are channelled into 'safe' areas (ibid.)

Domination over, or monopoly of, baraka is also power over the way the world is thought of, symbolised and experienced (ibid.). It has a critical effect in the realm of everyday logic and the construction of an universe, since above all it expresses notions about causation. It is incoherent and variable, clustering events, but not organising them scientifically in the western sense of the term. Its power is sought for in highly real, objective phenomena: cures, bodily/mental disturbance, attainment of violent and intense ecstasy, placation of the jinns. Gilsean postulates that baraka is part of 'the religious bricolage of the poor', part of,

'a cobbling together of all kinds of different events, relations, and persons into a single form that contains objects of many different colours, shapes, and sizes. Certain particular poles of attraction (shrines, trees, murids and so on) serve as immediate and concrete foci and sources of access to blessing'.

(op. cit: 115)

Secondly, he summarises baraka socially as the,

'refuge of those whose lives are most unstructured, or destructured, in terms of immediate experience..... it can be the language of domination or of the dominated'.

(ibid.)

This discussion is one of the 'manifestations' or baraka, a topic I think Vincent Crapanzano would highly approve of. However the terms in which it is couched would possibly be less pleasing to him. The 'manifestations' are concerned with domination and submission, with power and legitimation. These aspects of the social construction of baraka have the barest relevance to 'actors' models' of the workings of baraka. Nevertheless I think Gilsenan provides a cogent explanation of the situation of many Sufi devotees in the Near Middle East: the comments about lack of structure and unpredictability of life would certainly be apposite to the milieu of the Meknes Hamadsha, at least in the bidonvilles. How baraka manifests itself is perhaps skirted or passed over for the meatier subject of baraka's potential significance and its incorporation as a 'force', maybe, that has some effect on social discourse. Baraka conclusively is potential: as Crapanzano suggests, it also actualises itself in 'things', persons and places. It becomes concrete; its effects are socially 'seen'. There is a lot more that could be said about it, and far more that could be investigated: particularly its historical meaning in the contexts mentioned. Also there are other works where it is discussed historically and socially: lives of people are affected by it. In changing Morocco Paul Rabinow investigated the baraka of the holy dynasty of Sidi Lahcen and how it came to fail when meeting opposition from opposing, essentially modernist forces in an inept way. Baraka is here placed in history: the politics of culture move away from

the spiritual into a more social elan where competition weakens the traditional power bases of lineage and spiritual excellence.

Tradition is attacked and suffers: as in Gilsenan's Cairo the process of modernisation leaves little room for the holy to manoeuvre themselves into a commanding position unless they have alternative resources at their disposal.

If baraka is potential, it has to have certain conditions in which to actualise itself. Interpretations do not always bring these conditions to the fore: either they are deeply entrenched in particulars, and the workings of baraka are assumed and described situationally, or they generalise, and the conclusions have only a limited application. Study of the importance of baraka in less 'modern' Middle Eastern societies such as that of the Turkmen, described by Basilov, might be educative. Nevertheless in a town such as Meknes, the workings of baraka were extricated from the social 'web' by Crapanzano in the late sixties. The anthropologist is tied to his/her context unless he/she has a predilection for general themes. The general theme of baraka necessitates some delving into particulars: the authors here considered demonstrate to my mind an useful variety of slants, both factual and theoretical, on the interpretation and understanding of the topic.

CONCLUSION

The short consideration of baraka completes the overall picture I have attempted to create in this thesis. My task has been to isolate one core spect of Sufism and explore it. In the pursuit of this aim I have had to digress into certain related areas: a necessary introduction to Sufism and an examination of the associated area of emotional discourse in order to illustrate one important component of Sufism, a component that has been adversely treated by some authors and needed some explanation and investigation here.

Sufism is of course much more than a system of curing illnesses. It is a mysticism, and diverse in its manifestations. If one thing has led me to investigate its relationship with medicine it has been the data I have used: it seemed to me that the various discussions of both Sufism itself and its parallel with psychotherapy, and of indigenous traditional curing in the Middle East, could benefit from some systematisation, and to provide a framework within which to view these topics has been something of a challenge to me. In this thesis I have not attempted to put forward a concrete framework: I have merely gathered data from a variety of associated fields within anthropology and by so doing have, I hope, suggested how these different topics could be associated and linked usefully. If this thesis reaches any conclusion, it is that when discussing indigenous notions of the supernatural and their force in the world, one is covering a wide subject area that encompasses religion and medicine in it. Yet religion and medicine are only convenient subject headings: the important issue is that in discussing loosely mystical phenomena one is concerning oneself with an entire outlook, a way of viewing the world, and even a way of living.

The underlying thread running through this study is the significance of some of anthropology's shady areas: the world of the mystic and the shaman, the realm of emotional discourse, the underdetermined area of illness causation and explanation. As I pointed out at the beginning of Chapter Three, the discourse of power speaks softly in all these areas: it underlies explanations of these phenomena, and perhaps dwells at the back of peoples' minds in the cultures involved.

The main difficulty, which is the last thing I wish to mention, has been the problem of translating concepts. For instance, what exactly is mental illness? Is spirit possession a form of mental illness? Even at the end of this thesis I cannot make a categorical statement one way or the other. The issue is relative, the parameters of the subject cultural parameters. When we in the west are unhappy with our definitions, as I think is the case with regard to mental illness, how can we expect to examine parallel notions in other societies successfully? Love, too, proved a similar can of worms.

Our world is signified by our words and concepts: we are at the mercy of them when attempting to describe the smallest part of it, and we are hampered by the mystifications language can sometimes make of it. This is due both to the intricacies of syntax and the difficulty of translating concepts, and ways of expressing ideas. We are handicapped to the greatest extent when foraying into areas where understanding is most stretched. The world of the miracle worker, the shaman, is such a place. I hope in this thesis I have been able to shed a little light on that place; that I have made it more recognisable, more familiar, and ideally, more comprehensible.

GLOSSARY

afarit	-	ogre
Allah	-	God
'aql	-	reason
'ashaqah	-	a type of vine
bakhshi (baxsi)	-	a shaman curer
baqa	-	permanence-in-God
baraka	-	blessing, grace, spiritual power
batin	-	inner reality
beteng	-	spirit/shade
beya	-	knowledge
biay	-	life
dargah	-	lodge, shrine
davalix	-	cured by medicine
deli	-	mad
dhikr	-	Sufi ritual
dervish	-	Sufi, wandering mystic
dua, dualix	-	prayers; cured by prayers
fana	-	annihilation
fakir	-	holy man, generally impoverished
feki	-	a curer
fikr	-	meditation
ghita	-	a musical instrument
ghwal	-	ogre
hadith	-	tradition, the sayings of Mohammad
hadra	-	presence, meeting
hal	-	state
haqq/haqiqa	-	truth

hodja	-	religious man
hubb udhri	-	platonic love
insan-i-kamil	-	Perfect Man
'ishq, 'eshq	-	passionate love
jidhba	-	attraction
jinn	-	Islamic devil or spirit
karamat/keramat	-	force (of saint)
khalifa	-	spiritual successor
khanaqah	-	lodge
Koran/Qurán	-	Muslim scriptures
lewantop	-	mad
lila	-	night
liget	-	anger, passion, energy
maqam	-	station, stage
marabout	-	one tied to God
ma'rifa	-	gnosis
maskun	-	inhabited by the jinn, mad
mizwar	-	custodian of a shrine
muhabba	-	loving kindness
muhibbin	-	Sufi devotees
mujawar	-	Sufi curer
muqaddim	-	leaders, officiants
murabit	-	man attached to God
murid (morid)	-	Sufi pupil
murshid	-	Sufi teacher, master
nafs	-	soul, base instincts
nafs-al-lawamma	-	the blaming soul
nafs mutma'inna	-	the soul at peace

nemnem	-	thought
niyek	-	breath
pir	-	Sufi master
pujari	-	officiant (at ritual)
qalb	-	heart
qurb	-	proximity
Quraysh	-	descendants of the Prophet
ruh	-	spirit
sadaqa	-	alms, charity gift
sama	-	literally hearing; also Sufi ritual dance
shahaada	-	'There is no God but Allah'
shaman	-	mystical religious figure
shauq	-	longing
sheikh (shikh;shaykh)	-	religious leader
sheikha (shaykha)	-	religious leader (f.)
sheitan (sheytan)	-	devil, spirit
Sufi	-	Islamic mystic, one who follows the tariqa
sura	-	verse (of the Koran)
tariqa	-	order
tasawwuf	-	way of the Sufi
tauhid (tawhid; tuhid)	-	unity (with God)
ulama	-	Muslim priests
umma	-	community (usually the Muslim community)
uns	-	intimacy
wajd	-	ecstasy
weli	-	saint
zaar	-	devil, spirit
zahir	-	outer reality

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ahmad I. 1979. The Islamic Tradition in India Islamic Quarterly 44-56.
- Arberry A.J. 1950. Sufism, Allen & Unwin (London)
- Asad T. 1982. Anthropological Conceptions of Religion: Reflections on Geertz MAN 237-58.
- Barclay H. 1964. Buuri Al Lamaab: a Village in the Sudan, Cornell University Press (U.S.A.)
- Basilov V. 1984. Honour Groups in Traditional Turkmenian Society in Islam in Tribal Societies eds A.S. Ahmad & D.M. Hart RKP, (London).
- Crapanzano V. 1973. The Hamadsha, University of California Press, (U.S.A.)
- Crapanzano V. & Garrison V. 1977. Case studies in Spirit Possession, Wiley & Sons (New York).
- Constantinides P. 1972. Sickness & the Spirits: a Study of Spirit Possession in the Sudan Phd. Thesis (University of London)
- Dawood N.J. 1964 (tr.) The Koran, Penguin.
- Devereux G. 1980. Basic Problems of Ethnopsychiatry, Chicago University Press, (U.S.A.)
- Devereux G. 1978. Ethnopschoanalysis, University of California Press, (U.S.A.)
- Digby S. (unpubs.). Encounters with Yogis in Sufi hagiography.
- Dwyer D. 1978. Images and Self Images, Columbia University Press, (U.S.A.)
- Dwyer K. 1983. Moroccan Dialogues, The John Hopkins University Press, (U.S.A.)
- Early E. 1982. The Logic of Well Being, Soc. Science & Medicine 1491-1497.

- Eickelman D. 1976. Moroccan Islam University of Texas Press (U.S.A.)
- Evans Pritchard E., 1949. The Sanusi of Cyrenaica, Clarendon Press, (Oxford).
- Fatemi N.S., F.S. & F.S., 1978. Love, Beauty & Harmony in Sufism, A.S. Barnes & Co. Inc., (N. Jersey).
- Foucault M. 1979. What is an Author? in Textual Strategies ed. J. Harari, Methuen, (London)
- Gaborieau M. 1977. Minorities Musulmanes dans le Royaume Hindoue du Nepal, Laboratoire Ethologie de Nanterre, (France).
- Geertz C. 1968. Islam Observed, University of Chicago Press Phoenix edn. (U.S.A.)
- Gellner E. 1969. Saints of the Atlas Weidenfeld & Nicholson (London)
- Gellner E. 1982. Muslim Society C.U.P.
- Gibb H.A.R. & Kramers J.H. 1961. Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam Luzac & Co. (London) E.J. Brill (Leiden).
- Gilsenan M. 1973. Saint & Sufi in Modern Egypt Clarendon Press (Oxford).
- Gilsenan M. 1982. Recognising Islam Croom Helm (London & Canberra).
- Good B.J. 1977. Medical Discourse in an Iranian Town Phd. Thesis (University of Chicago U.S.A.)
- Gulick J. 1976. The Middle East: an Anthropological Perspective Goodyear (California, U.S.A.)
- Horton R. 1979. African Thought ' Traditional Science in Rationality ed. B. Wilson Blackwell (Oxford).
- Kuhn T. 1962. The Structure of Scientific Revolutions University of Chicago Press (U.S.A.)
- Kurin R. 1983. The Structure of Blessedness in a Muslim Shrine in Pakistan in J. of Middle Eastern Studies 312-34

- Lewis I. M. 1955. Sufism in Somaliland in S.O.A.S. Bulletin 581-602
- Lewis I.M. 1984. Sufism in Somaliland in Islam in Tribal Societies eds. A.S. Ahmed & D.M. Hart, RKP (London).
- Lindholm C. 1982. Generosity & Jealousy Columbia University Press (New York).
- Meeker M. 1976. Meaning and Society in the Near East in Int. J. of Middle Eastern Studies 243-270; 383-422.
- Myntti C. 1983. Medicine in its Social Context: Observations from Rural North Yemen. Phd. Thesis (University of London).
- Nasr. S.H. 1978. An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines Thames & Hudson (London).
- Nasr S.H. 1980. Living Sufism Allen & Unwin (London).
- Nasr S.H. 1972. Sufi Essays Allen & Unwin (London).
- Needham R. 1981. Circumstantial Deliveries University of California Press (L.A. & London).
- Nurbakhsh J. 1978. In the Tavern of Ruin Khaniqah Nimatullah Pubs. (New York).
- Ozturk O.M. 1964. Folk Treatment of Mental Illness in Turkey in Magic Faith & Healing, ed. A. Kiev The Free Press (N.Y.)
- Pastner S. 1984. Feuding with the Spirits among the Zikri Baluch in Islam in Tribal Societies eds. A.S. Ahmed & D.M. Hart RKP (London).
- Pastner S. 1978. Power & the Pirs among the Pakistani Baluch J. of Asian & African Studies X111 231-43.
- Parkin D. 1979. Straightening the Paths to the Wilderness J.R.A.S.O. 147-60.
- Pfleiderer B. 1981. The Psychiatry of a Muslim Shrine in Religion & Ritual among the Muslims in India ed. I. Ahmad Manohar (New Delhi).

- Rabinow P. 1977. Symbolic Domination University of Chicago Press
Medway Reprint (U.S.A.).
- Rabinow P. 1977. Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco, University
of California Press (U.S.A.)
- Rees W.L. (ed.) 1980. Dictionary of Philosophy and Religion Harvester
Press (Brighton).
- Rosaldo M. 1980. Knowledge & Passion C.U.P.
- Salan R & Maretzki T. 1983. Mental Health Services & Traditional
Healing in Indonesia: are the Roles Compatible?
Culture, Medicine & Psychiatry 377-409.
- Schimmel A. 1975. Mystical Dimensions of Islam Chapel Hill Columbia
University Press (U.S.A.)
- Slobin M. & Centlivres M. & P. A Muslim Shaman of Afghan Turkestan
1971 Ethnology 160-173.
- Shah I. 1977. The Sufis, Star Books (London).
- Strauss C. Levi (1979) Structural Anthropology Penguin.
- Tapper R. (unpubs.) Possession, Insanity & Responsibility in Northern
Afghanistan.
- Trimingham J.S. 1971. The Sufi Orders in Islam Clarendon Press (Oxford).
- Wuthnow R. Davison, Hunter J. Bergesen A. & Kurzweil E. 1984. Cultural
Analysis RKP (London).
- Valiuddin M. 1968. Love of God: the Sufi Approach Motilal Banardidas
(Delhi).