



**RELATIONS OF THE BHAKTI SAINTS  
WITH MUSLIM SUFIS  
( 16th and 17th Centuries )**

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**DEDICATED**

**TO THE LOVING MEMORY OF MY**

**MOTHER**

**MRS. INTIYAZ FATIMA**

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## PREFACE

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## CHAPTER-I

### (a) Political condition of India in early 16th century:

During the early Sixteenth century the Political condition of India was unstable due to the fragmentation of the northern India into small kingdoms. The Political condition of India during the period suggests the tendency of fissiparous outlook. The main territory of northern India comprising the fertile plains of river Indus and its tributaries along with Ganga, and Jamuna was under the rule of Lodi Sultans of Delhi. Who were all central power similarly Gujrat, Mahva, Rajputana, Jaunpur, Bengal were ruled by different independent rulers.

According to Babar's memories the Political condition of first quarter of the 16th century suggest Political fragmentation. Babar found in the first quarter of the 16th century five muslims and two Hindu kingdoms of note.

Viz. (1) The Lodi Kingdom extended from Bhera to Bihar; (2) Gujrat under Muzzafar Shah; (3) Mahva under Mahmud Khalji; (4) Bengal under Nusrat Shah; (5) The Bahmanis in the Deccan; (6) Mewar under Rama Sanga; (7) Vijainagar under Krishnadeva Raja".<sup>1</sup>

On the basis of Babarnama accounts Rushbrook William clearly divides Political condition of northern India into

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1. Babarnama, Vol. 11, Trans. by A.S. Beveridge, pp.481-82.

four groups.<sup>2</sup>

In the early 16th Century there was a Paramount Power in northern India, strong enough to enforce its will on the numerous independent states or even to forge them into a temporary confederacy for the defence of her extensive frontier. The Lodhis who held Delhi and Agra were master of limited territory and though they gave promise under the energetic Sultan Sikandar (1489-1517) of playing the role of Sultanate of Delhi, they failed to develop into an imperial Power, Ibrahim (1517-1526) the last ruler of the dynasty was not only defeated by Rana Sanga of Mewar but lost control over his Afghan Peers, some of whom like Daulat Khan Lodhi<sup>3</sup> governor of Lahore threw of their allegiance to the Sultan. The Lodhi Kingdom was therefore "a congeries of semi independent governership mostly held by Afghans.

In 1525 Babar occupied Panjab and compelled Daulat Khan Lodhi to submit. Daulat Khan Lodhi's chief object in life was to retain Supreme authority in Panjab. It was his house which had extended the authority of the Afghan's there and dispossessed the Mughals of the West Panjab. Daulat Khan therefore naturally feared the movements of Babar on the Western side of Indus.

After that Babar's next expedition was start. Now Babar proceed<sup>6</sup> against Ibrahim Lodhi the Afghan ruler and

2. Babarname, Vol.II, p.480.

3. R.P. Tripathi - Rise and fall of the Mughal Empire, p.28.



met him on the historic battlefield of Panipat on 21st April 1526. Babar won a decisive victory over the Lodhi Sultan Babar quickly occupied Delhi and Agra.

"On Friday (Rajab 15th) while we remained on <sup>the</sup> same ground Maulana Mahmud and Shaikh Zain went with few others into Delhi for the congregational Prayers read the Khutba in my name distributed a Portion of money to the poor and needy and return to camp".<sup>4</sup>

After the occupation of Delhi and Agra Babur quickly realised the necessity and importance of the neighbouring region of Rajputana which had begun once more to loom large on the Political front. In the reign of Rana Sangram Singh Mewar reached at the Zenith of her glory. He was controlling directly or indirectly the entire resource of Rajputana. Rana Sangram Singh was <sup>a</sup> very powerful ruler and according to Shaikh Zain" There was not a single ruler of the first rank in all these great countries like Delhi, Gujrat, and Mandu, who was able to make head against him. In banner of the infidel flaunted over two hundred cities inhabited by people of the faith"<sup>5</sup>.

This is confirmed by Babarnama - "Rana Sanga who in these latter days had grown great by his own valour and sword.

4. Babarnama, Vol.II, p.476.

5. Mirat-i-Sikandari, Eng. Trans., p.101.

His original country was Chittor in the down fall from power of the Mandu Sultans he became possessed of many of their dependencies such as Ranthambur, Sarangpur, Bhilsan and Chanderi".<sup>6</sup>

Rana Sanga the hero of the Rajpur national revival was certainly a more formidable adversary than Ibrahim. Rana Sanga met Babur in the famous battle of Khanwah on 16th March 1527. Babur won the battle.

Babur's occupation of Bihar and Bengal after defeating Afghans in the battle of Ghaghra. Babur met with the forces of Nusrat Shah in famous battle of Ghaghra in 6th May 1529. Like Rajputs Afghans were defeated by Babur.

New from river Sindhu (Indus) to Bihar, and from Himalaya to Gwalior. Babur carved out a Kingdom and laid the foundation of future Mughal Empire.

Thus Babur established a vast empire which extended from the river Amu to Bihar, Khunduz, Badakshan, Kabul, Ghazni Qandhar were his Western Province. In India Multan and the Punjab, the United Province and the portion of Bihar, formed parts of his empire Biyana Ranthambore, Gwalior, Alwar and Chanderi formed the irregular, boundry line between the empire and the kingdom of Rajasthan and <sup>1</sup>Malwa.

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6. Babarnama, Vol.II, pp.483-84.

Humayun succeeded Babur but due to so many reasons could not keep his father's empire. He was defeated by Sher Shah Suri and fled to Iran where he took assylum. After a brief period of assylum he started his recovery of his lost empire and conquered Kabul, Delhi and Punjab. However, he could not enjoy his recovered empire as he accidentally died in January, 20, 1556.

Humayun's son and successor Akbar became emperor after Humayun's death, who carved out a vast empire and due to his liberal religious policy brought together all his subjects irrespective of religion, caste or any other suit distinction.

Akbar's successors emperor Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb ruled over the vaste empire of emperor Akbar during the 17th century. The period of Mughal rule in India from Akbar to Aurangzeb is considered a period of Political stability and thus Indian cultural life was enriched during this period.

**(b) Beginning of Muslim contact with India:**

Muslim contact with India started from the time of the rise of Islam in the 7th century A.D. , due to trade relation between India and Arab countries. However political contact began with Mohd. Bin Qasim <sup>DATE</sup> invasion of Sindh in 712 A.D.

The frontier areas were occupied by the Arabs. Subsequently Mahmud of Ghazni invaded India several times in the

the first quarter of the 11th century A.D. Finally towards the close of 12th century A.D. Shihabuddin Mohammad Ghori was able to establish his power in Lahore <sup>and</sup> Delhi and this laid the foundation of Delhi Sultanat.<sup>7</sup>

Sufis came to India many years - Before the extension of Turkish political power, the muslim traders, merchants, saints and mystic peacefully entered into India<sup>8</sup> and settled down. These Muslims immigrant lived outside the fortified town amongst the lower section of the Indian people because of caste taboos. The muslims settled down in India nearly half a century before the Ghurid conquest <sup>and</sup> they secured permanent settlement in India. Ibn Asir writes about Banaras, "There are Mussalmans in that country since the days of Mahaud Bin Sukuktgin".<sup>9</sup>

Sufis came to India many years before the establishment of the sultanate<sup>10</sup> of Delhi (1192 A.D.). However it was after the foundation of the Turkish rule at Delhi that a large number of Sufis came from Islamic countries migrated to this country and settled themselves in many parts of India. In

7. F.B. Habibullah - Foundation of Muslim rule in India.
8. Mohd. Habib and K.A. Nizami - Comprehensive History of India, Vol. V, p.138.
9. Elliot and Dowson - History of India as told by its own Historian, Vol. II, p.251.
10. Comprehensive History of India, Vol. V, p.138.

course of time Sufi hermitage (khangah) scattered over all northern India and they divided the territory into subdivisions for their spiritual upliftment.

The History of the development of the Islamic thought shows how in Muslim countries ideas had been evolved which were analogous to Hindu ideas and which could therefore be presented without shocking them. The material of contact although peculiar was not thus entirely heterogenous.<sup>11</sup> As a result of it two great cultures came in contact <sup>with</sup> of each other and a process of give and take took place. Initially there was a wide gap between muslims and non muslims of India due to certain atrocities committed by the muslim forces. But at the same time muslim saint (Sufis) started another policy which was based on humanism and equality.<sup>12</sup>

(c) Sufism in India Upto 15th Century :

(1) Early origin of Sufism - Islamic mysticism which holy Quran. But in its development is generally influenced by other religions, i.e. Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Gnoticism of Egypt and Neo Platonism,

Yusuf Husain says "Sufism was born in the bosom of Islam."<sup>13</sup>

The metaphysical terminology of the sufis is largely derived

11. Tara Chand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.108.

12. A.L. Srivastava - Medieval Indian Culture.

13. Yusuf Husain - Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture, p. 33.

from the Quran in expression like fire for the purity of God." Sufism is not a sect in Islam but only a philosophical aspect of that great faith. It has simply sought to interpret some of <sup>the</sup> most fundamental principles of Islam on the higher plane of thought and is nothing but its intellectual foundation. Knowledge, love and Renunciation, form the keynote of Sufism, owing to the abstruseness of its principles its teaching have always been kept exclusive and the institution of the preceptor and the disciple has become its permanent feature. Spiritual awakening according to the Sufis can only be acquired with knowledge. "Real knowledge is the knowledge of God and knowledge of God cannotes retirement into innermost recesses of one's soul which alone contains the light".<sup>14</sup> That Sufism like all other philosophical and mystical school of thought in Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism, owes its origin to this universal tendency of human mind will be apparent if we study the genesis of this highly interesting and important school of thought in Islam.

(ii) Derivation of the word Sufism : - European writers who always try to show that all good ideas emanate from the west identify that the word "Sufi with Sophas, which means was applied to those person who used clothing of wool, i.e., coarse clothing the cotton fabrics of <sup>the</sup> Dacca and Calicut being

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14. S.M. Rahman - Islamic Culture (Sufism and Islam), 1927, pp. 641-42.

the monopoly of the nobility in those days and avoided every kind of luxury and ostentation. The name of "pushminaposi," was therefore given to sufis in Persia. Some writers are of opinion that the word is derived from the "<sup>LU</sup>Ahhil - Suffah" or the people of the bench". However the popular conception is that it is derived from the "Safa" which means "Purity".<sup>15</sup>

Some say "The sufi were only named sufis because of the purity (SAFA) of their heart and the cleanliness of their acts (ATHAR) Bishr Ibn al Harith said - "The sufi is he whose heart is sincere (Safa) towards God.

But if the term sufi were derived from safa the correct form would be "SAFAWI" and not sufi. Others think that sufi were only called sufis because they are in the first rank (Saff) before God. But if the term sufi were referred to saff (rank) it would be "SAFFI" not sufi. Others said "they were only called sufis because their qualities resembled those of the people of Dais who lived in the time of God's Prophet (Suffah). But if the term sufi were derived from "Suffah" (Bench) the correct form would be 'suffi' not sufi. Lastly they were only called sufis because of their habit of wearing suf i.e. wool, if the derivation from suf (wool) be accepted the word is correct".<sup>16</sup>

15. S.M. Rahman - Islamic Culture (Sufism and Islam) 1927,p.640.

16. Mir Valliuddin - What is Sufism (Islamic Culture), Vol.20 (1946), No.1-4, pp.373-74.

(iii) Basic conception of Sufism : - "Sufism teaches how to purify one's self, improve one's morals, and build up one's inner and outer life in order to attain <sup>u</sup>perpetual bliss. Its subject matter is the purification of the soul and its end or aim is the attainment of eternal felicity and blessedness".<sup>17</sup>

Imam Qushayri the author of the great sufi compendium Rasail takes sufiism in the sense of purity, i.e. the purity of inner and outer life and says that "purity is something praiseworthy in which ever language it may be expressed and its opposite impurity is to be eschewed."<sup>18</sup>

Thus sufiism in the words of Abu Ali or Radhabari is "giving one's lost the taste of tyranny "and Journeying in the pathway of the Holy Prophet".<sup>19</sup>

Sufis had great faith in God. They believed in His existence. Sufi believed that God is transcendent and immanent. Nothing could be hidden from God, since He is always with us. God is near us, God is omnipresent. The sufis believe in Divine presence. God alone is worthy of worship. The sufis identified the Hag and Khalq, the creator and created. "It means that God is the unity behind all purity and the Reality behind all phenomenal appearance."<sup>20</sup> In other words they

17. Mir Valliuddin - What is Sufism ? (Islamic Culture)  
Vol.20, (1946), No.1-4, p.375.

18. Ibid, p.375.

19. Ibid.,p.376.

20. B.N. Luniya - Life and Culture in Medieval India, p.334.



believed in the doctrine of Wahadat-ul-Wujud or unity of being.

There were many orders (silsilahs) of the sufis in India. The main silsila's were the Chishtia, the Suhrawardia, the Naqshbandia the Qadiria, the Qalandaria and the Shattari.

The first sufi saint of the Chishti silsila in India was Shaikh Moinuddin Chishti (1141 A.D. - 1236 A.D.) settled at Ajmer before the Ghorian conquest of that region.

Shaikh Moinud-din <sup>born</sup> was born in 536 A.H./1141 A.D.<sup>21</sup> at Sijistan. The Khwaja adopted a catholic attitude in his dealings with the Hindus. His aim was that the highest form of devotion to God consists of doing service to humanity.

Khwaja had many disciple who propagated his ideals and teachings. Two of the most important among them were Shaikh Hamid-ud-din Nagori<sup>22</sup> and Shaikh Qutubud-din Bakhtiyar Kaki<sup>23</sup> Shaikh Qutubuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki (ob. 1235 A.D.) was distinguished Khalifah of Shaikh Moinuddin was a native of Avsh.

Both of these disciple were asked to settle at different places consequently Shaikh Hamid-ud-din Nagori

21. No earlier writer has given his date of birth.

R.A. Nizami - Some Aspects of Religion and Politics during 13th century, p.182.

22. Ibid.

23. Sirayul-Auliya, p.48, Siyar-ul-Arfin, p.16, Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, p.24.

settled in Nagor while Shaikh Qutub-ud-din Bakhtiyar Kaki at Delhi. Qutub-ud-din Bakhtiyar Kaki adopted Shaikh Farid as his spiritual heir who settled at Ajodhan.

Shaikh Farid-ud-din Masud Ganj-i-Shakar (1175-1265) was the famous saint of his time. He worked in Mansi and Ajodhan. Farid-ud-din known popularly as shaikh Farid or Baba Farid. He gave ~~to the Ghishti~~ to the Chishti silsilah the momentum of an organized spiritual movement.

Shaikh Farid's famous disciple was Shaikh Nizam-ud-din Aulia<sup>24</sup> (1236-1325 A.D.). It was under him that the Chishti silsilah reached its highest watermark.<sup>25</sup> For nearly half a century he lived and worked in Delhi. Nizam-ud-din Auliya acquired great fame during his life time and became known as Muhibb-i-illahi. His religious activities had a great deal to do with the popularity of the Chishti order's in India.

The last great Sufi saint of the Chishti silsilah was Nasir-ud-din Mahmud known as Chirag of Delhi settled down at Lahore. He was born at Ayodhya. When he was 25 he decided to be a mystic and at the age of 45 he became the disciple of Nizam-ud-din Auliya. He was the last great saint of Chishti silsila to have enjoyed an all India reputation. The Suhrawardy

24. Fawa'id-ul-Fu'ad, Siyar-ul-Auliya, Ain-i-Akbari, 11, pp. 208-9.

25. Tarikh-i-Ferozshahi, Afif, p. 363.

silsilah was the next important sufi order. After Chishti silsila another important Silsilah of India was Suhrawadie silsila. The founder of this silsila was Shaikh Shihabuddin Suhrawardi who asked his disciple to work in India. Shaikh Shihabuddin's prominent disciple Shaikh Bahauddin Zakaria<sup>26</sup> came to India and settled in North Western India at Multan till his death in 1262 A.D.

Shaikh Bahauddin Zakaria had seven sons<sup>27</sup> and a number of disciples. His son Shaikh Sadruddin Arif<sup>28</sup> succeeded him as his Chief Sajjadah Nashin in Multan and his disciple Jalaluddin Surkh Bukhari established a strong - suhrawardy centre at Uchch. Jalaluddin Surkh<sup>29</sup> had come from Bokhara and became a disciple of Bahauddin Zakariyya. He acquired influence and converted many Hindus of Uchch to Islam. His grandson Sayyid Jalaluddin Makhdum-i-Jahannan<sup>30</sup> was one of the most influential Suhrawardy saints of his time.

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26. Fawaid-ul-Fuad, p.5, Siyarul Auliya, p.60, Akhbarul Akhyar, pp.26.

27. Fawaid-ul-Fuad, p.221.

28. Siyarul Arifin, p.128, Akhbarul Akhyar, pp.60-62.

29. Ibid, p.155, Ibid, p.60.

30. Tarikh-i-Firozshahi, Afif, p.514.

The Suhrawardy Sufis took greater care of their families and devoted more time to the upbringing and training of their sons than the Chishti Saints.

A prominent branch of the Suhrawardy silsilah was that of the Firdausia. Shaikh Sharf-uf-din Yahya was a prominent leader of this silsilah. He was a learned man and left behind him a good number of his letters known as his Maktubat in which he tried to recognise the doctrine of Wahadat-ul-wujud (Unity of being).

The next order Qadiri Silsilah was founded by Shaikh Abdur Qadir Jilani of Bagdad in the 12th century A.D. Shah Niyamat Ullah and Nasir-ud-din Muhammad Jilani who flourished in the middle of the 15th century. Mohammad Jilan settled at Uchh in Sindh.

The popularity of the Sufis was due to their understanding of the Indian condition and to their adopting some of the Hindu customs and ceremonies.

"According to Sir Jadunath Sarkar the Bhakti movement and Sufi philosophy tended to bring the ruling sect and dominated people close together".<sup>31</sup>

Mostly the Hindus of the lower classes came into contact with Sufi and they had been very much influenced with 31. Sarkar, J.N., Studies in Mughal India.

the number of Hindu associates themselves with Muslim Sufis and they adopted sufistic thought, behaviour and practices.

**(D) Growth of Bhakti Movement in India upto 15th Century:**

**(1) Origin of Bhaktism**- "The Hindus treat their religion from the point of view of emancipation (Moksa), for the attainment of which they recognise three Paths - the Path of action (Karma), of knowledge (Jnana) and of devotion (bhakti)."<sup>32</sup>

According to the ancient Hindu thought Salvation or freedom from the bondage of birth and death which is the ultimate end of human life, can be attained by three means (marga) viz. (knowledge) gyan, Karma (action) bhakti (devotion).<sup>33</sup>

The third Path for the attainment of liberation is that of devotion and faith (Bhakti marga). Bhakti has been defined as ' the worship of a personal deity in a spirit of love,<sup>34</sup> as personal faith in personal God love for him as for a human being the dedication of everything to his service,

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32. Tara Chand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.1.

33. A.L. Srivastava, Medieval Indian Culture, p.53.

R.C. Majumdar, - Bhakti Renaissance, p.9.

34. Barnett - International Congress for the History of Religion, 1900.

Tara Chand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture.

and the attainment of Moksa" by this mean rather than by knowledge or sacrifice or works<sup>35</sup> as an affection fixed upon the Lord after acquiring a knowledge of the attributes of the adorable one.<sup>36</sup>

The beginning of bhakti may be traced in the hymns of the Rigveda where "longing Prayers are said to touch Indra who is longing just as a wife with desire get her husband.

The word Bhakti is derived from the root bhaj, by the application of the ktin suffix<sup>37</sup> which express an action and means among other things, service devotion, attachment, loyalty worship and homage.

The traces of Bhakti movement can be found in the philosophy of Gita. "The earliest written text of the school of devotion is the Bhagavad Gita".<sup>38</sup>

Bhakti, however was preached as a doctrine for the first time in the Bhagavad Gita. The Bhakti movement was initiated as a cult of love and devotion based on the

35. Sedgwick - Bhakti - Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1910.

36. Garrierson - Bhakti Marga.

37. R.C. Majumdar - Bhakti Renaissance.

38. Tara Chand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, pp.24.

the Bhagavad Gita and other sacred Hindu texts, by Alvar and Adiyar Brahmins of South India. "The Bhakti of Gita has a very close resemblance to the Christian notion of the love of God embodied in the Greek word agape".<sup>39</sup>

However the Bhakti movement in India started in South India during the 7th century A.D. From the eight century to fifteenth the South is the home of religious reform, it is there that Vaishnava and Saivite Saints start<sup>ed</sup> the schools of Bhakti and Shankara and Ramanuja Nimaditya, Basava, Vallabhacharya and Madhava expounded their philosophical system.<sup>40</sup>

(ii) Basic Concepts of Bhaktism : Shankaracharya's philosophy was based on dualism. Shankara's philosophy which in so far as thought systems may be considered to be causes of events, dealt a fatal blow to Buddhism, attempted to rally the Hindu sects together. "The one aim of Shankara's endeavours was to remove that fatal weakness of Hinduism the fissiparous tendency of its religious sects which all claimed their authority from the same source namely the Srutis".<sup>41</sup>

Shankara had to establish that the sacred scriptures of the Hindus had one consistent teaching to impart and that

39. Nirad C. Chowdhry - Hinduism, pp.56-57.

40. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.84.

41. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.97.

the differences of Schools were due to misunderstanding and lack of true insight. "Monism according to him was the outstanding feature of Hindu theology, a monism uncompromising absolute idealistic".<sup>42</sup> God was one and there was no other besides him. It is said that Shankara was the founder of Bhakti movement. (Besides Shankara there were many Bhakti Saints in India till 16th century. Of course Bhakti movement was systematized by Ramanuja in the 12th century A.D. and propagated all over India. Ramanuja<sup>43</sup> was born in 1016 at Tirupati or Perumbur near Madras. His fathers name was Kesava and mother's name was Kantiyati. He became at first the pupil of Yadava Prakasa, who was a follower of Shankara. "The aim of Ramanuja's teaching was the refutation of Shankara's absolute monism and Mayavada and the establishment of Bhakti within the philosophy of Vedanta and incidentally also to obtain recognition for the non vedic Panchratra in the Vedic literature".<sup>44</sup>

The medieval Bhakti movement in real sense begins with Ramanuja. Ramanuja died in 1137 at Srirangam.

After Ramanuja the next great Vaishnava philosopher was Nimbarka. He is also known as Nimalitya or Nimananda and is said to be Telugu Brahman of Nima in Bellary district

42. Tara Chand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.97.

43. Rangacharya - Life and Teachings of Ramanuja  
K.S. Aiyangar - Ramanuja  
Rajagopalchariar - Ramanuja

44. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, pp.100.



Nimbarka's sect became popular in north India and the success of the Bhakti movement in the north is to a great measure due to him.

The Bhakti movement was spread in the north by Ramananda who was greatly influenced by the teachings of Ramanuja. Ramanuja was born at Prayag in a Kanyakubja Brahmin family. He was educated at Prayag and Benaras. He gave his teachings through Hindi the language of the common people. He ignored the traditional barriers of caste and creed and had among his disciples Raidasa the cobbler, Kabir the weaver, Dhanna the Jat farmer, Sena the barber and Pipa the Rajput. "It is certain that Ramananda came into contact at Benaras with learned Musalman".<sup>45</sup>

"Ramananda founded his School and renounced the rigidity of Hindu ritual".<sup>46</sup>

"Ramananda's teaching gave rise to two schools of religious thought, one conservative, and the other radical".<sup>47</sup> The legends attached to his disciples show the popular character of the Bhakti movement.

Another important Bhakti saint was Madhavacharya who flourished in the 13th century. Anandatiratha or Madhva<sup>48</sup>

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45. Macauliffe - The Sikhs, Vol.VI, p.102.

46. Yusuf Husain - Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture, p.13.

47. Tara Chand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.145.

48. Bhandarkar - Vaishnavism and Saivism.

(1199-1278) rejected both the theory of unqualified monism of Shankara and qualified monism of Ramanuja.

He believed in the theory of distinct dualism "Madhava conception of God was that of the Sovereign who ruled the world, and whose grace conferred deliverance on man".<sup>49</sup>

The next Bhakti Saint Raidas was a worker in leather and thus belonged to a low caste social hierarchy. He was born at Benaras, his father's name was Ragghu and that of his mother Ghurbiniya. "His hymns breathe a spirit of humility and self surrender. He did not indulge in high philosophic speculation about the nature and essence of God and His relation with the world and man. He believed in a God who was the Absolute Lord of all".<sup>50</sup>

"Hari is in all and all is in Hari".<sup>51</sup>

Kabir (1398-1518 A.D.) was the most important of the disciples of Ramananda - He was a weaver by profession. He lived the life of householder earning his living by weaving. There is in them a denunciation of worldliness, the life of sensepleasure, sectarianism formal religious practices and unrighteous conduct. It is said that Kabir was the son of a Brahmin widow who in order to hide her shame left him on the

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49. Tara Chand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, pp.103.

50. Ibid, pp.179.

51. Raidas Ki Bari, p.25.

side of a tank from where he was picked up by a weaver Niru who adopted him.

Kabir was a meditative child and when he grew up he became disciple of Ramananda. Kabir himself says "I was revealed in Kasi, and was awakened by Ramananda".<sup>52</sup>

According to Mohsin Fani "at the time when he was in search of a spiritual guide he visited the best of the Musalman and Hindus, but he did not find what he sought, at last somebody gave him direction to an old man of bright genius, the Brahman Ramananda".<sup>53</sup> The mission of Kabir was to preach a religion of love which would unite all castes and creed. He rejected those features of Hinduism and Islam which were against the spirit, and which were of no importance for the real spiritual welfare of the individual".<sup>54</sup>

The God he worshipped was formless one, he called him by number of names, both Rama and Rahima. He sharply condemned caste and religious distinctions and taught the brotherhood of man. He appealed to the conscience, the inner voice of man, and not to scriptures. Hindu or muslim. He believed that the ultimate goal of the human soul was unity with God.

"Kabir's teachings had a profound effect on the masses".<sup>55</sup>

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52. Kabir - Bijak, Ramaini, p.77.

53. Troyer and Shea - *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*, p.186.

54. Tara Chand - *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, p.150.

55. A.L. Srivastava - *Medieval Indian Culture*, p.59.

"The Bhakti movement of medieval India represents the first effective ingingment on Hindu Society of Islamic culture and outlook".<sup>56</sup> It is<sup>o</sup> fact that Bhakti movement was indigenous and was first appeared around the 6th century A.D. in the South Particularly in Tamil country and from there spread through out much of the country by different saint.

The movement not only prepared a meeting ground for the devout men of both creeds it also preached human equality and openly condemned rituals and caste."<sup>57</sup> The main mission of this movement was to unite Hindus and Muslims. The result of this movement was that the two great cultures came into contact with each other and the process of give and take took place. Initially there was a wide gap between Muslims and Hindus of India. But at the same time Bhakti saints started another policy which was based on humanism.

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56. Yusuf Hussain - Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture, p.31.

57. Ibid, p.31.

## CHAPTER-II

### (A) Development of Bhakti Movement in India During 16th and 17th Centuries :

Bhakti movement continued during the 16th and 17th centuries in the more detailed form as compared to its early period. During this period it became unconventional and antiritualistic and ignored the age old restriction of caste and creed or attached little importance to them. During this period Bhakti movement bifurcated into two divisions i.e. Saguna (God with attributes) and Nirguna (God without attributes).

A large number of saints belonged to the Saguna School which believed that God has many forms and attributes that He manifests Himself in incarnations such as Rama and Krishna and that His spirit is to be found in the idols and images worshipped at home and in temples.

The most important saints of Saguna School in the 16th and 17th centuries were Vellabha Charya, Tulsidas, Surdas, Mirabai, Chailanya.

Those who believed in Nirguna philosophy categorically emphasised that God is without form or attributes, but nevertheless merciful and responsive to human prayers. This philosophy seems to be the outcome of ancient vedantic philosophy. However it is also possible that it might have

also influenced by Islamic conception of God. The main saints of the Nirguna School were Nanak, Dadu Dayal, Raidas, etc.

The saints of both these sect propagated the principles of human love and equality to all without any consideration of caste and creed. The saints belonging to Saguna order However tried to retain basic conception of social order. They wanted to bring socio-religious reform without breaking the age old social customs and practices. On the contrary the saints belonging to the Nirguna order strongly preached about social equality by condemning the social customs and practices.

The teachings of both the sects influenced the contemporary society and brought peace to all. Further, these teachings also helped in the synthesis of Indian culture and Islamic culture.

### Bhakti Saints of Saguna School

#### Vallabhacharya (1479 A.D. - 1531 A.D.)

Vallabhacharya was the next great saint of the Krishna cult of Vaishnavism. He was born in a deep jungle at Benaras in 1479 A.D.<sup>56</sup> Vallabhacharya the founder of the

56. M.P. Srivastava - Society and Culture in Medieval India, p.81.

A.L. Srivastava - Medieval Indian Culture, p.65.

Pandey - Saints of Northern India (From Ramananda to Ramtirth, p.73.



Vijaynagar where he established the supremacy of Vaishnavism with some learned scholar's of Shaiva sect.<sup>61</sup>

Vallabhaacharya preached the holy message of Lord Krishna during his Journey in the South. Then many disciples converted to Vaishnavism. After his long journey in the South he came back to the north. He did not waste even a day during his journey. He visited the regions of Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh (Varanasi, Hardwar, Badrinath and Kedarnath). This atmosphere of the mountains gave him sufficient spiritual strength. He worshipped Lord Krishna with the little of Shrinathji.<sup>62</sup> Like Kabir and Nanak he did not consider married life a hinderance to spiritual progress and he married a Brahman girl named Mahalakshmi at Benaras. He had two sons whom he himself taught and made them very learned scholars.

Vallabhaacharya was the author of many important books in Sanskrit and Brajhasha the very well known of which are Subodhine and Sidhant Rahasya<sup>63</sup>. He spent his last days of life in Vrindaban and Kashi and <sup>did</sup> did at the latter place in 1531 A.D. at the age of Fifty two.<sup>64</sup> He had many followers among whom 84 were his devoted disciples.

61. A.L. Srivastava - Medieval Indian Culture, p.66.

62. M.P. Srivastava - Society and Culture in Medieval India, p.82.

A.L. Srivastava - Medieval Indian Culture, p.66.

63. Pandey - Saints of Northern India (From Ramananda to Ramtirath) p.75.

64. A.L. Srivastava - Medieval Indian Culture, p.65.



Vallabhacharya along with his sons and nine grand children spread simultaneously the message of universal brotherhood. The mission of Vallabha was the unification of Hindu and the Muslim. Vallabha had complete faith in God. He considered God as omnipotent and can be pleased and released only through love and Bhakti. Vallabh's philosophy centred round the conception of one personal and loving God. He believed in the marga (path) of Pushti (grace) and Bhakti.<sup>65</sup> He looked upon Shri Krishna as the highest Brahma Purushotama (the most excellent of all being or the perfect man) and Permananda (the highest joy).<sup>66</sup> He believed that supreme being can be attained by sincere Bhakti.

"Vallabhacharya gives special importance to Bhakti (devotion) which according to him can only be conferred by God. Bhakti means spontaneous attachment to God, who himself chooses His devotees".<sup>67</sup>

There are only two ways of devotion "one is the maryada Bhakti in which devotion is obtained by one's own effort in the following particular practices. The path of devotion is pushtibhakti by which devotion is obtained effortlessly merely

65. Sukla, Ramchandra - Hindi Sahitya Ka Itihas (Hindi), p.156.

Vivek Bhattacharya - The Spirit of Indian Culture, (Saints of India), pp.293.

A.L. Srivastava - Medieval Indian Culture, p.67.

66. M.P. Srivastava - Society and Culture in Medieval India.

67. Prem Lata - Mystic Saints of India (Ramanuja) p.115.

by the Grace of God. Vallabha is in favour of Pushtibhakti and therefore does not consider any personal effort necessary for its attainment. The Pushtibhakti worships God not because He is all powerful or the highest Lord but purely out of ardent love for him".<sup>68</sup>

According to Vallabhacharya "The Pushtibhakti is of four kinds (1) Pravada Pushtibhakti (2) Maryada Pushtibhakti (3) Pushti Pushtibhakti (4) Suddha Pushti Pushtibhakti."<sup>69</sup>

The first is the path of those who while engaged in a worldly life with its me and mine which is composed to a stream (Pravada) to acts calculated to bring about the attainment of God. The second is of those who withdrawing their mind from worldly enjoyment devotee themselves to God hearing discourse about him singing his name and such other process. The third is of those who <sup>or</sup> already enjoying "God's grace and made by another grace competent to acquire knowledge useful for adoration and thus they came to know all about the way's God. The follower of this path have to depend on their own effort for the acquisition of knowledge efferred to. The fourth is of those who through more love devotee themselves to the singing and praising of God as if it were a haunting passion".<sup>70</sup>

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68. Prem Lata - Mystic Saints of India (Ramanuja), p.115.

69. Pandey - Saints of Northern India, p.89.

70. Bhattacharya, V. - The spirit of Indian Culture (Saints of India) p.293.

This Bhakti is generated by God himself and does not depend on mans will. First a liking for himself is generated by God in the mind of a man to whom his grace extends. Then a man sets about acquiring knowledge about God and all this is called Premabhakti (love adoration). Now the stages in the development of this are as follows : (1) Love or liking (Prema) (2) Attachment or (Asakti) (3) A haunting passion. Which is the mature condition of the first two (Vyasani). The haunting passion leads to the attainment of the end, that is the highest bliss those in whom Bhakti has attained<sup>ed</sup> to this pitch reject with scorn the four kinds of Mukti and chose the eternal service of Hari as noticed in the section on the Panchartna system".<sup>71</sup>

Vallabhacharya says - "Pushti is the grace (amgraha) of God, which is to be inferred from its fruit or the results, which are the ordinary or of this worlds. The bhakti or devotion is generated by this special grace is called Pushtibhakti".<sup>72</sup>

Vallabha discarded the rigidity of idol worship, fast etc. He preaches that bhakti or devotion showed the simple way to realised God. He said God can be attained through the purity of heart" Purity of heart, however is

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71. Bhattacharya, V. - The Spirit of Indian Culture (Saints of India), pp.293-94.

72. Ibid., p.293.

essential for devotee, and there are sixteen means provided for its attainment".<sup>73</sup>

He pointed out the evils of religion and inspired them to follow the right path. He said that the man should do his duty, God is omnipresent and there is no use of worshipped the stone.

He also opposed the caste system. He said that all the human beings are equal in the eyes of God. So there should be no discrimination in the Society. Many untouchables became his disciple during his journey. Vallabhacharya's teachings had an emotional appeal and they elevated the out and poetry of Brij, Rajasthan and Gujrat.

At last we can say that Vallabhacharya was one of the great Bhakti saint of India.

We reach to this conclusion that he converted the masses into Vishnavism during his journey. He was hostile to idol workship, indifferent towards external acts of religion. Of course he spread the ideas of Bhakti cult all over India. In fact he gave a great contribution to the Bhakti movement.

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73. Prem Lata - Mystic Saints of India, p.115.

SURDAS (1478 - 1580)

Surdas was also the most important mystic saint of the Krishna Bhakti cult. Surdas spread and popularise the Bhakti cult in the 16th century. His name was "Surdhwaj" but he is known as Surdas Madan Mohan.<sup>74</sup>

There is a controversy among scholars about the place of birth and details of his early life. It is however certain that he was not the same surdas who is mentioned in the Ain-i-Akbari as the blind bard of Agra and a Poet musician of Akbar's Court.<sup>75</sup> He was born in or about 1478 A.D. (Vaishak Shukla 5, 1535 V.S.).

Surdas's early childhood and youth<sup>was</sup> spend in Gaughat and Renuka on Yamuna. Which is 12 miles far from Agra. Here at Renuka he met Vallabhacharya,<sup>76</sup> in 1509 A.D. and became his disciple. According to Abul Fazi Renuka was in the 16th century "a much frequented place of Hindu worship".<sup>77</sup>

Surdas must have been born of indigent parents who would not otherwise have forever parted with their gifted though blind son.

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74. Bhaktmal

75. A.L. Srivastava - Akbar the great Vol.III, p.84.

76. Ibid., p.85.

77. Ain-i-Akbari, Vol.II, p.191.

There is no clear evidence that he was born blind. The study of Sur's literature suggests that Surdas was probably not born blind because a blind man could not have spoken so well about the shape, form and colours as well as minute observations of life.

Surdas was very much famous for his extraordinary, intelligence, native genius, uncommon intellectual and spiritual gift and for his individuality.

"When Vallabhacharya made Surdas his disciple at Gaughat in 1509 A.D. the latter was over 31 years of age and already a well known Sannyasin and a gifted poet. His meeting with the Acharya and initiation in the doctrine of Divine grace proved to be a turning point in his life".<sup>78</sup>

"Though a saint of high order he had till then looked upon the Almighty as master and himself his servant, and devotee.

Now in pursuit of the doctrine of Divine Grace he began worshipping God as personal living God, and surrendered himself completely to His will. He began making an endeavour to win His grace, for without it salvation was impossible. He gave up the humility of a servant and slave and adopted

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78. A.L. Srivastava - Akbar the Great, Vol.III, p.86.

towards Lord Krishna, the Paramananda the attitude of a passionate lover towards his beloved",<sup>79</sup>

Surdas accompanied Vallabhacharya to Govardhan where he was entrusted to the duty of conducting Kirtan at the shrine of Shrinathji, surdas did those job with full devotion.

He Sang Kirtan along with other devotees while he was at Govardhan he frequently visited Mathura and Gokul. It is said that he also met emperor Akbar at Mathura,<sup>80</sup> on later's request.

He passed away at Parasoli near Govardhan in 1580 A.D. at the age of over one hundred year's Surdas was not only a saint but a poet also. His main important works are Sur Sarawali, and Sursagar. Surdas in his works has displayed himself as a sincere devotee of the Almighty His work have guided and inspired many on the path of Bhakti.

Surdas enjoyed the company of saints and sages. According to him Lord Krishna is the Divine Being, the god at the helm of the affairs of the universe. He provided various attributes to God and believed in the Saguna God. He said

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79. A.L. Srivastava - Akbar the great vol.III, p.86.

80. Ibid, p.86.

that Salvation can be achieved through Bhakti (devotion) to Krishna. He laid stress on the profound love for the object of worship. " With Surdas love is a sublimated theme representing the irresistible attraction of the gopis of Vrindaban towards the youthful and lovely Krishna. The intensity of passion displayed by the gopis for the person of Krishna is an expression of the natural attraction of the human spirit towards the divine soul."<sup>81</sup>

Surdas was convinced of the importance of unflinching devotion and profound selfless love over reason and intellectualism, and he conveys his conviction and experience in a series of charming verses devotional songs and lyrics.<sup>82</sup>

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81. Puri Das Chopra - Social, Cultural and Economic History of India, p.92.

82. B.N. Luniya - Life and Culture in Medieval India, p.449.



SRIKRISHNA CHAITANYA (1486-1533)

Mahaprabhu Sri Krishna Chaitanya was a Bhakti saint of Krishna cult of Sanguna sect. He was born on the full moon day of Falgun 1407.<sup>83</sup> Saka (18th February 1486 A.D.) at Navadvipa or Nadia in Bengal. His father Jagannath Misra and mother Sachi were very religious and pious.

The childhood name of Chaitanya was Visambhar and Nimai.<sup>84</sup> Chaitanya is known by the name Gauranga".<sup>85</sup>

Chaitanya's early education was in Sanskrit texts. At a comparatively young age chaitanya was married to a beautiful girl named Laxmi. But she died very soon. He married again. Even as a married man passion for devotion was immense. He became disciple of saint, named, Ishwarapuri in 1508 A.D. at the age of twenty two. Ishwarpuri was a famous saint of Gaya.

Chaitanya believed in the Krishna cult with Radha and Krishna in unison and became a sincere devotee and passionate lover of God in that form. Chaitanya believed that Bhakti was the only way of salvation. "Chaitanya

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83. R.G. Bhandarker - Vaishnavism, Saivism and other minor Religious system, p.83.

84. D.C. Sen - Chaitanya and his age v p.109.

85. A.L. Srivastava - Akbar the Great, Vol.III, p.89.

R.G. Bhandarker - Vaishnavism, Saivism and other minor Religious System, p.83.

believed that knowledge, meditation, charity and virtue should be subordinated to the devotion of Krishna and Radha. His form of worship as a bhakta was in Kirtan or Samkirtan (group singing)".<sup>86</sup>

At the age of twenty four years Chaitanya became Sannyasi in 1510 A.D.<sup>87</sup> and assumed the name of Krishna Chaitanya. He went to Puri and from Puri he travelled to other places as Pandharpur, Sannath and Dwaraka etc.<sup>88</sup> After his travels he returned to Puri and stayed there for two years. After his stay at Puri he again travelled to Mathura and Vrindaban. After the Pilgrimage of Mathura and Vrindaban he came back to Puri and settled down where he expired in 1533 A.D.<sup>89</sup>

In his wanderings Chaitanya came into contact with a Sufi saint. The Pir was fascinated by the wandering man's message of universal brotherhood of man. The discussion between the saint and the Pir<sup>90</sup> are given in Chaitanya's Charitamrita.

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86. S.A.A. Rizvi - A History of Sufism in India, p.357.

87. A.L. Srivastava - Akbar the Great, Vol.III, p.89.

88. R.G. Bhandarker - Vaishnavism, Saivism and other minor religious System, p.84.

A.L. Srivastava - Medieval Indian Culture, p.68.

89. R.G. Bhandarker - Vaishnavism, Saivism and other minor religious System, p.84.

90. Tara Chand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.218.

It says "He profounded monotheism and one common God on the basis of the holy book (The Quran). But master refuted all his proposition by arguments based on the muslim scriptures till the man was silenced. The master continued, "your scripture establishes one common God and refuting that theory sets up in the end a particular God, who is full of all powers, dark of hue, the perfect spirit, the soul of all the most excellent, adorable by all, the first cause of everything".<sup>91</sup>

Since Chaitanya believed in universal brotherhood and discarded the separation of the different creeds. Some muslims of pathan race accepted him as their master and became his disciples. "The contemporary biographer says that they were all famous as the Pathan Vaishnavas".<sup>92</sup>

"In the world in order to enjoy through personal experience, the ardour of Radha passion for her beloved Krishna".<sup>93</sup>

According to Chaitanya the highest kind of devotion is that by which one serves Krishna, the Lord, But unless a man has purity too and character, he can not succeed on the path of devotion. "The devotee must be kind trustful equable to all, selfless, pure, desireless, virtuous, humble, mild

91. Chaitanya Charitamrita.

92. Vivek Bhattacharya - The Spirit of Indian Culture, (Saints of India), p.284.

93. Cultural Heritage of India, p.153.

forbearing, and must look for no support except that of Krishna. The natural love for God is called Prema Bhakti".<sup>94</sup>

Chaitanya believed in one personal God, Bhagvan or Hari is the name, given to supreme. He is infinite in nature, Power and attributes, the creative, destructive and sustaining aspect which appear in Hindu theology as Brahma, Siva, Vishnu are manifestations of his nature. All the forms in which the supreme has been conceived of and worshipped in Hindu thought are included in Bhagvan. He is the source of infinite forms of all these forms that of Krishna in the most perfect. "Radha was conceived as eternal enjoyed and Krishna as the eternal enjoyer. Chaitanya's attitude towards God symbolised in Radha Bhava".<sup>95</sup>

"Chaitanya advocated love intensified and sublimated into the divine love and his central doctrine was knowing God through Bhakti (devotion). According to Chaitanya Krishna is the Supreme God to whom Bhakti should be offered with complete selfless devotion and love".<sup>96</sup>

Chaitanya did not believe either in monism or in dualism. The faith of Chaitanya and his followers was intensely

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94. Prem Lata - Mystic Saints of India (Ramanuja), p.120.

95. B.N. Luniya - Life and Culture in Medieval India, p.429.

96. Ibid, p.429.

theistic for them, Krishna is the supreme being whom to love and serve was the chief end and joy of man.

Chaitanya believed that Krishna or Brahman is sat (absolute existence) Chit (absolute intelligence or consciousness) and Ananda (absolute bliss). Brahman is both Nirguna and Saguna. He is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. He is beyond the influence of time space and relativity.

Chaitanya denied the conception of advaita (dualism) He also rejected the Shankar's philosophy of Maya (illusion). Chaitanya mentioned many sins such as abuse, blasphemy, incalling a man God, lust and anger. Theological heresy is a grievous sin. "The idea of Salvation, common to most Hindu thought of mukti, emancipation or liberation is conceived of as having five states".<sup>97</sup>

He disregarded caste restrictions for devotion and salvation. The bhakti marg is only enough way to salvation.

The supreme being reveals himself directly in the soul and through the guru and the scripture.

Man is meant to be the servant of the supreme being but easily became the slave of Maya. The law of karma and its working, life in this world is suffering and sorrow but

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97. J.N. Sarkar - Chaitanya, p.37.

S.K. Day - Vaishnava Faith and Movement, p.81.

to the Vaishnava thinker the rigours of the Karmic law are modified by the joys of bhakti which are possible to all.

The cultivation of bhakti is a subject that receives considerable space in the Charitamrita. Chaitanya gave emphasis on five things which is the means of attaining the Bhakti. These five are "The Society of holy men, Kirtan of Krishna name listening of the reading of Bhagavada, dwelling at Mathura and reverential service of his image.

Chaitanya introduced emotional and devotional song and music which is called Kirtan. The name of Hari and Kirtan were sung in a company. The cult of Vaishnava was mainly popular among the masses through Kirtan.

Chaitanya was liberal and made no distinction between Brahman, Chandalas, Shudras and Muslims. He tried to brought them closer. There is certain clear evidence in the Charitamrita which goes to show that Chaitanya had no quarrel with varnasram dhrama (duties of the caste system) and that he accepted the traditional ideas of its authority in Society.<sup>98</sup> But in religious matters he emphasised the equality of all castes and creeds. Haridasa was his favourite Muslim devotee. Two other muslim devotees of Chaitanya were

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98. Charitamrita.

Raj and Sanatan. He accepted disciples from all classes, castes and creed. He created a new relations amongs<sup>h</sup>high and low born people. This made Chaitanya and his sect so popular.

He give more emphasis on universal lone as the first step to the love of God. He did not believe in rites and rituals but he had respects for the sacred scriptures or worship of image of God. He favoured the life of Sanyasi.

Chaitanya revitalised Vaishnavism which was in low position and miserable plight.<sup>99</sup>

Chaitanya spread the teachings of Vaishnavism all over India, but mainly in Bengal. His message of love for personal God as a balm for the people suffering socially & culturally.

"A modern muslim scholar who appears not to be conversant with the different forms of Bhakti argues that Chaitanya was influenced by Shaikh Nur Qutb-i-Alam. There would seem to be little the common with the puritanical Vaishnavism of Chaitanya and his followers and Sufis such as Nur Qutb-i-Alam and his Khalifas. However, the deep impact

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99. Dr. S.C. Mukerjee - A Studies of Vaishnavism in Ancient and Medieval Bengal, p.161.

made by Chaitanya was felt on a more popular level, for example in the Saul movement".<sup>100</sup>

The influence of Chaitanya's teachings on the masses of the people has been wide and profound.

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100. S.A.A. Rizvi - A History of Sufism in India (Vol.I), p.358.



MIRABAI (1498 - 1546)

Like Surdas and Tulsidas Mirabai was also Bhakti saint of 16th century. She was the follower of Krishna cult of Saguna school of Bhakti. Mirabai was born to Rajput parents of aristocratic class at the village of Kudki in the Merta district of Rajasthan in 1498 A.D.<sup>101</sup> "She was the only daughter of Rao Ratan Sen of Merta and a cousin sister of famous Jaimal".<sup>102</sup>

It is said that Mira had devotional instinct from a very tender age. When she was a child of five years, on an occasion of marriage procession, asked her mother about her own bridegroom, the mother replied that Girdhan Gopal (Lord Krishna) was her husband since then Mira recognised Girdhar Gopal as her husband and was devoted to her throughout her life. She had now one fine image of Krishna.

“ हा तेरी ही आरी जीव तेरी ।  
तू तेरा हँ प्यारा मैं हूँ तेरी ॥

At the attainment of puberty she was married to Mewar's Rana Sanga's eldest son and prince Bhojraj in 1516 A.D. But unfortunately Bhojraj died sometime between 1518-1523 A.D.

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101. K.P. Srivastava - Society and Culture in Medieval India, p.71.

A.L. Srivastava - Akbar the Great Vol.III, p.90.

102. Bhaktmal

A.L. Srivastava - Medieval Indian Culture, p.63.

After her husband's death she devoted herself entirely to religious pursuits. "In the early stage of her devotion she seemed to have been engrossed in her quest of the Lord. In the next stage of her Bhakti she believed as if she had found Him. In the final she seems to have felt as if she had He had become hers".<sup>103</sup>

She had a pilgrimage of Mathura, and Vrindaban and finally settled in Dwarika where she died in 1546 A.D.<sup>104</sup>✓  
However, about the date of Mira's death there is controversy and we do not know the exact date.

She had firm faith in God and worshipped Him in the form of Krishna whom she unstinted love and devotion. The sympathetic Colonel Tod says that she was the most celebrated princess of her time for beauty and romantic poetry and that "her compositions were numerous, though better known to the worshippers of Hindu Apollo, than to the ribald bards".<sup>105</sup>

Mira Bai has written many devotional songs. The songs are composed in Braj Bhasha and partly in Rajasthani and some of <sup>her</sup> his verses are in Gujrati. These lyrics are full of love and devotion.

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103. A.L. Srivastava - Akbar the Great Vol.III, p.91.

104. Ojha - Rajputana Ke Itihas, pp.670-71.

A.L. Srivastava - Akbar the Great Vol.III, pp.91.

105. Pandey - Saints of Northern India (From Ramananda to Ramatirath) p.624

Mira addressed her lyrics to Krishna whose presence she felt in every act of her daily life. The lyrics are full of passion and spiritual <sup>es</sup>ecstasy. The following poems of Mira shows her devotional love for Lord Krishna

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कृष्ण कृष्ण कृष्ण कृष्ण कृष्ण

"According to Mr. Keays she was so much persecuted by her brother in law that she fled from chittor and became a follower of Ravidas".<sup>106</sup>

Mira was one of the greatest devotees of Lord Krishna she may also be considered as a mystic poet of the highest order. Her passionate devotion to God bordered on madness of a seeker after him.

She sang many an immortal song which are on the lips of modern Hindus in most part of Northern India. Mira did not indulge in the philosophical speculation of the fundamental

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106. Hindu literature, p.29.

Pandey - Saints of Northern India (From Ramananda to Ramtirth ) p.69.

of metaphysics and even of the root principles of the bhakti cult.<sup>107</sup>

For Mira Lord Krishna was Divine Being, the God whose presence she felt in all her activities. Her form of love and devotion was to regard Him as lover and real husband. She yearns to be one with Him. Undaunted by fire or frown, unperturbed by persecution Mira Sang her songs of princely renunciation and self surrender so profusely and passionately that infused courage in the aspirant on the path of love. 'Mira lived the message and boldly proclaimed the doctrine of absolute faith in and devotion to the Lord'.<sup>108</sup>

Mira Bai was not a reformer saint like Kabir, and Nanak, but she followed all the tenets of Bhakti unwaveringly all her life. Her Bhakti to Krishna, her agonising longing for Krishna whom she loved passionately as Girdhar Gopal will inspire love and reverence for her at all times.

At last we reach to this conclusion that Mira was religious from her childhood and like her father and grandfather was a follower of Krishna cult of Vaishnavism. After her husband's death she spent her time in religious pursuits.

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107. A.L. Srivastava - Akbar the great Vol.III, p.91.

108. B.N. Luniya - Life and Culture in Medieval India, p.447.

Mira Bai's way of life and devotion to Lord Krishna influenced the contemporary masses. Mira Bai's emphasis on Lord Krishna's mercy, benovolence and love to living beings greatly strengthened social outlook of the people. People learnt compassion and love from Mira Bai and they also tried to behave with others with those passion.

Mira Bai's devotional songs gave spritual strength to the masses.

TULSI DAS (1532-1623 A.D.)

Tulsidas was other important saint of the Saguna school of Bhakti. Tulsidas was born at the village of Rajapur in the district of Banda near Allahabad. He was born in the year 1532 A.D. in the Saryuparin Brahman family.<sup>109</sup>

However, in Bhaktmal his birth place has been mentioned as Ganga Barah (Soron) in the province of Tari<sup>110</sup>. He was born in Sarvat 1589 (1532 A.D.),<sup>111</sup> and his father's name was Atma Ram Dube, his mother's Hulsai. He was married to Ratnavali. At an early age Tulsidas became orphan but was brought up and, educated by his father's Guru Narsinghdas He learnt sastras and other religious works.

Tulsidas refers to his childhood in his Kavitavali. He also refers to his first teacher Narhari Anand to whom he owed much.

"It was at Sukar Kheta", writes Tulsidas in his Ramcharitmanas, "that I was told again and again by my teacher the story of Rama but being a child I could only follow it partially on account of the limitations of my intelligence".<sup>112</sup>

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109. Swami Tattwananda - The Saints of India, p.61.

110. Bhaktmal

111. R.G. Bhandarkar - Vaishnavism, Savism and other minor religious System, p.74.

Pandey - Saints of Northern India (From Ramenanda to Ramtirth) pp.101-2.

112. A.L. Srivastava - Akbar the Great, Vol.III, p.92.

It is said that due to his wife's rebuke he left married life and decided to spend his life in devotion. He worshipped Lord Rama and thus belonged to the Rama cult of Seguna School. He undertook a pilgrimage to important holy places and spent a good deal of his time at Chitrakuta, Ayodhya and Varanasi. He wrote his magnum opus, the Ramcharitmanas at Ayodhya.<sup>113</sup>

Besides Ramcharitmanas Tulsidas wrote many other works such as Jankimangal, Parvatimangal, Gutarali, Vinai Patrika, Satsai Kavitaivali, Hanuman Bahuk and Ramlala Nahachchu. "The Ramcharitmanas is a magnificent epic on Rama's life conceived as an incarnation of God".<sup>114</sup>

Tulsidas believed in the worship of Rama as an incarnation of God. "Bhagvad is the supreme and He is incarnate in Rama ; other God's are allowed their place but they do not complete with Rama. It is He alone and all others are His servants. He is beneficent as well as powerful and his very tender care for man. In Him men may find the complete satisfaction of all their needs. Hence it becomes a question of the first importance. How are men to know and be linked

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113. Ramcharitmanas - Gita Press, Gorakhpur, ed. V.S.2020, p.56.

114. A.L. Srivastava - Akbar the Great, Vol.III,pp.92- 3.

with him ? To this we have the answer in a single word  
Bhakti".<sup>115</sup>

Tulsidas says that Bhakti is the outgoing of the whole being to a personal and supreme God, the contemplation of whose, 'freedom from all limitation in Tulsidas begets seperation from ignorance and Sin Just as the contemplation of His holiness, bring about repertance concerning Sin, and meditation on whose goodness begets gratitude and a desire for nearness and vision prompts to whole hearted service".

Tulsidas believed in personal devotion to God (Rama) But his way of devotion or Bhakti was not to condemn his existing social order. He wanted to develop Bhakti without breaking the social order and as such women. He was a firm believer of Hindu culture and propagated for it. He provided firm footing to Hinduism by his way of devotion.

Tulsidas created an invironment of harmony. Tulsidas believed and said, "There is one God. It is Rama, creator of heaven and earth and redeemer of mankind, and God incarnated as Rama.

"To Tulsidas, "He is all gracious, compassionate and humble, All God and All Powerful".<sup>116</sup>

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115. Pandey - Saints of Northern India (From Ramananda to Ramtirth), p.111.

116. B.N. Luniya - Life and Culture in Medieval India, p.449.



According to Tulsidas Rama is the Supreme God and that though his grace man becomes holy and blessed. He should therefore be adored where he is, Sin is not and therefore for the purification of the mind, he should always be thought of and meditated on. The ways to God usually followed are he says, ineffecacious and such may be thrown into the fire.<sup>117</sup>

Tulsidas neither established any sect nor he set up any big temple, but he excercised tremendous influence on the masses through his immortal works.

It is a pity that a genius like Tulsidas was not introduced to Akbar, although he was in contact with some of the important officers of the Mughal court.<sup>118</sup> He died in Sanvat 1680 (1623 A.D.)<sup>119</sup> at the age of ninty one.

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117. R.G. Bhandarkar - Vaishnaviam, Savism, and other minor Religious system p.76.

118. Shyam Sunderdas - Goswami Tulsidas, p.310.

119. Bhaktmal

R.G. Bhandarkar - Vaishnaviam, Sgivism and other minor Religious System, p.75.

BHAKTI SAINTS OF NIRGUN SCHOOL

GURU NANAK (1469-1538)

Nanak was born at Rai Bho-ki Talwandi, now known as Nankana Sahib in Shaikhpura district about 65 km. west of Lahore on April 15 1469 A.D.<sup>120</sup> But the most accepted date of Nanak's birth is full moon day of Kartik month of Hindi Calender in 1469 A.D.<sup>121</sup> His fathers name was Kalyan Rai or Kalu and mother's Tripta. He belonged to the Bedi branch of Khatri. His father was a shopkeeper as well as the village Patwari or accountant of the local landlord, Rai Bular Bhatti a recently converted Musalman. Nanak learnt Airthmetic and accountancy in Lande Mahajani from his father reading and writing from a Brahmin and Persian and Arabic from a Mawli.

Being a Contemplative mind Nanak was happiest in the company of saints both Hindu and Musalman. He wanted to serve humanity as a devotee of God. Nanak's bent of mind did not appeal to his worldly minded father.

Nank was married to Sulakhani<sup>122</sup> daughter of Mulchand Chano Khatri of Pakhoke Randhawa near Batata in

120. Hari Ram Gupta - History of the Sikh Gurus, p.81.

R.P. Tripathi - Rise and fall of the Mughal Empire, p.350.

Vivek Bhattacharya - The Spirit of Indian Culture  
(Saints of India), p.209.

121. Tarachand Infl. of Islam on Indian Culture, p.166.

122. Ibid, p.168.

1487 A.D. "He had two sons Srichand born in 1491 and Lakshmidas was born in 1496".<sup>123</sup>

Married life did not change Nanak's life. His sister Nanaku was married at Sultanpur Lodi in 1475 then capital of the Jullundur Doab. She took Nanak there. His brother in law Jairam secured for Nanak's employment as a storekeeper at Deulat Khan Lodi's Provision Store in 1485 A.D. Nanak worked honestly and faithfully but his heart was in devotion to God. He spent all his extra time in singing the praises of God.

"Mardana, the Muslim minstrel of Talwandi and later Bhai Bala joined him and they commenced their wondering over many lands, interviewing saints."<sup>124</sup> Nanak visited all the holy places and towns of importance in India, Ceylone, Persia, and Arabia during four series of travels in the remaining forty years of his life.

It is said to have had long inter course with "Shaikh Sharef of Panipat, the Pirs of Multan Shaikh Brahm (Ibrahim) the successor of Baba Farid at Pakpattan and several others."<sup>125</sup>

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123. Tarachand Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.167.

124. Ibid, p.167.

125. Ibid, p.167.

Vivek Bhattacharya - The Spirit of Indian Culture (Saints of India), p.211.

Nanak did not believe in any particular religion either. According to him "There was only a change of body produced by a Supreme Miracle".<sup>126</sup>

The mission of Nanak was the unification<sup>127</sup> of the Hindu and Musalman. He realized that in order to heal the wounds of society it was essential to end the conflict of religions.

Nanak's message was "Na Koi Hindu Na Koi Musalman". All were human beings' sons and daughters of the same Supreme being. He therefore proclaimed the principle of universal brotherhood. Nanak's mission in life was to reconcile the two hostile communities. Nanak's thinking represented his vision of harmony, tolerance and cooperation for mankind. The general belief of Nanak was "Hindu is not Hindu, Musalman is not Musalman".<sup>128</sup> He regarded himself as the prophet of God, who had come from the divine court and "received from his door step the songs (a'itan), the chapters (surahs) and the traditions (hadith) of the Prophet".<sup>129</sup> He taught that there is "One God in the world and no other, and that Nanak the Caliph (or son) of God speaks the truth".<sup>130</sup>

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126. Macauliffe - The Sikh Religion, Vol.I, p.190.

127. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.168.

128. Hari Ram Gupta - History of the Sikh Gurus, p.70.

129. Khazin Singh - The History of Philosophy of Sikhism, Vol.II, p.350.

130. Ibid, p.350.

Nanak's religion was alone the limits of caste creed and country. He gave his love to all Hindus, Muslims, Indian's, and foreigners alike. His religion was peoples movement based on Secularism and Socialism a common brotherhood of all human beings. His teachings were purely in Panjabi languages mostly spoken by General People.

Nanak's God is the true Lord (Sat), the creator, unborn, self existent, immortal, omnipresent, unrivalled, transcendent, formless and omnipotent. He knows all and everything. He is wise genrous, beautiful and beautiful. He is father and mother of all human being and take care of them.

"He is inaccessible, unfathomable, altogether distinct from His creation".<sup>131</sup> At "His threshold millions of Muhammads, Brahmas, Vishnus, Mahesas, Ramas are lauding Him in millions of form".<sup>132</sup> Thus God could be seen through his creation, the creed of Nanak was not monotheism (belief in one God) but Pantheism (belief that God is all). Nanak proclaimed that God never appeared in human form. God was personal and merciful. He helped those who believed in him sincerely.

"Guru Nanak's God in His primal aspect is devoid of all attributes. He is absolute unconditional"<sup>133</sup> Thus basically

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131. Macauliffe - The Sikh Religion, Vol.I, p.363.

132. Khazan Singh - The History and Philosophy of Sikhism, Vol.II, p.393.

133. J.S. Grewal - Some of his key concept (Guru Nanak).

Nanak was a Bhakti saint of Nirguna school.

"Like the God of Ibn al Arabi, Guru Nanak's Gods creates but He also manifests Himself in an infinite number of forms".<sup>134</sup>

"God has called himself Basir (Seeing) in order that his seeing thee may at every moment be a deterrent (againstsin). God has called himself Sami (Hearing), in order that thou mayst close thy lips from foul speech. God has called himself 'Alim (Knowing) in order that thou mayst fear to mediate a wicked deed these are not proper names applicable to God".<sup>135</sup>

Guru Nanak accepted the Hindu doctrine of Karma and, transmigration. According to Guru Nanak salvation from transmigration can only be attained through good deeds and by the grace of personal absolute god. Guru Nanak denied the theory of incarnation.

Nanak says "pride anger, lust (Lobh) and attachment are great enemies".<sup>136</sup>

Nanak denounced idolatory and ritualism. Mahsin Fani says " He had no faith in idols and idol temples"<sup>137</sup>.

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134. S.A.A. Rizvi - A History of Sufism in India, Vol.1,pp.390-

135. R.A. Nicholson - The Mathnawi of Jalauddin Rumi IV, Cambridge 1939, p.284.

136. Adi Granth - Japji

137. Dabistan-i-Mazahib.

Nanak did not denounce the scriptures such as the Vedas and the Quran: Nanak was in favour of Pilgrimage of holy places. A visit to sacred shrine and meeting to the pious people did ennoble the mind. Nanak opposed the penances and fasts. He was opposed to the torture of the body to get salvation. Nanak believed in the importance of Guru to achieve God. In his system the precept,<sup>138</sup> occupies the same place and position as that of Kabir.

In Nanak's time Indian Society was based on caste and was divided into countless waterlight compartments. Men were considered high and low equality of human being was a dream. Nanak rebelled against the age old caste system and defied the Brahminical rituals. He was a great prophet with a vision of finding God in man. Nanak was totally against the caste system.

In short we can say that Nanak was a reformer like Kabir with more restraint and dignity of expression. He was utterly dissatisfied with social and political condition of the country. He condemned the mimicry, Hypocrisy, baseness and poltroonery of the people and developed the degeneration that has set in among his countrymen. The social aspect of religious thought is well reflected in his sayings. "He who

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138. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.176.

looks on all men as equal is religious," and abide pure amid the impurities of the world".

Nanak gave a practical shape to the ideas of the Bhakti movement by coming in close contact with masses. He took up long Journey throughout his pilgrimages he had been spreading the message of love and castelessness. He did not advocate idolatory either. The advent of Islam had infused new thoughts in Indian philosophy. The sufi had definitely contributed much in the new movement.



RAIDAS

Raidas was born in Benares to low caste parents who were chamar or worker of leather as mentioned by him later on.

" कहे रैदास रामानंद चरित "

His fathers name was Ragghu and mothers Ghurbinya<sup>139</sup>. He was a later disciple of Ramananda<sup>140</sup>. Probably after a quite few years of Kabir. He was devoted to saints and spent all the money which he was having. This act annoyed his father who asked him to leave the house. He left his fathers house along with his wife and lived in a small hut. His simple way of life and spiritual knowledge was appreciated by the people.

"It is said that a Rajput queen accepted him as her Guru".<sup>141</sup>

Raidas was basically a saint of Nirgun School like Kabir. His cardinal doctrines are very similar to that of Kabir. Raidas's aim was also to bring about the unity between Hinduism and Islam. "His hymns breathe a spirit of humility and self surrender. He did not indulge in high philosophic speculation about the nature and essence of God and His relation with the world and nature".<sup>142</sup>

Like Kabir he uses Rekhta, the Persian language and Sufi terms to show the identity of Hinduism and Islam.<sup>143</sup>

139. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.179.

Ramchandra Sukla - Hindi Sahitya Ka Itihas (Hindi), p.81.

140. M.P. Srivastava - Society and Culture in Medieval India, p.86.

141. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.179.

142. Ibid, p.179.

143. Ibid, p.179.

It suggests <sup>that he</sup> that he might have come in contact of Sufi saint who influenced his thought considerably.

Raidas believed in one personal God. According to him there is one supreme being who is the absolute Lord of all.

Raidas's Govinda was not Govinda or Lord Krishna of Vrindaband but Govind is immovable, formless, unborn, unique of fearless gait, unlimited beyond sight and reason, indivisible, unqualified extreme Joy".<sup>144</sup>

"Hari is in all and all is in Hari"<sup>145</sup> "Raidas looks upon the World as the play of God, and is inclined to the view that it is illusory".<sup>146</sup>

"One is many and many is one Hari, how am I to say that there is a school" and "He is one, and only two by illusion".<sup>147</sup>

But God is not identical with any of the incarnation" The Rama in whom the people recognise Him, they are in error about it. O brother"<sup>148</sup>

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144. Raidas Ki Bani, p.25.

145. Ibid, p.7.

146. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.180.

147. Raidas Ki Bani, pp.25-26.

148. Ibid, p.6.

He used the words Govinda, Hari, Madhav as synonyms of his Nirguna God. Like Kabir Raidas also laid emphasis on the importance of Guru to attain devotion and salvation was an opponent of caste system and said "my caste is low, my actions are low, and even my profession is low, yet the Lord has raised me high".<sup>149</sup>

Raidas was against the pilgrimages, fasts, shaving the heads and dancing in temples and was opposed to idol worship.

The teachings of Raidas resulted in removal of distinction between the higher and the lower castes or Hindus and Muslims or out castes in religious field. Both Hindus and Muslims were treated as equal by him. His teachings developed Hindu Muslim unity in the society and were able to remove old age hatred between the two creeds.

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149. Raidas Ki Bani, p.20.

DADU DAYAL (1544-1603)

Dadu Dayal was one of the prominent saint of the 16th century. "He was born in 1544 A.D. at Ahmadabad but he spent most of his life in Naraina and Bharaina in Rajasthan.<sup>150</sup> Dadu's father was Lodhi Ram a merchant of Ahmadabad. According to some accounts Dadu belonged to the Mochi<sup>151</sup> (tenor) caste. Thus there is controversy about his caste, some believes he was Gujrati, Brahman, other believed as Mochi".<sup>152</sup>

"According to Mohsin Fani Dadu was a cotton cleaner".<sup>153</sup>

Dadu left his home in quest of knowledge and travelled throughout northern India and visited many places of pilgrimage and became a devotee. He always enjoyed the company of learned, pious and devout persons. At the age of twenty five Dadu settled down at Sambhar, near the famous salt lake in Ajmer<sup>154</sup> Suba of then Mughal Empire.

Seven years after the arrival in Sambhar Dadu's a son was born to him. He had three sons and two daughters namely Hawwa (Eve) and Shabbo.

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150. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.182.

151. Sudhakar Dwivedi - Dadu Dayal Ki Bani, p.180.

152. Ram Chandra Sukla - Hindi Sahitya Ka Itihas (Hindi), p.85.

153. Dabistan-i-Nazahib.

154. W.G. Orr - A Sixteenth Century Indian Mystic, pp.27-28.

At Sambhar many people came to Dadu's living quarter and became his followers: Banwari Das<sup>155</sup> the reputed founder of Uttardha or Northern section of Dadu Panth, Haridas<sup>156</sup> came from Punjab, Muslim officer of State Buland Khan<sup>157</sup> also joined the ranks of Dadu's followers. The sayings and preachings of Dadu offended both Hindus and Muslims.

After a stay of ten years at Sambhar at the age of thirty five Dadu went to Amber, where due to his fame he received a warm welcome from the ruler Bhagwan das.

It is said that emperor Akbar was anxious to meet Dadu and sent many nobles to brought him as his palace. But Dadu replied "that he had no skill in the art of flattery, his trust was in God alone". However with great efforts of Raja Bhagwan Das, Dadu was Persuaded to meet the emperor,<sup>158</sup> and had an interview with emperor<sup>159</sup>. According to Ain-i-Akbari<sup>160</sup> Abul Fazi and Birbal met Dadu at the initial stage and reported to the emperor the greatness of the saint.

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155. W.G. Orr - A Sixteen Century Indian Mystic, p.30.

156. Ibid.

157. Ibid.

158. Ibid, p.40.

159. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.182.

160. Ain-i-Akbari.

"Abul Fazi and Birbal were much impressed and lost no time in reporting to the emperor that in Dadu they had found a real treasure a saint with whom it was a privilege to hold converse. <sup>Let</sup> Dadu was immediately sent for and escorted by Abul Fazi Birbal and Bhagwan Das was ushered into royal presence. After an exchange of greetings Akbar asked where he was now living".<sup>161</sup>

The emperor was deeply influenced by Dadu's teachings and requested him to come daily so that he may be benefitted by his discourses.

At the Raja's request Dadu visited the Zanna apartment and the ladies of harem were delighted to meet so eminent saint.

Dadu compiled an anthology of religious literature of different sects. He established the Parbrahma Sampradaya to unite different faiths in one bond of love. His followers are known as Dadu Panthis and after some time out of them arose another sect established by Kish. Dadu died at Naraina in 1603.<sup>162</sup>

Like all other eminent Bhakti saints Dadu also believed in one God. He insisted upon the unity of God and

161. W.G. Orr - A Sixteen Century Indian Mystic, p.32.

162. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.182.

Ram Chandra Sukla - Hindi Sahitya Ka Itihas (Hindi), p.85.

he regards him in his two fold aspect of transcendence and immanence. "To him He is one unchangeable, immortal, incomprehensible Being, He is brightness, effulgence, light, illumination, perfection He is with the heart of all beings".<sup>163</sup>

"I stay within me, I am the house for me, I am in the heavens (a'rah), I am my own support, I depend on myself, so says the merciful one, the creator,"<sup>164</sup> and "the whole of nature is His own form, for He is inside all"<sup>165</sup>

With all He is creator and Lord, who "by one word created all".<sup>165</sup>

As Niranjana (free from passion or free from strain) and as Nirguna (the Absolute the Unconditional) God alone knows no change or decay. He is the immutable the indestructible.

In short he had faith in one God and realised the unity of God under different names such as Ram, Krishna, Vishnu, Shiva, Allah etc. He denounced polytheism. He preached that true religion does not mean ritualism, but devotion to and love for one God. Both temple and mosque got equal reverence from him. He used to say that the sun, moon, space, the earth wind and water are all busy in serving him in every one without distinction and that they do not belong to any group or party.

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163. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.186.

164. Sudhakar Dwivedi - Dadu Dayal Ki Bani, p.59.

165. Ibid, p.81.

166. C.P. Tripathi - Dadu Dayal Ki Bani, p.276.

"Dadu manifests perhaps even greater knowledge of Sufism than his predecessors, perhaps because he was the disciple of Kamal who probably had greater learnings towards Islamic ways of thinking than others, perhaps because the Sufis of Western India Ahmedabad and Ajmer, wielded greater influence upon the mind of seekers after God, Hindu or muslim than those of the east. At any rate, the effect of their teachings was to make him a staunch supporter of Hindu-Muslim Unity".<sup>167</sup>

He repeats again and again the sentiment that "In all vessels, whether Hindu or Muslim there is one soul".<sup>168</sup>

"O Allah Rama, my illusion has passed away; there is no difference at all between Hindu and Musalman".<sup>169</sup>

Dadu's teachings cuts at the very root of the caste system, thus challenging by implication the religious assumption on which it nests. The operation of the law of Karma however, remains involving the migration of souls from onebody to another. "There are as many incarnation as the changes which came over the soul. This is the transmigration which the Almighty creator removes away".<sup>170</sup> Salvation is thus seen to lie in deliverance from the illusion of duality. Dadu did not believed in caste distinction and that was the reason why he had both the Hindus and the Muslim among his disples Dadu condemned the idol worship.

167. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.185.

168. C.P. Tripathi - Dadu Dayal Ki Bani, p.383.

169. Ibid, p.455.

170. Sudhakar Dwivedi - Dadu Dayal Ki Bani v p.160.



Dadu was one of the most influential Bhakti saints of his time. He was saint as well as reformer, who influenced all sections of the society but his main impact was on the lower strata of the society.

SUNDARDAS (1596-1689)

Sundardas was born in 1596 A.D. at Deosa near Jaipur.<sup>171</sup> He belonged to Bania family. Once saint Dadu Dayal visited Deosa at that time sundardas was six years old since then Sunderdas became Dadu's disciple.

"Since then the Child became known as Sundar (handsome)<sup>172</sup> Sundardas lived with the preceptor Dadu at Narsina. He soon became known for his outstanding genius as a saint.

After the death of his preceptor in 1603 A.D. Sundardas came back to his home. Sundardas remained at his village for a shorter period and then went to Benaras where he throughly studied religious scriptures till the age of thirty. He left Benaras and came back at Dausa.

At Deosa, Sundardas was joined by his two disciples pragdas and Rajjab,<sup>173</sup> to spread the religion of Bhakti. Sundardas settled at Fatehpur Shekhavati. The Chieftain of Fatehpur Nawab Alifkhan<sup>174</sup> and his two sons Daulat Khan and Tabir were admirers of Sundardas. Sundardas travelled widely and almost all areas of India were covered especially the regions of Rajputana Gujrat and Panjab.<sup>175</sup>

171. Ramchandra Sukla - Hindi Sahitya Ka Itihas (Hindi), p.87.  
Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.190.

172. Ibid.

173. Ibid.

174. Ramchandra Sukla - Hindi Sahitya Ka Itihas (Hindi), p.87.

175. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.190.

At the age of ninety three years he expired in 1689 A.D.<sup>176</sup>

Sundardas was a very good scholar of Sanskrit and he learned Persian and other languages. His main work is Sundarvilasa<sup>177</sup>.

Like his perceptor Dadu the main mission of Sundardas's was to unite Hindus and Muslims. He insisted upon the unity of God, and believed in one Supreme being. He is one, unchangeable, immortal. He is brightness, effulgence, light, illumination, perfection, He is within the heart of all being.

Sundardas was a man of culture. He was a very good poet. However, he was unable to express his spiritual experience clearly. He did not condemn the existing social order as he was a firm believer of not to injure one's feelings. Though he was a bachelor but praised the virtuous wives. Similarly warriors were also praised by him.

He strengthened unity between Hindus and Muslims through his deeds and sayings.

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176. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.190.

177. Ibid.

PRAN NATH

Pran Nath was Shakti saint of the latter part of the 17th century. Pran Nath was a Kahatriya by caste and founder of the sect Dharnig in the reign of Aurengzeb. "He acquired great influence over Chhatrasal Raja of Panna by the discovery of a diamond mine it is said."<sup>178</sup>

Pran Nath was well acquainted with the sacred books of Islam. The mission of Pran Nath was to unite the two religions through his teachings. His aim in life was to reconcile the two hostile communities Pran Nath's thinking represented his vision of communal harmony, sympathy, cooperation and tolerance. He says there is no Hindu and no Musalman all are creations of the same on almighty. Pran Nath was totally against the caste system. "His creed proclaims the abolition of the worship of idols, and caste restrictions as well as the supremacy of the Brahmins".<sup>179</sup>

He equally denounced idolatry of Hindus and ritualism of Islam. In his Kulsum Sarup a work in the Gujrati language, he brought together texts from the Quran and the Vedas and showed that they are not incompatible".<sup>180</sup> As a test of a disciple's assest to the real identity of the Hindu and Musalman creeds, the ceremony of initiation consisted in

178. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.198.

179. Ibid,p.199.

180. Ibid,

common dining at the gathering Pran Nath wrote fourteen treatises all in verses some extracts from his Qiyamat name are given:

"Go to the followers (Ummat) and tell them,  
rise the faithful ones, for the day of  
resurrection has come.

I tell you in accordance with what the Quran says,  
and I relate before you the story.

He who is a special leader of the following should  
stand careful.

All of you, whether Hindus or Muslims, will have a  
common faith".

Pran Nath was liberal and made no distinction between Hindus and Muslims. He said both Hindus and Muslims are equal. He tried to brought them equal.

"There was strife in the two worlds, and the path of action (Karma kanda) and of law (Shari'at) prevailed, he made known to all the path of reality (haqiqat) and gnosis (marifat). He cleared away the clouds from the sky, illumined the universe with the sun of light, and united the people of the world. The whole creation calls upon Khuda, makes its statement to Him and accepts His command."<sup>181</sup>

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181. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, pp.199-201

"All worship the word (surat) of the Lord, or the Kalam (word) of Allah".<sup>182</sup>

Prannath's philosophy was under great impact of sufi philosophy . The teachings of Prannath had great impact on the contemporary society, influencing of both Hindus & Muslims.

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182. Growse - Mathura, Aajawat Namah, p.61.

JAGJIVANDAS

Jagjivandas was born at Sardalia in the Barabanki district of Uttar Pradesh in 1682 A.D.<sup>183</sup> He was Chandel Thakur by caste. He belonged to the Nirgun School of Kabir. He spent almost his most <sup>of his</sup> life at Katwa between Barabanki and Lucknow. Jagjivan Das spread his teachings all over India through his disciples. He had number of disciples hailing from all castes i.e. Thakur, Chamar, Brahmin and Muslim. His teachings were collected in his three principal works - Janan Pragas, Mahapralaya and Pratham Granth.<sup>184</sup> "He succeeded in establishing some community of thought between Himself and Islam. Atleast two of his disciples were Musalman".<sup>185</sup>

Jagjivan das had re-organised the older Satnami sect which had been crushed by Aurangzeb's.

He preached the doctrine of the unity of God. His God was beyond qualities (nirguna). "He laid great stress upon self surrender and indifference towards the world".<sup>186</sup> Jagjivandas said that All human beings, are son and daughter of the supreme being. "Thus propagated the principle of universal brotherhood. "He held that the goal of human

183. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.200.

184. Ibid.

185. Grierson - Satnamis, E.R.E., Vol.XI, p.60.

186. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.200.

endeavours was absorption in God through the help of a spiritual guide (guru).<sup>187</sup> Truth, gentleness and harmlessness were main virtues in his eyes, for attainment of Bhakti.

Jagjivandas did not believe in fasts renunciation of worldly life (sanyas). He was against all types of tortures to one's body to attain salvation.

In the following hymns he preached the inwardness of religion.

"Oh what avail is the wearing of rosary or putting  
on of the mark on the forehead, of what avail is  
the abandonment of food and fasting,  
or feeding on milk alone."<sup>188</sup>

Jagjivandas's thinking represented his vision of harmony, tolerance and cooperation for mankind. He told how to meditate on God.

"Give up all thinking (fikr), and become absorbed in meditation (Zikr).

Make the Parrot of attention (Sruti) sit in the sky, and repeat the name of Hari and thus teach him.

The Lord (sain) is one, known Him as one,  
Never allow your mind to have any doubts

Says Jagjivandas, see there the word (Sruti)

Fold the two hands together and adore the Lord".<sup>189</sup>

187. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.200.

188. Jagjivan Sahib Ki Sabdavali, p.38.

189. Ibid, p.49.



Jagjivan das proclaimed the principal of Universal brotherhood. He says all the human beings <sup>are</sup> one equal in this world. The mission of Jagjivan was to unite in Muslims and Non-muslims. He says -

"O Sadhu, the one light shines in all, think it over in your mind, there is no second. The blood and the body are the same, there is no Brahman or Sadhu, Some are called men and some women, the invisible (ghaib) Purus (male) is in all".<sup>190</sup>

Jagjivan Das seems to be much influenced by Sufi philosophy as he used sufis terminology in his preachings & discourses. His teachings brought tremendous effect on Hindu & Muslim unity.

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190. Jagjivan Sahib Ki Sabdavalī, p.108.

**B. Sufism in India During Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries:**

As Sufism began in India during the 12th century A.D., which continued, flourished and patronized by Delhi Sultans reached at its Zenith in the 16th century. During 16th and 17th centuries a good number of Sufi saints preached and practiced sufism in different regions of India. Some of the famous saints of this period were Shaikh Mohd. Ghaus<sup>191</sup>, Sarmad, Shaikh Salim Chishti<sup>192</sup>, Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi<sup>193</sup>, Khwaja Baqi Billah, Shah Burhan<sup>194</sup>, Shaikh Nizamuddin of Ambethi<sup>195</sup>, Shaikh Daud<sup>196</sup>, Shaikh Salim, Shaikh Khwaja Abdus-Shahid<sup>197</sup> Shaikh Taha and mian Waji-ud-din Gujrati<sup>198</sup> etc.

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191. Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Nizamuddin Ahmad II, Vol.II, Trans. by B. De, p.701, Ain-i-Akbari, Trans. Blochman, Vol.I, p.609.
192. Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Trans. by Rogers, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, p.702, Munta-khab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol.III, Ain.Vol.I, p.601.
193. Tuzuk.
194. Ain-i-Akbari, Vol.1, Trans. by Blochman, p.610.
195. Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol.II, p.700.
196. Ain-i-Akbari, Vol.1, p.709, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol.II, p.702.
197. Ain-i-Akbari, Vol.1, p.607, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol.II, p.700.
198. Ain-i-Akbari, p.607, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol.II, p.700.

SHAIKH ABDUL QUDDUS GANGOHI (1456-1543)

Shaikh Abdul Quddus was born in 1456 A.D. in Rudauli (Barabanki distt.). His father's name was Shaikh Ismail. It is said that Shaikh Ahmad Abdul Quddus Haq predicated that Shaikh Ismail's son would be great sufi of his time.

"Shaikh Abdul Quddus asserted himself to be a descendant of Abu Hanifah. He was the disciple of Shaikh Mohamad-b-Shaikh Aarif-b-Shaykh Ahmad Abdul Haqq. He acquired secular and spiritual learning and became eminent in theology. Many of his mystical saying are recorded. Once emperor Humayun also visited him.<sup>199</sup>

Among the successors of Shah-i-Madar in India 'Abdul-Quddus of Gangoh was very famous'.<sup>200</sup>

Different anecdotes regarding his trance of ecstasy are mentioned, which occurred to him since his childhood. When he attained youth he was married and lead married life happily and several sons and daughters were born to him.<sup>201</sup>

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199. Ain-i-Akbari, Trans.H.S. Jarref, Vol.III, p.417.

200. Md. Enamul Haq - The Sufi Movement in India, Indian Culture, Vol.1, No.3 (1935), p.341.

201. F. Mujeeb - The Indian Muslims, pp.296-97.

In c.1491 Shaikh Abdul Quddus migrated to Shahabad in Ambala near Delhi on 5 Jumada I, 897/5 March 1492 his son Shaikh Ruknuddin was born to him who is the author of the Lata-if-i-Quddusi, and prepared commentary of Rushadnama. The reason for the migration of the Shaikh to Shahabad was emotional, as Sultan Sikandar invited him to settle in his pargana at Shahabad. After setting in Shahabad, Shaikh Abdul-Quddus visited Ajodhan and Multan".<sup>202</sup> Shaikh Abdul Quddus reached Gangah from Delhi. It is said that he also met Babar. "Abdul Quddus also met Guru Nanak."<sup>203</sup>

Due to Babar's invasion and unsettled conditions lot of families from Punjab moved to safer areas and amongst the emigrants was the Shaikh who settled at Gangah in Saharanpur district of U.P. when Babar marched to Panipat where the Mughal army was opposed by Ibrahim Lodi's forces, Shaikh Abdul Quddus and his family accompanied the rear of the Lodi army for safety. The Shaikh told his disciples and family to flee to the eastern districts. Only the Shaikh his son and a Sayyid servants remained at Panipat on 20 April 1526 the three were captured and taken to Delhi. Where they were released by Babur, After his release Shaikh came back

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202. S.A.A. Rizvi - A History of Sufism in India, Vol.I, p.345.

203. Shailesh Zaidi and Rizvi - Alakhbani, p.78.

to Gangah<sup>204</sup> and lived there till his death where he was buried.

He has written two most important works, the Anwarul-Uyun and Rush-Nama at Rudauli. According to the Shaikh the relationship between God and man is that of master and servant. According to him God is eternal (Qadim). He believed that God is hidden in everything of the universe and everything of the universe is hidden in God.

"He was pained at the distinction of Muslim and Kafir when all existence is one and all existence in God".<sup>205</sup>

He believed in immanence in unity of existence, though he regarded it as a mystery not to be revealed to all and sundry.

He yearned for total absorption in God, and is reported to have said, "The Prophet went as near to God as two bow lengths and came back".<sup>206</sup>

Shaikh Abdul Quddus used the word Alakh Niranjān in the sense of Supreme creator or incomprehensible or unseeable one. He says that his Lord is unseeable (Alakh Niranjān). In other verses the Shaikh identifies Niranjān with Khuda and calls him the creator of the different world.

204. Gangoh is a town in Saharanpur dist. U.P. It consists of an old and new quarter the former founded by legendary hero Raja Gang and the latter by Shaykh Abdul Quddus who gives his title to the western suburb where his tomb still stands among other sacred shrines.

205. M. Majeed - The Indian Muslims, p.296.

206. Ibid.

Shaikh also laid great importance to ONKAR.

"The highest degree of perfection is extremely difficult to achieve but Shaikh Abdul Quddus except sufis to absorb themselves in onkar through Zikr. To Him onkar is the Absolute oneness is interchangeable with Niranjana and indicates the State of Sunyata".<sup>207</sup>

लखियाँ ऐतना रज्जु अकार, कौंसु न विरता रज्जु विपार ।  
धूम तयै एहि लखी रज्जु जो लखी विरिषय न पूत ॥

The term Sabad used by Shaikh Abdul Quddus identifies mystic contemplation with Shakti as well shiva and their Union as the course of the existance of the three worlds. In other words the Union of Shakti. The sun and Shiva the moon according to the Shaikh is the Salat-i-Makus of the Sufis.<sup>208</sup>

In fact Ahmad (Muhammad) and Ahad (one or God) were the same and every on in the world was misguided because of a failure to understand the true significance of the intervening mim in the words Ahmad and Ahad.

Shaikh Abdul Quddus finds the teachings of the Nath identical to wahadat-al-wajud.

207. S.A.A. Rizvi - A History of Sufiam in India, Vol.I,p.337.

208. Ibid.

According to Shaikh Abdul Quddus the only relation that is possible between God and man is the relation of Ishq or love.

The mission of Abdul Quddus was the unification of Hindu and the Mussalman. In another words we can say that his object was to bring about compromise between Hinduism and Islam and to foster <sup>friendly</sup> friendly relation between two communities. He adopted a sympathetic attitude towards the Hindus. Many Hindus came into close contact with the Shaikh.

He always criticised the caste and social distinction. He said everybody are equal in the eyes of God. He believed in universal brotherhood.

Shaikh Abdul Quddus also believe in the Divine revelation.

Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gangohi had popularized the prestige of Chishti Sabiri order in a very short period through his teachings with remarkable success.

SHAIKH SALIM CHISHTI (1479-1571 A.D.)

Shaikh Salim Chishti<sup>209</sup> was one of the greatest saint of India. Shaikh Salim was one of the (great) shaikhs of the age, was distinguished for religious exercises and enthusiasms and had sublime habits of working miracles and having revelations. He performed twenty four pilgrimages to the Haj and when again performing the pilgrimages remained once in Mecca for fifteen years. His majesty the Khalifa-i-Illahi made the city of Fatehpur his capital for some years on account of its connection with that saintly man".<sup>210</sup>

Shaikh Salim was the son of Shaikh Bahauddin and a descendant of Shaikh Farid Gang-i-Shakar.<sup>211</sup> The family originally belonged to Delhi where Shaikh Salim was born in 1479 A.D. He travelled twice by land and sea from India to the two most holy places of pilgrimage, there to perform the duties of pilgrimage. "He set forth on his travels journeying to Asia minor, Beghdad, Syria, Najaf (that holy spot) and the other countries of the Western region spending the whole year in travelling, returning to the glorious

209. He was a descendant of Shykh Farid-i-Shakarganj and lived in Fatehpur Sikri highly honoured by Akbar, Bahangir was called after him Salim. He died in 979.

Ain-i-Akbari Tr. by Blochmann Vol.I, p.610.

Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri Tr. by Rogers, p.2.

Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Tr. by B.De, Vol.II, p.356.

Akbarnama Tr. by Beveridge Vol.II, p.503.

210. Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol.II, p.701.

Akbarnama- Vol.II, pp.343-344.

211. Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol.II, p.12, Maasir-ul-Umra, Vol.II, p.554.



city of Makkah at the time of the pilgrimage and then again setting out on his travels. He was a regular pilgrim to Mecca and performed the pilgrimage twenty two times, fourteen times during his first period of Absence from India and eight times during his second period of absence.<sup>212</sup>

Shaikh Yakub of Kashmir who accompanied Shaikh Salim gave the date of his latter visit to Makkah in the following couplet.

Thanks to be God, of whose mere bountry,  
The holy region became our halting place  
if any one ask the date of this even  
We answer him, "We entered the holy".<sup>213</sup>

After returning to India he settled at Sikri about 30 Kms from Agra. While he was in Sikri he was visited by emperor Akbar who held him in high respects. Akbar sent his expectant wife to Sikri, so that newly born might get the blessings of the saint.

Shaikh Salim Chishtī was highly honoured by Akbar when the emperor desired a son he had recourse by the advice

212. Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol.3, p.19.

213. Ibid. The method of the Sufis, they are the elect those of whom more especially reveals himself, drawing the, to him self with mysterious bonds and inflaming their heart with an ardent love for him.

of his courtiers to Shaikh Salim who assured him that his prayer would be answered, Akbar Promised to place the son, when he should be born, under the tutorship of Shaikh Salim and the Shaikh stipulated that he should be named after him. This was agreed too. When Akbar's wife a princess of Amber house, became pregnant, she was sent at the time of her confinement to Shaikh Salim house where she gave birth to a son, who was named Sultan Salim. The birth of Salim, future Jahangir under these circumstances caused Akbar to believe the place was particularly fortunate one for him and led to the founding of the new capital town of Fatehpur Sikri.<sup>214</sup>

Out of respect to Shaikh, Akbar used to call his son Shaikhu Baba. Jahangir mentions that after my birth they gave me the name of Sultan Salim, but I never heard my father whether in his cups or in his Sober movements called me Mohd. Salim or Sultan Salim but always Shaikhu Baba.<sup>215</sup>

Shaikh died in 979 A.D. (1571-72 A.D.)<sup>216</sup> at Sikri where he was buried.

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214. Ain-i-Akbari, Vol.1, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol.1, p.1. Badsoni text, II, pp.108-9.

215. Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, p.2.

216. Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol.3, p.27.

Shaikh Salim Chishti had a large number of disciples. The most important among them were Shaikh Kamal of Alwar, Shaikh Piraya of Bengal, Shaikh Fathu-ullah Farin of Sambhal, Shaikh Ruknu-d-din of Ajudhan and Shaikh Hussain the Khadim. They all were man of learning. They had a great regard of Shaikh Salim. His majesty the Khalifa-i-illahi had a high opinion for the Shaikh and he visited to his Khangah on several occasions to see him and had also stayed in his house for several days.<sup>217</sup>

Shaikh Salim Chishti was very generous, and believed in universal brotherhood and equality. He says there should be no <sup>distinction</sup> destination between Hinduism and Islam and propagated for fostering <sup>friendly</sup> relation between the two communities. He gave more importance to religious and spiritual guide. He says through him everybody came to know about the world. Shaikh Salim Chishti adopted many Hindu customs, and ceremonials for the development of his silsila. Such as the practice of bowing before the Shaikh, the Shaikh presenting water to the visitors, audition parties (Sams) and Chillah-i-Makus (the inverted Chillah).

In the country Shaikh Salim Chishti was known as Shaikhu-l-Hind or the holy man of India. He reached the age of ninety five and travelled always in the path of holy

217. Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol.II, p.356.

law delivered by the Prophet (may God bless and save him) always observing the most severe austerities and the most austere discipline to a degree which can have been attained by but few of this holy man of this age. He observed as a religious duty the ceremonial purification and bathing before each of the five daily recitals of Prayer, nor did he omit this duty before the weekly public prayer.<sup>218</sup>

Shaikh Khangah was always open to all sects of people irrespective of caste and creed.

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218. Muntakhab-i-Tawarikh, Vol.3, pp.18-20.

SHAIKH MUHAMMAD GHAUS (1485-1563)

Shaikh Mohammad Ghaus <sup>219</sup> of Gwalior was tenth in succession from 'Abdal-Qadir the famous saint of Shattari silsilah, who introduced this order into India. He was born in Aleppo in 1485. According to Ain-i-Akbari Shaikh Mohammad Ghaus brother of Shaikh Bahlul, he knew the prayer by invocation of the names of God. In the Garb of a Shaikh he had great rank and splendour. His majesty the Khalifa-i-Illahi had a very high opinion of him and he once gave him a sum of one Karor".<sup>220</sup>

Shaikh Mohammad Ghaus spent thirteen year's meditating in the hills near Benaras under severaly austere condition he emerged to spend the remainder of his life teaching to most eclectic variety of sufism.

Shaikh Muhammad Gauth has given a sketch of his early life in the Jawahir-i-Khamsah a book which he wrote at the age of twenty two. He was a little over seven year old when it was intimated to him in a dream that he would attain his end under the guidance of Haji Hamid Husur (Shattari)

219. Ain-i-Akbari, Tr. by Blochman, Vol.I, p.610.

220. Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Tr. by E.De, Vol.II, p.701.

who took him in his charge at Gwalior. After giving him his elder brother Bahlol instruction from two years, Haji Hamid Husur proceeded towards Bihar. He left Shaikh Muhammad Ghawth (Ghaus) in the hills of Chunar to perform austerities on his own and Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus remained engaged in these for thirteen years at the end of which he wrote the Jawahir-i-Khamsah and presented to his teacher when he returned from Bihar. This was in 1523 and in the same years Haji Hamid Husur died. Apparently Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus's personality and methods of teachings were very attractive and he soon acquired great influence. He studied Sanskrit and wrote a book, Kalid-i-Makhasin combining Sufi doctrine with astrological theories and another Bahrat Hayat on the method of self discipline and breath control as practised by yogis. "The emperor Humayun had great reverence for him".<sup>221</sup>

Shaikh Mohammad Ghaus established famous centres of Shattari teachings in Gujrat at Ahmedabad and Broach. Shaikh had many disciples and followers. The most important among his followers in Gujrat was Shah Wajih-al-Din Alawi (d.1589) of Ahmedabad is remembered for having been a distinguished scholar and author of some three hundred tracts

221. K.A. Nizami - The Shattari Saints (Med. India Quarterly) 1950, Vol.1, No.2, p.68.

and the founder of a great madarsa in Ahmadabad<sup>222</sup>.

In early years of Akbar's reign Shaikh came to Agra where he renewed his association with Mughal Court and also became the spiritual guide of Tansen.<sup>223</sup>

At Agra Shaikh was honoured with imperial favours but due to some ill feeling between him and Shaikh Gadai, he left Agra and went to Gwalior. He remained at Gwalior till his death and engaged in the performance of the duties of a Shaikh His majesty the Khalifa-i-illahi granted a stipend of one kr<sup>to</sup>or en him".<sup>224</sup>

"On 3 Ardibihisht, Divine month of the 8th year corresponding to Monday, 17th Ramzan, 970, 10th May year 1563, he went to the abode of annihilation".<sup>225</sup> He was buried in Gwaliyar.

Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus believe in God, the real (al Haqq) and the loving (Wahid). Shaikh Muhammad sometimes addressed God as his lord, and himself as His servant.

According to Muhammad Ghaus God is only real being. He only exists and exists for ever. In this sense He is the

222. Malfugat-i-Shah Waifib-al-Din Guirati, Comp. uncertain Persian MS (Hyderabad Asafiyah Library, Tasawwuf, No.5471, p.3.

223. K.A. Nizami, D.I.O.N. The Shattari Saints, p.68.

224. Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Tr. by B.De, Vol.III, pp.234-35.  
Muntakhabu-t-Tawarikh, Er. by Sir Wolsely Haiq, Vol.III, p.10.

225. Akbarnama Tr. by H. Beveridge, Vol.II, p.135.

eternal (qadim). The idea that God inhense in everything of the universe and everything of the universe inhense in God is found in the teaching of Muhammad Ghaus. In this sense, all is He (hamaust) and all is from him (Hamazust). "According to the Muhammad Ghaus the only relation that is possible between God an man is the relation of "Ishq or love"<sup>226</sup>

Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus said that man is the infinite in the finite form in other words he is a god in the form of a man. Like God he is eternal and everlasting and his outwards shape is temporary and perishable (Fani).

"He was one with God and gain he will be one with him."<sup>227</sup>

Thus the present existance of man is the only cause of his seperation with God.

The five principles of Muhammad Ghaus are beli f in God, the great unseen in Divine revelation and in the life to come.

"Prayer to God is the essence of man's duties towards God. Prayer is an outpouring of the hearts sentiments a devout supplication to God and a reverential expression of the souls sincerest desire before its maker.

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226. Dr. E. Haq - Sufi movement in India (Indé Iranica)  
Vol.III, No.3, (1949), p.13.

227. Ibid.



Fasting was approved by him for the purpose of purification of the soul.<sup>228</sup>

Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus did not believe in the caste distinction. He said all men are equal. He always preached the gospel of unity and friendliness. He said that Hinduism and Islam were two different ways leading to the same destination.

"He had intimate relation with Hindus. He would stand up to welcome every Hindu visitors".<sup>229</sup>

The Shaikh was respected by the Hindus and the Muslims alike. He was a keen student of Hindu religious thought and was superbly tolerant and catholic view. His system of living and practising removed hatred between Hindus and Muslims. Which may be called his main contribution to Indian Society.

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228. Sirdar Iqbal Ali Shah - Islamic Sufism, pp.62-63.

229. K.A. Nizami - Shattari Saints and their attitude towards the State (Medieval India Quarterly), Vol.I, No.2, 1950, p.58.

SHAIKH NIZAMU-D-DIN OF AMBETHI  
d. 1571

Shaikh Nizamuddin was the saint of Chishti order who avoided courts and courtiers, omitted all praise of all king in the Khutbah read on Fridays at the mosque near his khangah.

"Shaikh Nizam-ud-din Amethiwal was possessed of personal and spiritual perfections and held high rank in religious exercises and devotion.<sup>230</sup>

Ambethi is the chief village of the Pargana in the district of Lakhanav.

Shaikh Nizam was disciple and pupil of Shaikh Maruf-i-Chishti. He followed the ordinary rule of life (of an orthodox muslim) but was at the same time drawn towards God in a mysterious manners.<sup>231</sup> Although he was at first one of the students of remunerative branch of knowledge his exalted disposition yet led him to turn much the things of the next world. His eyes were ever fixed on the page and his heart fixed on God, nor was he neglected of the service of Zikr and the employment of the Soul (in God's service).<sup>232</sup>

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230. Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol.II, p.701.

231. Muntakhabu-t-Tawarikh, Vol.3, pp.27-28.

232. Muntakhabu-t-Tawarikh, Vol.3, p.29.

In short time he obtained from his spiritual guide permission to impart religious instruction going nowhere except to the principle masjid of the living God (in that place) and sometimes to Khairabad to walk round the illustrious tomb of the venerable Shaikh <sup>233</sup> (may his tomb be sanctified).

The Shaikh Nizamuddin in the early days of his student life had first been attracted to God in the hospice of the Oasis father.

"He made the books "Ihyau-l-Ulum" "Awarif" "Risala-yi-Makkiyya" "Adabu-l-Muridan" and other books on the same sort the pivot on which his doctrine and practice turned both in his religious duties and in the daily business of life. He always first recited the midway prayers with the congregation on Friday and afterwards recited the regular Friday prayers In the Khutbah he altogether omitted the praises of Kings. <sup>234</sup>

The Shaikh was having high opinion and a great respect about god. He would after say

"There was a servant of God whom I used sometimes to teach the words of God and he used to understand it.

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233. Muntakhabu-t-Tawarikh, Vol.3, p.30.

234. Ibid, p.32.

Badaoni mentions in Muntakhabu-t-Tawarikh that once he met the Shaikh. He says, "I observed that Shaikh at the beginning of the interview addressed to everybody a few words appropriate to his condition contenting himself with saying "Praise be to God" with the utterance of prayers or restricting himself to such remark as "Glory be to God", there is no God but God", we seek protection of God", In the name of God, "or to the recitation of a verse from glorious word (of God) or from the hadith or from the Saying of noted saint".<sup>235</sup>

He generally observed the continued fast and spent his time in reading the glorious Quran in reciting God's praise, the exorcism and in works of Supererogation, so that not one hour of his precious life was wasted or was passed in idleness as mine has been".<sup>236</sup>

Shaikh Nizamuddin believed in adherence to the Shariah not only inwardly but also outwardly and sometimes said his Friday Prayers with his shoes on because the prophet is related to have done so, when he met a person he said something appropriate to the occasion, most of the time he was repeating the durud or verses in praise of God.<sup>237</sup>

235. Muntakhabu-t-Tawarikh, Vol.3, p.37.

236. Ibid, p.41.

237. M. Mujeeb - The Indian Muslims, pp.306-7.

The Akhbar-al-Akhyar gives Shaikh Nizamuddin view on some matters which indicate his attitude somewhat and more precisely. He was opposed to Sama and discouraged his murids to attend such gatherings. The main impact of Shaikh's teachings was on Muslims because he was a firm believer of Shariah.

KHWAJA BAQI BILLAH (1563-1603 A.D.)

The eminent Sufi saint of Naqshbandi Silsila was Khwaja Baqi Billah. Through him Naqshbandi Silsila gained more popularity. This silsila was introduced in India by Khwaja Baqi Billah (1563-1603).

"The real founder of this order was Bahauddin or the Painter who was native of Turkistan".<sup>238</sup>

Khwaja Baqi Billah was born in about 971 A.H. (1563-64) at Kabul.<sup>239</sup> Qazi Abdus Salam Khawaja Samarqandi Quraishi was this father. He was an Alim and a prominent Sufi.

"Khwaja Baqi Billah was educated and brought up in Kabul and Samarqand where he came in contact with Naqshbandi school of thought and admitted himself to that school. Being imbued with the teachings of that school of sufi thought, he returned to India and preached his new idea in this country, though he was not very successful in his mission. He settled in Delhi".<sup>240</sup>

Khwaja Baqi Billah was devoted to pious life from his very childhood. He spent most of his time in meditation.

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238. Md. Enamul Haq - The Sufi Movement in India, Indian Culture Vol.I (1935), No.3, p.341.

239. Ibid - Says that he was born in Delhi.

240. Ibid, p.342.

He started his early education under Maulana Sadiq Halwai. He was an eminent scholar of Samarqand, who was leaving in Kabul.

He always used to visit Sufis and Darvishes and did practise devotional exercise. Khwaja Baqi Billah Berang was more fanatic about his mission.

He once went to Kashmir and there he met Shaikh Baba Wali who influenced him. Here in Kashmir he spread the teachings of Naqshbandi order. After the death of Samarqand, where he became disciple of Maulana Khawajgi.

Khawaja Baqi Billah claimed to have depended directly on the teachings of Khwaja obaidullah Ahrar and Khwaja Bahauddin Naqshbandi.

His preceptor ordered him to leave for India again and to preach the principles of the Naqshbandi order there. On reaching India he stayed in Lahore for some time and then proceeded to Delhi where he took up his residence in Firuzi fort and settled there and died there on Saturday the 25th Jamada II 1012<sup>241</sup>/30 Nov. 1603 A.D.

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241. S.A.A. Rizvi - Muslim Revivalist Movement in Northern India in the 16th and 17th century.

Khwaja Baqi Billah spent most of his time in Zikr meditation and contemplation.

Like most of the Sufis of the Naqshbandi silsilah he gave more emphasis on Shariat. He has said, "One of the following things helps the Sufisi in guiding and educating the people divine inspiration, divine ordinance or compassion for the people". Through his teaching Khwaja Baqi Billah stressed that people should persuade to look after the protection and furtherance of Shariat. To the dissemination of the knowledge of Fiqh and Hadis.

Khwaja Baqi Billah Berang said that there is only one Supreme being who is Almighty.

He believe in God the real (al Haqq) and the Wadud to them. The relation between God and man is that of master and servant. He sometimes addressed God as his Lord and Styled himself as his servant.

According to him "A devotee should consider the right type of faith and fulfilment of the obligation to the Shariat and constant attention towards the Almighty as the greatest of all the blessing on this earth for no mystic grace and ecstasy can complete with these".<sup>242</sup>

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242. S.A.A. Rizvi - Muslim Revivalist Movement in Northern India in the 16th and 17th century.



He differentiated between Walayat and Wilayat.

"Walayat" he said is that nearness to the Almighty which a devotee acquires while Wilayat is that perfection which is a cause of popularity amongst people. People are impressed only by that. This is related to Takwin (genesis). Miracles and Supernatural powers belonged to Wilayat. The Naqshbandi saints possessed more of the Walayat than Wilayat.

He stresses his point of view with the controversy of Wahadat-i-Shuhud as held by Shaikh Ala-ud-Daula Simnani. Like all other eminent saints he also believed that the criticism of Shaikh Ala-ud-Daula were superficial and so he supported the point of view of Ibn-al-Arabi.

Khwaja Baqi Billah was very kind and highly forbearing. Once during a famine in Lahore he did not take food for many days because people were starving. He had distributed his food to the needy and pious. His doors would always remain open for the poor and the indigents.

It is said that he was having close relation with emperor Akbar. Emperor was very much influenced by his teachings.

Due to his influence the Ahrari discipline of Naqshabandi order became very popular.

"The main reason for his astounding success lay in the popularity which this branch of Naqshbandi order had already gained under the Mughal emperor and in his own life of poverty, resignation and human approach to the problems of the Muslims.<sup>243</sup>

Khwaja Baqi Billah gained more popularity and influenced the mass through his teachings. However, his teachings were accepted by Muslim masses and non-muslims remained outside his sphere of influence as his teachings were basically based on Shariat.

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243. S.A.A. Rizvi - Muslim Revivalist movement in Northern India in the 16th and 18th century.

SHAIKH AHMAD SIRHINDI (1563-1624 A.D.)

Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi is well known<sup>244</sup> saint of Naqshbanda order. He was born in Sirhind in Patiala on Fariday the fourteen day of Shawwal 971 A.H. (1563 A.D.). His family was known for spiritual greatness and he was a descendant of Umara-al-Khattab the second Khalif of Islam. Shaikh Ahmad was proud of his descent.<sup>244</sup> His fathers name was Abdul Ahad. He was a devout saint and an eminent mystic. He had received his training in mysticism from Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gangohi, Abdul Ahad.

Shaikh's full name was Imam Rabbani Mahbub-i-Subhani Shaikh Ahmad Faruqi.<sup>245</sup> He is generally known by his little Mufadda'û-i-Alf-i-Thani (Sani) or the reformer of the second millenium of Hijera.

Shaikh Ahmad received his early education at home and got the highest inspiration from his father. Shaikh Ahmad was initiated in the Ghishtish and Qadiriya orders and got Khilafat of both. After his father's death Shaikh visited Delhi where he joined the Naqshbandi order. Later on he received Khalifat of this order from Khwaja Baqi Billah who had introduced this order in India. Thus Shaikh Ahmad became

244. Makhtubat I, No.11, p.122, II, No.15, p.29.

245. Md. Enamul Haq - Sufi Movement in India,  
Indian Culture Vol.2 (1935) No.1, pp.17-18.

the founder of new order Mujaddidiah a subdivision of the Naqshbandi order.

Shaikh Ahmad's writing is called Majmu'atva-t-tasawwuf. There is very long account of him and his interviews with Jahangir in the Khazinatu-i-Auliya, I, 807, etc.<sup>246</sup>

"In course of time he became an erudite scholar possessed esoteric and exoteric knowledge in Islamic lore.<sup>247</sup> Such as theology, science philosophy and mysticism and thereby played the role of sole arbitrator of Islam in enforcing discretionary power on the masses in matters concerning shariat or Islamic conorical law. There is no doubt that he was an exceptional learned man in Islam during his period. His erudite work "Maktubat" or "Epistles" collected after his death by his follower in the most shining example of his profoundly learning".<sup>248</sup> Since Shaikh Ahmad was a man of conviction and preached whatever he thought correct, without any fear, resulted into emperor Jahangir" displeasure. Emperor Jahangir imprisoned him for two years.<sup>249</sup>

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246. Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, pp.91-92.

247. Md. Enamul Haq - Sufi Movement in India  
Indian Culture Vol.2 (1935), No.1, p.18.

248. Ibid.

249. Tuzuk, p.92.

The author of Rauzat-ul-Qayyumiyyah, gives more explicit reasons for the imprisonment of Shaikh Ahmad. According to him the persian ridden court of Jahangir entertained on enmity towards Shaikh Ahmad for his anti shia activities.<sup>250</sup>

The result of Shaikh Ahmad's writing treatise on falsity of Rafidi and Shias cured, a class of muslims, particularly these two sects grew infuriated with him. Shia's had a very strong hold on the Mughal emperor Jahangir through his favourite consort Nurjahan who was a Shia. They instigated the empress to take a drastic and immediate step against the rising heretic Shaikh Ahmad. The emperor under the instigation and influence of his royal consort soon arrested the Shaikh and passed order to throw him to prison for an indefinite period of time. But Shaikh Ahmad neither changed his opinion, nor abandoned his convictions. He was even not in active behind the prison bars where he preached the message of reform to all sundry who came in contact with him. As a result of his preaching the prison house soon turned to be a reformatory platform and he succeeded to win over a large number of prisoners to his side.<sup>251</sup>

250. Rauzat-ul-Qayyumiyyah, I, pp.170-81.

251. M.d. Enamul Haq - Sufi Movement in India, Indian Culture Vol.2 (1935), No.1, p.18.

After two years Shaikh was released from <sup>the</sup> prison without any undertaking. Now he became a vociferous champion of religion and worked vigorously. He preached his religious ideas freely as there was no authority - religious or royal to oppose him. The activities of this savant, reformer and saint were felt far and wide. Many people from different parts of India were converted to Islam by him.<sup>252</sup> And accepted him as a "Mujaddid" or 'reformer' 'Mawlana Shaikh Hamid Danishmand' of Bangal Kat Burdwan was his deputy who worked for his master in Bengal.

Throughout his life he remained in contact with great nobles of Mughal empire and for many years was in very close touch with emperor Jahangir. 'Jahangir also came to know about him and summoned him to his court. From Jahangir account on Shaikh Sarhindi, in Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri it appears that Shaikh was very adversely reported to him.<sup>253</sup> But it should be noted that Jahangir was not the only person who thought ill of Shaikh Ahmad.

According to Zabdat-ul-Magammat the Mujaddid moved with the royal court for about three years. Jahangir honoured the Mujaddid by paying him Rs.2000 in the 8th year of his reign.<sup>254</sup>

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252. Md. Enamul Haq → Sufi Movement in India  
Indian Culture, Vol.2 (1935), No.1, p.20.

253. Tuzuk II, pp.91-93.

254. Tuzuk II, p.276.

In an interview with Jahangir when the Mujaddid Sarhindi was questioned about the allegation he replied in the negative and elucidate his answer further he cited an example "if your majesty summon an ordinary person to serve you and as an honour you speak to him the secrets, surely that person will reach you after crossing the rank of Ranj-Hazari Umara.<sup>255</sup> To gain support from Mughal nobility in his mission Shaikh Ahmad wrote letters to almost all prominent nobles such as Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan, Khan-i-Azam, Mirza Aziz Koka, Khan-i-Jahan, Murtaza Khan, Juliz Khan, Jubbari Khan, Qasim Khan and Shaikh Farid Bukhari explaining what he described as the sad plight of Islam and urging <sup>for</sup> a policy of opposing eclecticism for which he promised them the highest religious bliss in this and the next world.

He pleaded for the reimposition of Jizya and abolition of the ban on cow slaughter. He not only directed his mighty pen and tongue against the alleged Hinduized beliefs and practices, prevalent among the Muslims of India but also applied much of his energy to the reformation of the different Sufi order and diverse Muslims sects such as Shias and Rafidis. Hindus too could not escape him. His

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255. Tuzuk, p.89.

Makhtubat or 'Epistles' contains a few letters addressed to prominent Hindus of different localities. These letters clearly shows how Mujaddid-i-Alf-i-Thani tried to expound that falsity of the Hindu belief in gods and goddesses and the futility of subtle explanations that are generally given by the Hindus in support of their beliefs. He offered the message of un-mixed monotheism to the Hindu and preached, explained and unfolded to them the beauty and teachings of Islam. <sup>256</sup>

Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi died on the last day safar 1035 Nov.20, 1625, <sup>257</sup> at the age of sixty three. In real sense Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi was a reformer of Islam who impressed upon Muslims to cast away non Muslim customs and traditions and to lead this life in accordance with Shariat.

The main aim of Shaikh Ahmad's life was to establish the supremacy of the Shara in the Muslim state. In almost all his letters addressed to the political personalities there is almost emphasis on following the Shara "In a letter to Murtaza Khan on the occasion of the <sup>or</sup> appointment of the Ulama at the court he says that they should have "emunciate in controvention of Shara". <sup>258</sup>

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256. Md. Enamul Haq - Sufi Movement in India  
Indian Culture Vol. 2(1935) No.1, p.18.

257. Tuzuk, p.92.

258. S. Nurul Hasan - Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi and Mughal  
Indian History <sup>Politics</sup> Congress 8th Session (1945), p.251.



Shaikh Ahmad <sup>laid</sup> ~~laid~~ great stress on the importance of the propagation of the Shariat by the State. In a letter to Khan-i-Azam he says, "Sages have said that the Shara is always under the sword and the triumph of Shara depends on the Kings. He again emphasised this point in a letter to Jahangir himself when he wrote that the propagation of the Shara depended on him. He makes his arguments very clear in the following words, "The King stands in the same relation to the world as the heart stand to the body, if the heart is sound the body is also well. If however the heart is in a bad way the body also suffers".<sup>259</sup>

His last words to his sons and disciples were "Hold Shariat light with your teeth". Tasawwaf or the direct knowledge of God according to the Shaikh had taken full possession of the hearts of the Muslim people. Contrary to the monotheistic, personal, transcendent God of Islam, a pantheistic conception of Deity had been substituted. Hence many liberal sufis says that Tarikat is something different from Shariat.

The conception of Tawhid as advanced by Mujaddid is as follows, "The Holy existence of God is self existant. Every other Kings are His own creation. God is alone in

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259. S. Nurul Hasan - Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi and Mughal Politics - Indian History Congress (1985), p.250.

His 'Zat' (existence) and 'Sifat' (attributes) and actually there is no participant in any of these it may be wujud or non wujud (existent or non existent) neither in name nor in resemblance.<sup>260</sup>

Shaikh Ahmad also found fault with Ibn-al-Arabi's philosophy of Wahadat-ul-Wujud (unity of being) which similar to the pantheistic of vedant. He believed in philosophy of Wahadat-ut-Shuhud or phenomenological Monism.<sup>261</sup>

With regard to God's conception he drew inspiration from Ibn Arabi, the idea of oneness of God and the World but soon found it quite unsatisfactory. According to him God, who created the world (men and his environment) could not be identified with his creature because God existed before creating the world and will certainly exist after destroying it".<sup>262</sup> According to Shaikh in order to attain salvation worldly attachment were to be renounced.

The mission of the Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi which filled a big space in the religious and political history of the Muslim community of the 17th century was a great success. The Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi is the father of the Religio-political reform movement of orthodox Islam in India. He had really effected the outlook of Muslim nobility and upper

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260. Mohammad Yasin - A Social History of Islamic India, p.163.

261. Makhtubat, II, No.27.

262. A.H. Aminjung - Islamic Mysticism  
Islamic Culture 15 (1941), p.232.

class. There was nothing wrong in the conception of Tawhid as advanced by the Mujaddid. It was the time honoured Islamic conception of one God.

However the mission of Shaikh Sarhindi was not in accordance with the tradition of muslim saints. All muslim Saints (Sufis) except him never made any distinction among the masses on the basis of religion. The Khangah's of sufi saints were always open to non muslims but Shaikh Sarhindi never allowed non Muslims.

SARMAD (d.1659)

Sarmad the great pantheist and Sufi was one of the renounced personality emperor Shahjahan's reign. History and legend have filled his image with a glorious tradition and pathetic memory of a martyr saint of the 17th century.<sup>263</sup>

He fell a victim of Aurangzeb's policy of repression against free thinking, since Aurangzeb believed in orthodoxy of Islam. Sarmad was beheaded by emperor Aurangzeb's order in 1659 A.D.

Contemporary chroniclers have omitted any mention of his life, ideology and cause of death<sup>264</sup> but the Mirat-ul-Khaya<sup>265</sup> of Sher Shah, the Riyas-ush-Shuara<sup>266</sup> of Jali Baghistani and Dabistan-i-Masahib<sup>267</sup> of Mirza Mohsin Fani provide some details which could be pieced together to make a sketchy picture of his personality and activities.

According to Mirat-ul-Khaya Sarmad was originally from Faringistan (Europe) and was an Armenian but Dabistan-i-  
263. Sarmad's memory is held in high veneration in the social circle of Delhi even after a lapse of over three hundred year's and his grave near the Jami Masjid is visited by many people.

264. The Alamgirnama of Md. Kasim, Maasir-i-Alamgiri of Saqi Mustaid Khan and the Muntakhab-ul-Lubab of Khafi Khan make no mention of Sarmad.

265. A contemporary account of Aurangzeb.

266. A Tazkira of Mohammad Shah.

267. Ibid, p.242-44.

Magahib refers to his place as Kashan in Iran.<sup>268</sup>

He was born of Jewish parents and acquired knowledge of Hebrew scripture, and became a rabbi (scholar). After some time he was converted to Islam and took the name of Mohammed Said. He was thoroughly conversant with Arabic.<sup>269</sup>

Dabistan-i-Magahib mentions that "he studied philosophy under such learned teachers of Persia and Mulla Sadra, Abdul Qasim Qandrashi and a host of others,<sup>270</sup> that he became master of the Hebrew and Islamic, Science, Philosophy and Pantheism.  
18th

He came to India as a trader and met a Hindu boy Abhay Chand at Thatta in Sind and was so much infatuated with him that he abandoned all his business and turned a mendicant and started teaching Hebrew Sciences. He visited Golkunda in the Deccan in 1657 but could not attain the audience of <sup>Qutb</sup> Shah and proceed to Delhi. Sarmad's quest for divine love (Ishq-i-Haqiqi) its attributed to his infatuation to a beautiful boy Abhay Chand. It is said that sensual love (Ishq-i-Mifazi) led him to the love divine (Ishq-i-haqiqi) which ultimately gave him a foremost rank amongst the dervishes of India.  
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268. B.A. Hashmi - Sarmad - His life and Quatrians.

Islamic Culture No.7 (1933), p.667.

Dabistan-i-Magahib, pp.242-43.

269. Ibid.

270. Dabistan-i-Magahib, p.242.

Dara Shikoh was one of the most learned man of his age and his chief interest lay in the comparative study of religious. When Dara Shikoh came to know of Sarmad, he lost no time in inviting him. Sher Khan Lodhi in Hirat-ul-Khiva says , "As Sultan Dara Shikoh had a liking for the company of lunatics, he kept his (Sarmad's) company and enjoyed his discourses for a considerable period. It is evident that Dara Shikoh took immense interest and pleasure in the company of Sarmad, who in turn appreciated his royal friend greatly.

It is said that Aurangzeb who knew all about the close friendship of Sarmad and Dara Shikoh did not like any one of Dara Shikoh's admirers to survive. He got rid of most of them on political pretexts, but for Sarmad the subterfuge of religious disbelief was needed. It was not very hard to find one and so mulla Qavi, the Qazi-ul-Qusnat was sent to Sarmad to ask him the reason of his nudity.

"The one at lovely stature has made me so low and His eyes by giving me two wine cups have taken me out of my sense, He is by my side and I am in search of Him. This novel thief has stripped me of everything."<sup>271</sup>

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271. B.A. Hashmi - Sarmad, His Life Outrains  
Islamic Culture Vol.7, (1933), p.670.

Mulla Qavi took the story to Aurangzeb who had Sarmad summoned before a religious court where he was to be tried for his various religious crimes. Velah-i-Daghistani writes on the authority of Khalifa Ibrahim Badakhshani who lived his pious life towards the end of the reign of Aurangzeb that when Sarmad refused the order of the court to put on cloths. Aurangzeb argued that no one could be hanged with any justification for going undressed. At last sarmad was asked to recite Kalima-i-Taiyaba. He according to his habit, recited only Lailaha, there is no God, and did not go any further. When he was questioned about his heretic utterance, he said that in his life he had so far met only with the negation of life and love, and as he did not actually know the positive side of it, he would not speak of it. Now the charge of heterodoxy was completely established and sarmad stood condemned firstly for being a partisan of Dara Shikoh, secondly as one who did not believe in the bodily accession of the prophet to the heavens (Mirai-i-Jisani) and thirdly, as one who went about nude and denied the existence of God because he had not had any personal knowledge of Him. Judgement was delivered and Sarmad was sentenced to be executed.<sup>272</sup> When Sarmad was taken to the place of execution and the executioner wanted to bandage his

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272. B.A. Hashmi - Sarmad, His Life and Qurtrains  
Islamic Culture, Vol.7 (1933), p.671.

eyes according to the custom, he asked him not to do so and looking at the executioner smiled and said, "come in whatever garb you may, I recognise you well".<sup>273</sup> So saying he bravely placed his head under the sword and gave his life. Sarmad's execution was political as Aurangzeb punished all those who were friendly with Dara Shikoh.

Sarmad believed in living life of a mendicant who was opposed to worldly possessions. Neither he believed in starvation nor in the life comforts. He did not approve of bowing before Shaikh.

Sarmad the seer saw the evanescence of worldly enjoyments and preached asceticism, quietism, intimate and personal love of God, contentment and humility as the gateway to the realm of Divine beauty, disparaging men lip service formal worship and peity. His ethical and spiritual teachings echo once again the words of Hafiz and breathe the fragrance of the saying of Khyyan<sup>a</sup>. The debt to those poet saints he confessed in all weakness.<sup>274</sup>

It is one of the most splendid yet sinister fascinations of life that we can not trace to their ultimate source all the storm of influence that play upon the fall

273. Debistan-i-Mazahib, p.245.

274. Tattawanda Swami - The Saints of India.



craft of an individual's existence. Sarmad had come out to India to add to his worldly wealth and when he did reached India he threw away all his worldly wealth and all his worldly wisdom.<sup>275</sup>

Sarmad was a great saint to whom the shackles of convention and the rituals of religion were irksome and that he had the courage of his conviction when he broke those fetters and paid the penalty by giving his life.

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275. B.A. Hashmi - Sarmad - His Life and Jourtrains Islamic Culture, Vol.7, (1933), p.669.

Besides these famous sufis there were number of other sufis in India during the 16th and 17th centuries.

Ain-i-Akbari<sup>276</sup> gives a list of some saints i.e. Shaykh Nizam Narnauli, Shaykh Adhan, Miyan Wajihuddin, Shaykh Rukhud-din, Shaykh Jalaluddin, Shaykh Burhan, Shaykh Daud, Shaykh Abdullah Badaoni, Shaykh Mah and Shaykh Taha.

Shaikh Nizam Narnauli was for many years in the path of Shaikhship and engaged in the teaching of seekers.

Shaikh Daud was possessed of appreciation (Zauq) and musical enthusiasm and contemplation and spiritual conversation and for many years was seated on the masnad and gave instruction to seekers.<sup>277</sup>

Shaikh Abdullah Badaoni was originally a Hindu. At the time of reading the Gulistan when he came to the name of Prophet, he asked his teacher who this man was. The teacher mentioned some of the praises of his holiness and he was exalted with the honour of accepting Islam, he is possessed of learning and wisdom and is well known for his purity and piety.<sup>278</sup>

Shaykh Mah was one of the Pupils Shaikh Adhan and lived many years in Gujrat.<sup>279</sup>

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276. Ain-i-Akbari, Eng. Tr. Vol.1, p.607.

Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Eng. Tr. p.702.

277. Tabaqat-i-Akbari, p.703.

278. Ibid, p.703.

279. Ibid, p.704.

Shaykh Taha was one of the pupil of Shaikh Salim and lived in Gujrat and died there in the year 994 A.H.<sup>280</sup>

Shaikh Adhan belonged to the Chishti's and died at Jaunpur in 970.<sup>281</sup>

Shaykh Ruknuddin was the son Shaykh Abdul Quddus of Gangoh. Badsoni saw him at Delhi at the time of Bairam's fall.<sup>282</sup>

Shaikh Jalaluddin belonged to Thanesar and was pupil and spiritual successor of Abdul Quddus of Gangoh. Died in 989.<sup>283</sup>

Khwaja Abdushahid is the son of Khwajagan Khwaja Akbar. He died in 982, and was buried at Samarqand. He had been for twenty years in India and held a Jagir in Pargana in Bari Duab where he maintained two thousand poor.<sup>284</sup>

Shaykh Burhan lived as a recluse in Kalpi. He knew no Arabic and yet explained the Quran. He was a Mahdawi. He died in 970 at the age of one hundred years and was buried in his cell.<sup>285</sup>

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280. Ibid, p.704.

281. Ain-i-Akbari, Vol.I, p.608.

282. Ain-i-Akbari, Vol.I, p.608.

283. Ibid, p.608.

284. Ibid, p.609.

285. Ibid, p.609.

Shaykh Daud is called Jhanniwal from Jhanni near Lahore. His ancestors had come from Arabia and settled at Sippur in Multan, where Daud was born. He died in 982.<sup>286</sup>

Some of the saints came into contact with Hindus and influenced them. There are very instances that many sufi saints adopted many Hindu practices.

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286. Ain-i-Akbari, Vol.I, p.608.

### CHAPTER III

#### A. CONTACT OF BHAKTI SAINTS WITH MUSLIM SAINTS IN INDIA:

The Sufi saint who have settled in India influenced Indian masses with their teachings and way of life. Since the abodes of the Sufi saints were visited by all irrespective of caste and creed, some Bhakti saints also came into their contact. The information regarding the mutual contact between Bhakti saints and Sufi saints is very meagre, but we find occasional evidences of such contacts. Dabistan-i-Mazahib mentions that when Kabir was in search of spiritual guide he visited the best of Musalman<sup>287</sup> and Hindus. It is possible that among the best of Musalmans, he might have visited some sufi saints. The expression of Kabirs teachings was shaped by that of sufi saints<sup>288</sup> and poets. Kabir speaks about cup of love of the lover (ashiq and habib) and the beloved (mashug, mahbub) of the path and its stations (mugam) etc. which were derieved from Sufism.<sup>289</sup>

Like Kabir, Nanak<sup>290</sup> is said to have had long discussions with Shaikh Sharaf of Panipat, the Pirs of Multan

287. Dabistan-i-Mazahib, p.186.

Tarechand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.147.

288. Ibid, pp.151-53.

289. Ibid, p.152.

290. Ibid, p.167.

and Shaikh Ibrahim, the successor of Shaikh Farid at Pakpattan. Undoubtly Nanak enjoyed the company of Sufi saints.<sup>291</sup> we also find an evidence regarding Nanak's meeting with Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gangohi and was greatly influenced by the teachings of the Shaikh.<sup>292</sup> It is also said that Nanak also came in contact with Shaikh Mohammad Ghaus<sup>293</sup> of Gwalior. Guru Nanak travelled to Baghdad<sup>294</sup> to visit the famous Qadiri centre of <sup>P</sup>Bir-i-Dastgir Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani. Dadu, another Bhakti saint manifest great knowledge of <sup>U</sup>sufism that his predecessors probably he was the disciple of Shaikh Kamal.<sup>295</sup>

Like Bhakti sa.nts sufi saints also seem to have an urgent desire to meet the Bhaktas. Shaikh Badiud-din<sup>296</sup> Saharanpuri claims to have visted Jadrup Gosain. He relates that it was Jadrup Gosain who told him that Mujaddid is superior to all other spiritual guides. Though we do not find much evidence about personal contacts between the sufi saints and Bhakti saints but the interaction of sufi and Bhakti thought suggest that both of these movements

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291. Mohd. Hidayatullah - Kabig; the epostle of Hindu Muslim Unity, pp.125-26.

292. Shailesh Zaidi, S.A.A. Rizvi - Alakhbani, p.78.

293. Thatawanda Swami - The Staints of India, p.67.

294. S.A.A. Rizvi - A History of Sufism in India, Vol.I,p.389.

295. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, .185.

296. S.A.A. Rizvi - A History of Sufism in India,Vol.II,p.410.

were effected by each other. Shaikh Abdur Rahman Chishti combined both the bairagi and Muwahid tradition about Kabir in his Mirat-ul-Arar.<sup>297</sup>

Similarly Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gangohi's Rushd-Nama contain comparison between Nath terminology and Dvaitatita Vilakshanavada and the terminology of sufism and Wahadat-ul-Wujud<sup>298</sup>. Dara Shikoh's Majma-ul-Bahrain<sup>299</sup> contains the mystic truth of Hindu Muwahhids (followers of Wahadat-us-Wajud) after discovering the secrets of sufism (It is the same book which was singled out by ulama as a justification for condemning Dara Shikoh to death declaring him as Kafir. The interaction of Sufi and Bhakti saints is also evident if we study the common practices and common ideas in teachings of both these movements.

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297. S.A.A. Rizvi - A History of Sufism in India, Vol.II,p.410.

298. Ibid, p.417.

299. Ibid, p.417.

**B. COMMON PRACTICES OF BHAKTI SAINTS AND SUFI SAINTS**

As both the bhakti movement and sufi movement flourished in India at the same time, it was but natural that both of them influenced each other. The result was in the form of adoption of common practices.

Sufis adopted those practices of Bhakti saints which would boost up the working of the silsilahs. The Bhakti saints likewise followed the tradition of the sufis.

There are many instances of adoption of the each others practices. The main reason of the success and popularity of the Chishti silsilah in India was this, that they understand the condition of India and adopted many Hindu customs and practices, i.e. The practices of bowing before the Shaikh,<sup>300</sup> presenting water to the visitors<sup>301</sup> circulating sanbil<sup>302</sup>, shaving the head<sup>303</sup> of new disciple were very similar to the practices of Bhakti saints.

Sama (audition parties) of the sufis and Kirtan or devotional song and dance are almost same.

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300. Fawaid-ul-Fuad, pp.158-59.

301. Fawaid-ul-Fuad, p.137.

302. Khairul-Majalis, p.150, Siyarul Auliya, p.66.

303. K.A. Nizami, Some aspect of religion and politics during 13th century, p.178.



Bhakti saints practised Kirtan to attain salvation and sufis practised Sama to attain salvation. Among the Bhakti saints the exponent was Chaitanya who believed that through love and devotional song and dance a state of ecstasy could be produced in which the personal presence of God would be realised.<sup>304</sup>

Chillah-i-Makus of the Sufis had close resemblance with practice of Bhakti saints. Guru Nanak's conception of Hukum had very close resemblance with the Sufis interpretation of divine will (Risa).<sup>305</sup>

But there are many differences between the order's or silsilah of the sufis. Such as suhrawardis believe in living a normal balanced life, a life in which both the body and the spirit, received equal care. Neither himself fasted perpetually nor did he recommend a life of starvation. The Chishtis believed in the control of emotional life as a prerequisite to the control of external behaviour.<sup>306</sup>

Similarly both Bhakti and sufi saints had common approach towards the way of life, they lead. Almost all these saints believed in living a balanced life. For example

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304. J.N. Sarkar - Chaitanya's life and teachings.

305. S.A.A. Rizvi - A History of Sufism in India Vol.I,  
pp.392-93.

306. K.A. Nizami - Some Aspect of religion and Politics  
during 13th century, p.179.

Nabak and Dadu opposed to torture the body to get salvation. The Bhakti saints said that human body was the sublime temple of God. Like Suhrawardy saints many Bhakti saints did not believe in Fasting. But in contrary to this many Bhakti saints as well as sufi saints believed in Fasting.

Regarding pilgrimage to the holy places both Bhakti and Sufi saints laid emphasis. Bhakti saints largely performed pilgrimage to holy cities of Mathura, Brindaban, Kasi, Prayag, Haridwar etc. Like wise to the Sufi saints the pilgrimage to Macca, represent the last stage in spiritual advancement.<sup>307</sup>

Caste system was <sup>viciously</sup> ventually criticised by Bhakti and Sufi saints which they practised in their life. They made their disciples from all castes. Further they tried to bring reconciliation and unity among Hindus and Muslims i.e. "Shaikh Mohd. Ghaus of Gwalior had intimate relation with Hindus "He would stand up to welcome every Hindu visitors".<sup>308</sup> Dadu did not believe in caste and creed distinction and that was the reason that he had both the Hindus and Musalmans among his disciples".<sup>309</sup> He held temples and masques in equal reverence. He used to say that the sun and moon, space

307. Sirdar Iqbal Ali Shah - Islamic Sufism, p.63.

308. K.A. Nizami - Shattari Saints and their attitude towards State (Medieval India Quarterly) Vol.I (1950) No.2, p.58.

309. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.185.

the earth, wind, water are all busy in serving him in every one without distinction and that they do not belong to any group or party. Guru Nanak also denounce caste and untouchability.

The process of assimilating the Hindu religious thought particularly Tantric practices reached its highest watermark under Mohd. Ghaus. Later Shattari saints followed it they did not add to it.

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C. TEACHINGS OF BHAKTI SAINTS AND SUFI SAINTS

Both Bhakti saints and Sufi saints who flourished in India in the 16th and 17th centuries influenced the Indian people through their teachings.

The conception of God is almost same in the eyes of Bhakti and Sufi saints. The very conception of loving God and the relation between God and soul as one of beloved and the lover are peculiar to Bhakhtas and were adopted by Sufis in India. The sufis believed in monotheism (believed in one God). The Bhakti saints also believed in monotheism. They said that Islam and Hinduism were two different paths leading to the same destination and that Ram and Rahim, Krishna and Karim, Allah and Ishwar were different names of the same Almighty, Indian Sufis like Shaikh Mohd. Ghaus<sup>310</sup> Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gawgohi<sup>311</sup>, Shaikh Salim Chishti<sup>312</sup> etc. were believed in God the real (al Hagg) and He is the creature. In the same way Vallabhacharya's philosophy centered round the conception of one personal and loving God. "He believed in the Marga (Path of Pushti) grace and Bhakti. He looked upon Shri Krishna as the highest Brahma Purshotama (the most excellent of all beings) Permanent (the highest Joy)".<sup>313</sup>

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310. Ain-i-Akbari, Vol.I, p.610, Tabaqat-i-Akbaria p.701.

311. Ain-i-Akbari, p.610.

312. Ibid, p.610.

313. Prem Lata - Mystic Saints of India (Ramanuja), p.115  
Vivek Bhattacharya - The Spirit of Indian Culture,  
(Sants of India), pp.293-94.

It is possible to attain the Supreme being by sincere Bhakti. Chaitanya preached the religion of intense faith in one Supreme being by whom he called Krishna or Hari. Dadu says that God is omnipresent. He is the one alone Real in the world of Unreality, the eternal source from which all beings comes forth, the treasure house of all excellencies, the Lord of creation to whom all creatures bow.<sup>314</sup> He is still the Doer the merciful the creator the divine companion God alone knows no change. He is Niranjan and Nirgun<sup>315</sup>. This idea of Dadu about God is very similar to that of Sufis.

Both Bhakti and Sufi Saints had a strong mono-theistic tendency.

According to Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gangohi God is only real-being. He only exists and exists for ever. He is eternal (qadim)<sup>316</sup>. The idea that God hidden in every thing of the universe and everything of universe hidden in God is found in the teachings of Abdul Quddus. It is very similar to Guru Nanak's conception of God. His God in His primal aspect is devoid of all attributes. He is absolute, unconditional. As such He is beyond comprehension.

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314. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.186.

315. W.G. Orr - A Sixteen Century Indian Mystic, p.14.  
Sudhakar Dwivedi - Dadu Dayal ki Bani, p.327.

316. Dr. Enamul Haq - Sufi Movement in India (Index Iranica)  
Vol.3, No.3 (1941), p.12.

M. Mujeeb - The Indian Muslims, pp.295-97.

He is unknowable. He is unchanging formless or Nirankar .  
He is without form (rup) and has no material sign (rachna).  
He is boundless (par) <sup>(apar)</sup>. He is unborn (ajuni) <sup>317</sup> etc.  
Guru Nanak's God is the true Lord (sat) the creator (Karta  
Purkh), unborn, self existant (Saibhang) immortal (Akal)  
omnipresent, transeendant, and omnipotent.

Guru Nanak emphasised the greatness of God as the  
sole creator and sole sustainer and the sole destroyer of  
his own creation. <sup>318</sup>.

According to the Sufi saints God is real (Al Haqq),  
unknowable, unchanging formless and unborn. So the conception  
of God for both Bhakti and sufi saints is common.

In short the saints of both the orders believed in  
unity of one God or unity of one being. They also consider  
Almighty God as the Supreme creature. Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi  
Mujaddid says that God is creature. He believed in Wahadat-~~al~~-  
Shuhud Bhakti and Sufi saint believed that God is transcendant.

Many Bhakti saints describe supreme creator as  
Alakhmath (the incomprehensible or unseeable one) or as  
Nirangan. Shaikh Abdul Quddus also uses the name Alakh  
Niranjan in the same sense. He says that his lord is

317. J.S. Grewal - Guru Nanak (Some of his key concept), pp.8-10.

318. Ibid, p.12.

"unseeable (Alakh Niranjan)"<sup>319</sup>. Like Bhakti saints Shaikh Abdul Quddus attaches great importance to "Omkar".<sup>320</sup>

The term "SABAD" used by the Shaikh Abdul Quddus identifies mystic contemplation with Shakti as well as Shiva and their union as the course of the existence of three worlds.<sup>321</sup> So it seems that the union of Shakti the sun and shiva the moon according to the Shaikh Abdul Quddus is the salat-i-Makud of the Sufis.

The idea of both the orders about the relation between God and man is almost similar. According to the Indian sufis conception the only relation that is possible between God and man is relation of 'Ishq' or love. Love and love alone is the criterion of their creed and the guiding principle of their mundane life.<sup>322</sup> The sufis conception and Bhaktas conception of God and man is that of a master and servant. In the same way many Bhakti saints adopted this idea of Sufis. For example Mirabai consider herself as the lover of Lord Krishna.

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319. Shailash Zaidis, S.A.A. Rizvi - Rush Nama

320. Ibid

321. S.A.A. Rizvi, A History of Sufism in India, Vol.1, p.343.

322. Enamul Haq - Sufi Movement in India Indo Iranica Vol.3 (1945) No.3, p.13.

¶Like all Sufis Nanak taught that in the soul's Journey towards God, it was necessary to be guided by a Guru".<sup>323</sup>

The Guru Nanak directed the disciple upon the path which has four stages - sarand Khan, Inan Khand, Karam Khand and Such Khand,<sup>324</sup> which according to the Gurumukh Singh the author of Nanak Prakas correspond with Sufi Shariat Marifat, Ufwa and Lahut.<sup>325</sup> Sufis doctrine of Wahadat-ul-wujud based on Bhakhtas vedant. Some Sufi identify the belief of Wahadat-ul-wujud with philosophy of Gorakhnath. Wahadat-ul-wujud is similar to Dwaitwada.<sup>326</sup> Shaikh Abdul Quddus finds the teachings of Bhakti saints identical with Wahadat-ul-wujud. They also denounced idolatory as well as polytheism Having borrowed so many basic ideas from Hindu religious thought the sufis could not possibly pursue any rigid or fanatic policy towards the Hindus. Their attitude towards conversion comes very near the attitude of Chishtis. They had no proselytizing ambition and were always prepared to give lessons in mysticism to Hindu without demanding formal conversion to Islam. Tansen the famous musician of Akbar's court

323. Tarachand - Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p.176.

324. Ibid.

325. Ibid.

326. S.A.A. Rizvi - A History of Sufism in India, Vol.I, pp.336-37.



was a disciple of Shaikh Mohd. Ghaus<sup>327</sup>. Bhakti saints used to visit Shaikh Wajih-u-d-din and learn Sufi practices from him.

So the mission of Bhakti and Sufi saints was the unification of Hindu and the Musalman. In another words their object was to bring about a compromise between Hinduism and Islam and to foster friendly relation between two communities. But they did not get much success in this object.

So from the above interpretation we are confident enough to say that there were many similarities in the practical and teachings of the Bhakti and Sufi saints. So at last we can say that when sufis came to India they adopted those practices which would boost up the working of the silsilah. The Bhakti saints likewise followed the tradition of the sufis.

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327. Badshahnama, Vol.II, part I, p.7.

## CHAPTER IV

### A. IMPACT OF SUFISM IN INDIA

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries sufi movement was at its peak in India. Right from beginning of their settlements the Sufis came into close contact with the indigenous population, but during these centuries sufi saints influenced the social and religious life of Indian people. The teachings of Sufi saints and their healing touch in day to day life brought significant effect particularly in the lower strata of the society. As the Khangah's of Sufi saints were visited by masses of lower strata of Hindu society who were badly treated in their own society, were easily, vulnerable to conversion.

The Sufis trained in the Khangahs of Shaikh Abu-ud-Daula Simmani, Mir Saiyid Ali Hamadani and his son and successors Mir Mohammad considered the conversion of Hindus to Islam as one of their main objectives.<sup>328</sup> The sufis of Shattari, Qadiri and Naqshbandi orders were deeply aware of the proselytizing traditions of their ancestors in Persia and Central Asia and brought their knowledge to bear upon Indian conditions in order to gain converts<sup>329</sup>. Some of the saints performed yoga and the practices of hard asectic

328. S.A.A. Rizvi - History of Sufism in India, Vol.I, pp.201-2.

329. Ibid, Vol.II, p.426.

exercises in the wilderness which helped them in attracting Hindus for conversion. The descendents of Shaikh Jalal converted many Buddhists and Hindus to Islam in Bengal, and thereby strengthened the Shattari order. Similarly in Qadiriya order Shaikh Daud of Chati converted fifty to hundred Hindus each day would make the number of converts annually an impossible neat 15000<sup>330</sup>. Despite Akbar's prohibition against enforced conversion Shaikh Daud's successor Shah Abul Mali and Sufis in other Qadiriya Khangah's never hesitated in their mission and continued to convert Hindus to Islam. The saints of Naqshbandi order were also not behind their contemporaries. The Naqshbandi Khangahs of Khwaja Khwand Mahmud was an important centre of conversion in Kashmir. Shaikh Badruddin Sirhindi describing the miracles of Mujaddid, attracted several thousand Hindus to conversion in Islam. The same process of conversion continued upto the time of Shah Abdul Aziz son of Shah Wadiullah. However the saints of Chishti order did not play any important role in propagation of Islam, though occasional references with regard to their conversion are found. According to Jawahir-i-Faridi, Baba Farid converted a large number of Hindus to Islam in the neighbourhood of Ajodhan.<sup>331</sup> The above process of conversion was operated in

330. S.A.A. Rizvi - History of Sufism in India, Vol.I, p.427.

331. Ibid, Vol.II, p.429.

small towns and villages where the sufi saints had settled down.

In teachings of Sufi saints the principle of Wahadat-ul-Wajud brought reconciliation among Hindus and Muslims and to a great extent was helpful in bridging the Hindu Muslim hostility. The propagation of the principle of equality effected the morals of lower strata of Indian Society both Hindus and Muslims.

Everyman either he belonged to higher caste or lower castes can go to sufi Khangah without any restriction. Muslims and Hindus both used to go in their hospice. They would stand up to welcome every Hindu visitor. Every can take part in sama without any hesitation.

Sufi influenced the lower class of Hindu society to some extent. The eastern variety of sufism is an off shoot of Hindu vedant (some of the sufi saint especially of the Chishti order who lived and acted like Hindu saints and adopted sympathetic attitude towards lower classes of Hindus) could not fail to attract the <sup>att</sup>ention of Hindu community. From the time of Akbar onwards the contact between the upper class Hindus and of the Muslim sufi saints became quite close Hindus were very much influenced by them and adopted some of their practices. Of Hindus, who called on Chishti Khangahs, for training in Zikr, the most likely

to convert were the educated Hindus of Kayastha class, whose knowledge of Sufism was already extensive and whose study of Persian classics of Saadi, Attar & Rumi had filled them with enthusiasm for Sufi ideals.<sup>332</sup>

The impact of the teachings of the Sufi saint was not less to the lower classes of Muslim society. They were not having any position in the society. They were considered as untouchables. They fought untouchability and rigidities of the hereditary caste system. They were thus advocates of social equality and promoted social solidarity and consolidation.

Thus Sufis tried to bring them on equal social strata. The lower class of Muslim Society also was deeply influenced by the teachings of the Sufis. Sufis believed in monotheism. The Sufis say the God of every religion, every class <sup>is</sup> same so there should not be distinction among the different religions and different classes.

The most important impact of the teachings of Sufi saints was to compromise ~~it~~ between Hindu-Muslim unity. The mission was to bring about compromise between Hinduism and Islam and to foster friendly relations between the two communities, but they are not fully successful in attaining this mission.

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332. S.A.A. Rizvi, A History of Sufism in India, V.II, p.430.

Religion was also influenced by the teachings of Sufis. Sufis believed in the doctrine of monotheism. They always condemned idol worship. As the result of this that the people of lower status who were not having any status and can not take part in any religious activities try to move on the path of sufis.

The Sufis preached social and religious equality. They said that all men are equal and every body has to right to acquire knowledge. All sufis proclaimed the essential oneness of all religions and condemned any narrowness in religious matters. Thus the impact of sufism was not negligible in social life but it certainly an important one as regard, to lower strata of the Hindu & Muslim society as well in process of conversion to Islam.

**B. IMPACT OF BHAKTISM IN INDIA**

As the Bhakti movement was an indigenous movement, therefore it was but natural that it influenced the people of India. With the settlements of Muslims in India a new religious came in conflict with Hinduism. It is in this background that Bhakti movement developed in India. The aim of Bhakti movement was two fold, i.e. the principle of love and devotion to personal God and reformation in the Hindu religion. Muslim thinkers and writers were very critical of than prevalent Hinduism. The Bhakti saints tried to reform Hinduism to that extent that it may combat the spread of Islam. In this process the Bhakti saints were influenced by Muslim sufi saints. Generally it is believed that Bhakti saints were so much influenced by Islamic theology as to have borrowed the theory of unity of God from i. s contact with sufis.

The Bhakti movement was not the direct fruit of contact between Hinduism and Islam. As I have stated earlier that there were many religious group in Indian society, such as Buddhist, Christian, Musalman and Hindus, with varied class and caste distinction. The Bhakti saints tried to develop reconciliation between different class and caste of Hinduism. They had special appeal for the upliftment of down troddens or Sudras of Hindu Society.

Sudras were looked down upon as untouchables and they were the unprivileged masses. They did not have a respectable status in the society. They could not go to temple freely because people of higher strata did not allow them to visit the temples. So Bhakti saints were the first who understand the position of untouchable or the people of lower society. As a result of it Bhakti saints denounced idol worship, which ultimately reduced the position of temples. They believed in monotheism. They pointed that in the Bhakti it is the Almighty omnipresent God that is the main object of a devotees adoration and it is to his grace that the Bhakta or devotee looks for his deliverance. Bhakti saints preached against the caste system thereby stressed the principle of equality and further emphasised that birth was no bar to one's salvation by means of Bhakti (devotion).

The Bhakti saints influenced the people of lower society as many bhakti saints belonged to the lower strata of the society. Bhakti saints were not taking pains to reform Hindu society, but also tried to foster good relation between Hindus and Muslims. Most of the saints preached the gospel of unity and friendliness. Nanak Chaitanya for instance emphasised the fact that Hinduism and Islam were two different paths leading to the same destination and that Rama and Rahim, Krishna and Karim, Allah and Ishwar were different names of the same Almighty. These teachings



were able to remove hatred and suspicion from the minds of Hindus and Muslims and were responsible for developing common bonds between them. However the object of Bhakti saints to bring compromise between Hinduism and Islam and to foster friendly relation between the two communities did not get much success.

The most important impact of Bhakti movement was to make Hindu religion more simplified by deleting certain rituals and customs. It resulted into decline of priest class which was dominating the religious life of the people. The high and low among the Hindu society forget many of their prejudices and believed in the messages of Bhakti saints. It was also responsible in breaking the compartmentation of Hindu society in religious <sup>and</sup> of social life.

Bhakti saints also revived the age old ancient traditions of non-violence, (<sup>n</sup>Ahimsa), purity of thought, purity of action, as supplement of devotion. This approach resulted into the revival of Hinduism during the 16th & 17th centuries.

### CONCLUSION

In the beginning of the sixteenth century the political condition of India was unstable due to the fragmentation of the Northern India into small kingdoms. Gujrat, Rajputana, Mahwa, Jaunpur and Bengal were ruled by different independent rulers.

So the political condition of the early 16th century suggests political fragmentation. There were five Muslims and two Hindu Kingdom such as The Lodi Kingdom from Bhera to <sup>in</sup> Bihār, Gujrat under Muzzafar Shah, Bengal under Nusrat Shah, <sup>l</sup> Mahwa under Mahmud Khalji, <sup>j</sup> Mewar under Rana Sanga, The Bahmanis in the Deccan and Vijsinaga was ruled by Krishnadeva Rana.

In the same way Babur defeated the Afghans and carved out a Kingdom and laid the foundation of Mughal empire.

In this atmosphere the Bhakti movement flourished in the country. It is obvious that Bhakti movement was an indigenous movement and was first appeared around the 6th century A.D. in the south and from <sup>there</sup> spread all over the country by different saints.

According to the philosophy of Hinduism one can attain salvation by the way of devotion (Bhakti). Bhakti has been defined as the worship of a personal deity in a spirit of love, as personal faith in personal God. Bhakti

however was preached as a doctrine for the first time in the Bhagvad Gita.

So the bhakti movement was first appeared around six century in Tamil country and from there spread through out much of the country by different saints but it was systemized by Ramangya in the twelfth century and after that this movement was propagated through out India by Ramananda, Kabir, Dhanna, Pipa, Sena, Dadhva, Nimbara, Tukaran, Raidas, Ramdas, Chaitanya, Dadu, Nanak, Surdas, Tulsidas, Mirabai, Namadeva, Prannath, Sunder Das and others.

The main aim of this movement was to unite Hindus and Muslims. There was a wide gap between Muslims and Hindus of India, so the result of Bhakti movement was that the two great cultures came into close contact with each other and the process of give and take took place. In the same time sufi movement was also flourished in the country. The sufi saints started the policy which was based on humanism and equality.

The popularity of the sufis was due to their understanding of the Indian condition and to their adopting some of the Hindu customs and ceremonies.

Bhakti movement influenced the Indian people. The Bhakti saints tried to reform Hinduism to that extent that it may combat the spread of Islam. In this process the Bhakti saints were influenced by Muslim sufis. So it is believed that Bhakti saints were influenced by Islamic theology as to have borrowed the theory of unity of God from its contact with sufis. The most important impact of Bhakti movement was to make Hindu religion more simplified by detecting certain rituals and custom.

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