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ABBREVIATIONS

Below is the list of Hadrat Sultan Bahu's books cited in the book

Abyat	Abyat Sultan Bahu
DB	Divan i Bahu
AK	Amir al-kawnain
AS	Awrang Shahi
TH	Tawfiqi Hidayat
TB	Teghi Brehna
JA	Jami al-Asrar
R	Ruhi (Tr. Of the Spirit)
SA	Shams al-Arifeen
AB	Aqli Bidar
AF	Ain al-Faqr
FL	Fadl al-liqa
QD	Qurbi Didar
KTK	Kalid al-Tawhid Kalan
KJ	Kalidi Jannat
GA	Ganj-al Asrar
MN	Majalisatun Nabi
MA	Mahabbat al-Asrar
MFK	Mahik al-Faqr Kalan
MF	Muhkam al-Fuqara
MA	Miftah al-Arifeen
NH	Nur al-Huda
NHK	Nur al-Huda Khurd

With the reference to the Urdu Translations published by Allah Wale, Lahore, except the Abyat (Punjabi), Ruhi (English Tr: Of the Spirit) and Divani Bahu (English Translation) published by Hadrat Ghulam Dastgir Academy, Darbar Hadrat Sultan Bahu, District Jhang, Pakistan.

Foreword

It is, indeed, a great pleasure and privilege to write Foreword for the book on the life and work of our illustrious forefather, Sultan al-Faqr, Sultan al-Arifin, Hadrat Sultan Bahu --- written by my dear old friend Prof. Syed Ahmed Saeed Hamadani. Hadrat Sultan Bahu is one of the, greatest Sufi Saints of the Sub continent and Muslim world, who has millions of followers within and outside the country. Hadrat Sultan Bahu wrote about 140 books, all of which except one i-e. Abyat-i-Bahu (which is in Punjabi), are in Persian

I have had the pleasure of Knowing Prof. Hamadani, since 1974. Over the years, our association has become stronger and closer, primarily, on account of the scholarly work that he has produced on Hadrat Sultan Bahu. I am grateful to him that he initiated writing on the subject, at my request, and has now written over 15 books on Hadrat Sultan Bahu. His work is, indeed, of a very high order. It was in recognition of the quality of his work and his genius, that the renowned scholar, Dr. Annemarie Schimmel met him in Germany, reviewed the book under publication and was pleased to write Foreword as well.

Prof. Hamadani has divided the book in seven parts, namely.

i-	Prologue	ii-	Times
iii-	Life	iv-	Faqr
v-	Perfect Faqr	vi-	Dhikr and Meditation
vii-	Half a Glance		

Each part is further divided under Sub-headings which the learned author has explained in simple language for the benefit of the readers. I reproduce a few quotations from the last chapter i-e. Half a Glance.

“The scholar learn from worldly teachers and the *Faqirs* receive knowledge direct from Allah.” (MA, p.14)

“O pious scholar! Don’t look down upon the *Faqir* with disdain. The *Faqir* is a man of authority by the command of the Judge of Judges. The question of *Faqir* is like the dialogue of *Khadir* and *Moses*. That is wisdom absolute.” (TH, p.65)

“The *Faqir* who abandons prayers has not an iota of knowledge of God even if he shows you high and low, from the moon to the fish. It would be just illusion and misguidance.” (MF, p.28)

“The man is he who judges his soul himself in every state. Ego-worshippers are many but God-Worshippers are rare. Allah is sufficient, all else is mere lust.” (AQ, p.54)

“The hearts are deeper than the rivers and seas.

Who can fathom the hearts? ___ O Hu!

The boatsman and the boats, the oars and the struggle, all are there ___ O Hu!

All the fourteen spheres are in the heart where love has pitched its tent ___ O Hu!

Only he can know God, who knows the secrets of the heart ___ O Hu!” (Abyat)

“Salvation lies in going on the straight path, and to refrain from cruelty is the means of guidance, and to displease others is a sin. The God-conscious *Faqir* is aware of each and every (spiritual) stage.” (AB, p.39)

“The higher the *aarif* (Gnostic) the more humble he is. He is sometimes in desire and sometimes in awe.” (AB, p.109)

“Those are very imprudent who have a little knowledge and intellect but claim to be all in all.” (AB, p.138)

“There is a touchstone to test every thing, the touchstone for knowledge is *Faqir*.” (JA, p.6)

“The *Faqir* who aims only at the attainment of proximity (to God) and not at the favours of the kings, is in fact, greater than the king.” (AQ, p.71)

“The friends of God will succeed each other and shine like the sun till the day of Resurrection.” (TH, p.15)

“A *Faqir* is rich, he is rich due to the proximity to God and not due to wealth and property. The richness because of worldly wealth is false.” (TH, p.46)

“The perfect men remain tongue-tied:

The branch full of fruit bows and puts its head on the ground.” (KTK, p.19)

“The men of love are those who believe in the omniscience of God and his Apostle and remain immersed in their love.” (AF, p.100)

I take this opportunity to compliment my nephew, Muhammad Maqbool Sultan for persuading Prof. Hamadani to write this book which is really in line with the objectives of Hadrat Sultan Bahu Academy. It has been our sincere endeavor to introduce and promote the teachings of Hadrat Sultan Bahu to all sections of the people. In my considered view, there is an urgent requirement for a book of this type which is, primarily, intended for an audience who prefer to read in English or Expatriates who, obviously, can benefit from the English text only. My thanks are also due to Sultan Arshad Al-Qadiri for making arrangements for the publication of the book in a benefiting manner.

In his teachings Hadrat Sultan Bahu has laid down simple guidelines for us to follow. There is no disparity between *Qaul* (what is said) and *Fe'l* (what is done). Hadrat Sultan Bahu does not advocate the life of isolation (*Tark-i-Dunia*). Instead, it is emphasized that one should take part in the worldly affairs and yet remain on the right path by observing the injunctions of Holy Quran and

Sunnah. This is the role model, which is an example for all of us to emulate. In the present environment of uncertainty, materialism, strife and disunity, the teachings of Hadrat Sultan Bahu have assumed greater importance and significance. I believe that the solution of the problems facing the country, the *Ummah*, and indeed, the humanity, at large, will be found in following the teachings of Hadrat Sultan Bahu.

I recommend the book to the readers, both within and outside Pakistan, who are interested to seek the truth and guidance for the life in this world and the world hereinafter.

25.05.2001

SULTAN HAMEED

President:

Hadrat Sultan Bahu Academy &
Secretary (Retd.) to the Govt. of Pakistan
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Prologue

Hadrat Sultan Bahu (1628 - 1691 A.D.) is a well-known Sufi saint of the later Mughal period in India who lived in Punjab, worked as a Sufi Master of his time, wrote prose and poetry in Persian and Punjabi, wandered through deserts and among the mountains crossing rivers at certain places, to meet the simple people with noble hearts, blessing them with wisdom and *baraka* and telling them all the time how to remember God and act with God-consciousness. To a general observer not well-versed in various Sufi ways and styles, it seems strange that he intentionally managed to conceal himself¹ in such a way that his name has not ever been mentioned in any of his hagiographies written by his contemporary Sufi writers. It is not because he might not have met any of them during many of his journeys in the land as he himself describes about his serious search for the real men of path of all levels (*Murshids* and *murids*). (NH, p. 149) In fact he often met the notables, the men of letters as well as the men of the world, without disclosing his real identity. It seems he actually introduced himself only to the Faqirs and *darveshes* most devoted to him as the true seekers of Truth.

We have at present only one source of the biographical information about the saint, the *Manaqib-i-*

Sultani howsoever incomplete, written by his great grandson Sultan Hamid, the son of his fourth *Sajjada-nashin* Hadrat Ghulam Bahu, many years after his death. Though inevitable for study during the research work but even then its statements may be perused and used for reference after a certain critical discernment.

Although the saint lived far from the big cities and towns, the so-called cultural centres, but he did not deprive the people, receptive to his teachings, of his spiritual directions and guidance. He wrote *Dohas*² (lyrical quatrains often sung melodiously by the Sufi singers) in his mother tongue Punjabi, *ghazals*³ in Persians and he was the author of books and treatises on Sufism in Persian, the cultural language of his time.

Again it is interesting that the simple people blessed by the saint with divine wisdom assumed the duty of copying the manuscripts of his major or minor books, gave away freely to others, literate or semiliterate, to read up and let others know about the valuable spiritual knowledge (*Marifa*) and the peculiar special power (*Baraka*) contained in them.

His first biographer Sultan Hamid calls him "Sultan of gnostics, Guide of the wayfarers, *Murshid* of the Seekers of Truth, Pole of the perfect, annihilated in Allah, Abiding in He (*Hu*), Our Master, spiritual director of the Masters (*Shaikh al-Mashaikh*), our lord Hadrat Sultan Bahu".

The saint himself, however, revealed his spiritual rank among the Muslim saints as *Sultan al-Faqr* (king of the realm of Spiritual Poverty) in one of his treatises

written in the state of trance under spiritual inspiration. (R,p.20) It was also asserted by him that only "seven spirits of *Fuqara*" have been honoured with the title of *Sultan al-Faqr* in the community of the Friends (*Awlya*), he being the fifth amongst them.

Among his devotees to-day he is remembered as "*Badshah Hadoor*" (the king, present) "*Badshah-i-karim*" (the generous king) or just simply "*Badshah sahib*" (our master, the king) but most often "*Haq Bahu*"⁴ (Bahu the Truth) with the additional phrase "*Be shak Bahu*" (the Truth, no doubt), and sometimes he is frankly alluded to "*Sultan Sahib*" (Sultan, the Lord).

Even if you only mention the name of Hadrat Sultan Bahu to one of his *murids* and then you will find out that he begins recounting the miracles of the saint who still helps the people even long after his death. Every year one is amazed to see his devotees increasing in number so rapidly that after a few years the *Sajjada-nashin* might have to think of a way to make provision for a wide open space on the occasion of *Urs* (annual gathering at the shrine) for the *murids* and visitors who come from far and wide to pay homage to the saint and get his blessing (*baraka*) by kissing the foothold of his grave hall.

But how and what Sultan Bahu was known by the inhabitants around the Shorkot Fort where he abided? Well, he was probably known as *Faqir Sultan Bahu Awan* in the suburbs of Fort Town. He was called Faqir because he was a saint and a Sufi master. He was addressed as "Awan" because of his caste or tribe he belonged to. We shall deal

with his life style afterwards but suffice it to say here that for the common people not necessarily his devotees, he was the Sufi son of an *Inaamdar* (the person who has been awarded a vast tract of land by the king). He must have been known as a well-instructed pious man, a strict follower of the *sharia* (Islamic legal law).

One can also imagine that by nature or through purpose, he might have always endeavored to conceal his spiritual states and stations from others. His motto in his own words would have been:

“The grave not to be known,
the body not to be known;
even the name or any sign
not to be known.”

Now we have a complete *khanqah* (Sufi centre with the shrine) at a place called Darbar Hadrat Sultan Bahu in Jhang District of Punjab (Pakistan) managed and supervised by a *Sajjada-nashin*. The shrine of his mother and father are also looked after by another *Sajjada-Nashin*; he is also one of the descendents of the Sultan's family. Moreover his predecessors, the scions of his house, have various Sufi abodes at various places in the country and they have their own regions under their spiritual influence. They are venerated everywhere because of their family lineage to the saint.

A word or two about his books. It is believed that Hadrat Sultan Bahu wrote one hundred and forty books but at present only thirty two books are found in printed or unprinted form. Not more than five or six books have been

properly edited by some scholars and translated correctly in Urdu or English. Others are still there in the form of unreliable translations or un-edited manuscripts found to be in the bookshops or the libraries. When the research will proceed on the right lines, the scholars in the East and West will be amazed to find a compendium of so much Sufi knowledge in these books. Someday the Sufi saint may be acknowledged as a great Sufi Theosophist like *Shaikh al-Akbar* Ibn Arabi and the great Sufi scholar and teacher like *Shaikh al-Shuyukh* Umar bin Muhammad Suhrawardy.

The litterateurs find in his person a poet par excellence. Only a small collection of his *dohas* (often called *Abyat*) under the title of *Si-Harfi* is found as a specimen of his poetry in Punjabi but it is considered to be so precious that most of the students of Punjabi Poetry have its lines at the tip of their tongues. The fame of *Abyat* is almost proverbial. The Persian Poetry is also revered and appreciated by the readers.

His books in prose are often studied by those who wish to traverse the path of Sufi Order of the saint, the *Qadiriya Sarwariya Tariqa* or generally by those who study for their importance as having been the epitomes of the Sufi wisdom and knowledge.

To practical *Sufis* he has left instructions in his books in detail for spiritual exercises like remembrance of God, seeking spiritual support from the Sufis of past ages by attending their graves and reading Quran according to one's spiritual rank, attending the Prophet's meeting through creative imagination and moreover gaining knowl-

edge of spiritual experiences, dreams, visions and numerous invisible powers. Many have found perfection in spiritual self-realization by following his directions and many are still to be seen as way-farers traveling upon the Path indicated by the saint who himself claimed to be the *Perfect Faqir* for all times.

Naushera (Soon Valley). Syed Ahmad Saeed Hamadani
21 February, 2001.

Times

www.yabahu.com



Times

Hadrat Sultan Bahu was probably born a year before or after Shah Jahan, the fifth great Mughal king after Babur, ascended the throne after much bloodshed of his relatives and their associates in 1628, under the title "Abul Muzaffar Shahabuddin *Sahib Qiran-i-Thani* Shah Jahan Padshah Ghazi." His father, Hadrat Sultan Bazeed Muhammad had perhaps been an officer in the army of Prince Khurram who had then become the Emperor Shah Jahan. Though his services were still needed, it is said, Sultan Bazeed Muhammad applied to the Emperor for retirement. The Emperor not only acceded to his request, he also awarded him first a village near Multan and then a vast tract of agricultural land on the bank of river Chenab near Qalai Shor (now in District Jhang, Punjab). Sultan Bazeed Muhammad settled there with his family and lived there until he died after a few years and was buried in the graveyard nearby.

Afterwards his family with a widow and a young promising son as a sole member of the house had nothing to do with the government affairs in war and peace. But a time came when Sultan Bahu at the age of 30 years could be expected to take side when the war of succession broke

out between the sons of Shah Jahan. The fact must be made clear at the outset that the support of young Faqir was just a kind of moral, or merely spiritual favour. But such favour among the Sufis is considered to be very significant and important because of the efficacy of the prayers for the party that attracts the sympathy of a man of God.

Shah Jahan fell ill in 1657 A.H. and the war of succession started between the sons of the Emperor. There were four brothers but the two main contestants for the throne were the heir-designate Dara Shikoh and the third brother in the line, Aurangzeb. Though they were real brothers but they were poles apart in respect of temperament, attitude and most of all their views about the religious affairs and the policy in general to be expected from the future ruler of India. Dara Shikoh, being the eldest son had all the privileges at court that could be granted to the heir-designate. But he unfortunately exploited his position to increase his political influence and degrade his brothers in the eyes of his father especially Aurangzeb who was certainly the ablest among them. Moreover Dara Shikoh's career as a scholar prince was not satisfactory in the eyes of Sunni religious authorities, *Sadat* (descendants of the Holy Prophet), Sufis and the men of faith among the courtiers who were in majority amongst the Muslims. They were sure that his role as a future king of India would be harmful to the beliefs, views and interests of Islam and the Muslims.

They were not very wrong in their opinion against Dara. He at first showed interest in Sufism and got himself initiated by a Pir of Qadiriya Order⁵, compiled books on

Sufism⁶ and wrote poetry assuming the poetic name Qadiri⁷. Then he turned to the study and research of mysticism of comparative religions, particularly Islam and Hinduism. The turning point in his search and belief came with the authorship of two books *Majma-ul-Bahrain* and *Sirr-i-Akbar*. It was in the year 1056 A.H when one of his sympathetic biographers says that "a new idea of universal brotherhood dawned upon him." He certainly had every right to enjoy "his unlimited interest in the religious system of the world"⁸ but when he declared that "mysticism is equality, it is the abandonment of all religious obligations"⁹ and adopted the Hindu name *Parbhu* for Allah, then "it became manifest that if Dara Shikoh obtained the throne, and established his power, the foundation of the faith would be in danger and the precepts of Islam would be changed for the rant of infidelity and Judaism."¹⁰ Dr. I. A. Ghauri has affirmed that no Sufi ever prayed for Dara Shikoh during this campaign.¹¹

On the other hand, Aurangzeb was a staunch believer. He was liked by all the sunnies including the religious scholars, Sufis, *sadats* and many of the chiefs in the Royal army. Among them there were Hindu Rajputs, too. He had declared that after having been enthroned as an Emperor he would promulgate Islamic law and Islam would be the religion supreme in India. The Sufis of almost all the orders in the country, particularly the Naqshbandis, helped him and prayed for his success openly.

In these circumstances, none could remain neutral. Hadrat Sultan Bahu was a young *Sufi Murshid*, he also

could not have stood aside and remained impartial. His writings show that he supported Aurangzeb. He calls him "Muhiuddin Aurangzeb badshah Ghazi, just with an ascetic's heart, a true worshipper knowing the Divine mysteries and knowledge." (NHK, p.5) In the beginning of a treatise he expresses his satisfaction over the rule of the king:

"The country is governed by the slave of God as Aurangzeb Ghazi is the king". (QD, p.5)

The war lasted only a few months. Dara's army was finally defeated at Samugarh in May, 1658 and in July Aurangzeb proclaimed himself the Emperor of Delhi and was formally coronated on the 5th June 1659 under the title of Abul Muzaffar Muhiuddin Muhammad Aurangzeb Alamgir Padshah Ghazi.

Actually the controversial issue of liking or disliking the king was first raised by Dr. Lajwanti Rama Karishna in an article on Sultan Bahu in her book "Punjabi Sufi Poets"¹². She knew that Sultan Bahu belonged to Qadiriya order. Dara Shikoh had also been a member of that order under the guidance of Pir Mullah Shah Qadiri, a khalifa of the famous saint Hadrat Mian Mir¹³. Then she relied on the statement of Sultan Hamid, the author of *Manaqib-i-Sultani*, that one Syed Abdur Rehman, a relative of Dara Shikoh was the murshid of Hadrat Bahu. Moreover she wanted to consider the fact that Sultan Bahu kept himself at a distance from the Emperor's court. She innocently concluded that Hadrat Sultan did not like Aurangzeb as well as he was fearful due to his sympathy with the fate of

Dara Shikoh and his affinity with Pir Abdur Rehman.

Now all that has been proved to be a baseless hypothesis. It is not necessary that a follower of Qadiriya order must have affiliation to another Qadiri under training with another spiritual preceptor. Then the statement of Sultan Bahu's discipleship under Pir Abdur Rehman Qadiri has already been observed almost groundless. And lastly Hadrat Sultan Bahu was a perfect man, *Malik ul-Mulki Faqir* (Master of the spiritual realm of Faqr) and a saint of the highest rank. How could he be afraid of a mortal man? Dr. Lajwanti and her like-minded intellectuals have missed the point that in the history of Sufism there have been so many mystics and *Sufis* who intentionally avoided relationship of any sort with the kings and their courts. It might have been detrimental to the task they were expected to accomplish. Hadrat Sultan Bahu was certainly one of them.

Hadrat Sultan Bahu only once met Aurangzeb in a mosque as narrated by the author of *Manaqib* but he asked him never to pursue him. He, however, wrote a treatise entitled *Awrang Shahi* for the King and left Delhi.

All of his life he wandered in the Saraiki and Baluchi regions where there was peace and the people were simple-hearted. All the other regions like Deccan, North Eastern and Northwestern Frontiers, East Punjab and Rajput states were disturbed due to the rebellions and revolts. Only the Western Part of the country was not disturbed and Hadrat Sultan Bahu mostly worked there.

Hadrat Sultan Bahu died in 1691 when Aurangzeb was still involved in many of his serious campaigns. The

saint was buried at a place close to Shorkot Fort without attracting attention of the nobility of the period. The fame of his *Marifa* (spiritual knowledge), *baraka* (particular spiritual blessing) and *karamat* (miraculous powers) spread afterwards. The *khanqah* was also built after a considerable later period.

The Sufi Perspective

Hadrat Sultan Bahu was a born saint. It means that whatever the Sufis and Faqirs experience after rigorous training under a Sufi Master (*murshid*), he was already blessed with all that bliss and blessing by nature. Then we find the spiritual tradition already existing in his family. Just have a look at the names of his ancestors¹⁴. All of them were *Shaikhs* (the religious leader), *Sultans* or *Shah* (kings in the spiritual realm).

Though his father "Hadrat Shaikh Sultan Bazeed Muhammad"¹⁵ died when he was just a child but the son must have remembered him as a pious man. He might have been told by his mother that his father was "*Hafiz-i-Quran* (one who has memorized the Holy Book), wise and a righteous man with the knowledge of religious law"¹⁶.

Then there was his saintly mother in the house as an exemplar so often absorbed in the remembrance of God. He observed her ecstatic states and moods remembered by him long afterwards when he also felt the same during his spiritual journey.

Since his childhood everybody who saw him, ac-

knowledged him as a *wali* (saint)¹⁷. But he was destined to be and to do more than that. He had to become *Murshid-i-Kul* (World Teacher) and Sultan of *Arifeen* (gnostics) to guide the seekers of Truth on the Path from the beginning to the end. For this purpose he had to learn through travels, attend the graves of the Sufis of past to win their blessings, pay visits to the living *Murshids* and *talib* (seekers), study books in the Sufi circles and gather information about the life intrinsically as well as extrinsically¹⁸. Though sometimes he claims that he had very little external knowledge (*ilm-i-zahir*)¹⁹ but the references of sufi authors and poets like Ghazzali, Rumi and Khaqani etc. etc., in his books clearly show that actually this was mere humility on his part, simply not interested to make a show of his intellectual qualification and learning. He was in fact well-versed in Sufi lore and tradition. The Sufi terminology and his style in use of language are certainly evident proofs of quite sufficient study of the Sufi masters on his part.

Hadrat Sultan Bahu thus inherited the tradition and knowledge of *Tasawwuf* (Sufism) when it reigned supreme in the Muslim world. He himself reveals that he was "commanded by the most noble Prophet of effluent light (may peace be upon him) to show the right path to all the mortals, whether they are Muslims or infidels, fortunate or unfortunate, alive or dead...." In his times various Orders of Sufism had their own systems of doctrines and methods though all of them claimed to attain the same goal — union with God. The religious and cultural atmosphere was saturated with Sufi thoughts and ideas. Looking back at the

history of Sufism, one finds that eleven centuries of the Sufi movement had passed through many phases before Hadrat Sultan Bahu.

Although this is not the proper place to reiterate what has already been elaborately discussed by the orientalists and eminent Sufi scholars about the nature, function and aim of Sufism, but a brief description is required to help us understand and appreciate the work of Hadrat Sultan Bahu and decide about his rank as the Grand *Sufi Faqir* of all times. (R, p.22)

About two centuries ago the orientalists and non-Sufi scholars who took upon themselves to study "about Sufism"²⁰, tried to make everybody believe that Sufism was actually one of the "grafts upon the stem of Islam."²¹ For a long time they went on telling their readers that Christian, Hellenic, neo-Platonic and even Buddhist influences were at work to produce a class of ascetics among the Muslims who were later on called Sufis and their creed was named *Tasawwuf* (Sufism)²². Now fortunately most of the enlightened orientalists and Western Sufi scholars of modern times are at last convinced of the true fact that Sufism had its roots in Quran and *sunna* (tradition or a custom of the Prophet). Though the *Sufis* had studied the thoughts of mystics from other traditions but they approved and adopted them only if the same conformed with the basic principles and beliefs of their own religion and mode of their culture. For instance a modern author Dr. Wheeler Thackston of Harvard, actually one of the many, sincerely remarks: "At no time has Sufism been at odds with the

essential tenets of Islam, which it indeed takes as its basic" and then explains: "The source of authority for Sufism, like any other branch of Islamic learning, derive directly from the Quran, considered to be God's word revealed to the Prophet, and *sunna*, the practice of the Prophet as recorded in the *hadith*. To these two, however, the Sufis add an important third source of authority: inner, or Gnostic revelation, the locus of which is the hearts of God's saints: 'There is no knowledge known or anything understood that is not found in God's book, or traceable to the Prophet, or in what is revealed to the hearts of God's friends.'" (Sarraj, *Kitab al-luma*)²³

Although it is easy to trace the origin of *Tasawwuf* (Sufism) in the Quran, *Hadith* and Sufi's inspired sayings but the definition of Sufism always seems to be indefinite and at times as subjective opinion.

William Stoddart has selected some of the verses of Quran and a few quotations from *hadith* and Sufism²⁴. First of all he cites the Opening Sura and then goes on denoting verses from other Suras. For example:

"Men whom neither trade nor profit diverts from the remembrance of God".
(26-7)

"And in the earth are portents for those whose faith is sure, and also in your souls. Can ye then not see?" (20-21)

"If my slaves ask thee of Me, say I am near. I answer the prayer of the pray-er when he prayeth." (2 : 186)

"Fear God, for it is God who teaches you." (2 : 282)

From the traditions (*Ahadith*):

"I was a hidden treasure, and I wished to be known, so I created the world."

(*Hadith Qudsi*)

"My Heaven cannot contain Me, nor can My earth, but the heart of my believing slave can contain me." (*Hadith Qudsi*)

"The heart of man is the Throne of God."

"Who knoweth himself, knoweth his Lord."

"Be in the world as a stranger or as a passer by"

"Whosoever protecteth God in his heart, him will God protect in the world."

It is very difficult for the student of Sufism to select the definitions from the sayings or writings of the *Sufis*. They view the Sufism and its Path from their own point of views in the light of their own versions of doctrines and methods. For instance, again from those selected by W.Stoddart:

"My heart has opened unto every form: it is a pasture for gazzelles, a cloister for Christian monks, a temple for idols, the Ka'ba of the pilgrims, the tables of the Torah and the book of the Quran. I practise the religion of love; in whatsoever directions its caravans advance, the religion

of Love shall be my religion and my faith."

Muhui d-Din Ibn 'Arabi. (d. 1240)

"The end of knowledge is that man comes to the point where he was at the origin."

Abu Yazid al-Bistami (d. 875)

"I saw my Lord with the eyes of my heart. I said: who are thou? He answered: thou."

Mansur al-Hallaj (d.922)

"The sufi sees his own existence as particles of dust made visible by a ray of sunlight: neither real nor unreal."

Abul Hasan ash-Shadhili (d. 1258)

"Seekest thou Laila (Divine Reality), when she is manifest within thee? Thou deemest her to be other, but she is not other than you."

Muhammad al-Harraq (d. 1845)

It is evident from these quotations that a comprehensive definition is not possible especially when it comes from the Grand Sufi masters who defined or interpreted the *Tasawwuf* in the light of their own spiritual world-view, vision and inner experiences. But perhaps we can understand Sufism better if we trace its history of evolutionary progress through the ages in brief from its very beginning.

The Muslim community in the days of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was comprised of the

believers who as individuals could be allowed to retain their temperament if it was under control and certain refined traits of conduct and character like predisposition to exaggerate in worship, prayers and charitable deeds and susceptibility for equality, justice and liberty. Many amongst them liked to live simple lives in humble abodes and they mixed freely among *masakeen* (the needy) and felt happy to help and fulfill the needs of others. There were *Ahl-i-Suffa* (the people of the bench) who passed their days and nights in a part of the mosque and availed the opportunities of sitting in the Prophet's of company to learn Quran and attain religious knowledge. They were always "engaged in devotion, renouncing the world and refusing to seek livelihood"²⁵. They arrived and departed of their own accord except on some particular occasions when the Prophet (peace be upon him) himself honoured one or a few of them to proceed and go somewhere as a teacher, a preacher or a campaigner. Then there were among the Companions like Abu Dharr al-Ghiffari, Salman Farisi, Abdullah bin Umar who were ascetic by nature. One man from Yemen "mystically connected with the Prophet"²⁶ was Awais al-Qarni who never saw the Prophet but the Prophet (peace be upon him) once said about him: "The breath of Merciful (*Rahman*) comes to me from Yemen." But according to the tradition, the Islamic spirituality was transmitted by Ali Ibn Abi Talib about whom "Junaid said: 'Ali is our shaykh as regards the Principles and as regards the edurance of affliction,i.e. in the theory and practice of Sufism."²⁷ Shaikh Ali bin Uthman al-Hujwiri concludes:

"Ali is a model for the Sufi in respect to the truths of outward expressions and the subtleties of inward meanings, the stripping oneself of all property either of this world or of the next, and consideration of the Divine Providence."

All these Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) with the thirst for religious and spiritual knowledge and love for worship and prayer living like ascetics became the models for later Sufis.

Next to Hasan al-Basari (d. 728), presumed by many *Sufis* to be the disciple of Hadrat Ali, Imam Jafar as-Sadiq (d. 765) has been claimed to be "one of the greatest teachers of Sufism"²⁸. He was the first exponent of "authentic love mysticism" long before Shaikh al-Akbar Ibn Arabi (1165 - 1240) who laid stress on gnosis or knowledge of spiritual realities, too. Later, Samnun, the Lover, (d. 900) also "considered love superior to gnosis."

The four centuries ___ from the ninth to the thirteen century of Christian Era ___ produced many Sufi luminaries in the Islami world who contributed to the progress of Sufism in theory and practice so much that no muslim ___ layman or scholar ___ could remain unaffected by its style or spirit.

The *Sufis* were the real favorite leaders of the people because they lived amongst them and participated in their activities of daily lives. There are many examples found in the history that they often protested against the oppressive rule of the caliphs and kings.

The list of the *Sufis* who influenced the Muslim society in general and the evolutionary process of culture in

particular is long but there are a few amongst them who can be seen as towering figures even now when we look back to the ages in which they led their lives praying for the people and teaching, guiding and helping them.

Bayezid Bistami (d. 874) and Abul Qasim Junaid Baghdadi (d. 910) were the pioneer *Sufis* who had formed their circles to regulate their work. Hadrat Bistami is well-known for setting an example to express seemingly the lofty spiritual stations and especially the state of intoxication (*sukr*). Hadrat Junaid indicated the importance of the state of sobriety (*sahw*) in feelings and ideas and even in their expression. He "praised poverty, *faqr*, which is an ocean of affliction, yet its affliction is completely glory." Later *Sufis* and thinkers like Iqbal in the twentieth century and Hadrat Sultan Bahu two hundred years before him substituted the Way of *Tasawwaf* for the Path of *Faqr*.

Hallaj (d. 922) gave his life for taking liberty in disclosing the mystical truth before the orthodox religious scholars and also to those who were quite ignorant of the Way. He became a symbol for the *Sufis* of later times as a martyr executed because of talking according to his inspirations.

The two other masters Shaikh Abd al-Qadir Jilani and Abu al-Hafs Suhrawardy founded their Orders and organized them in such a way that they still exist and their work is carried on by various groups of the respective Orders. Shaikh Abd al-Qadir Jilani (d. 1166) was a teacher, preacher and admonisher. He founded the Qadiriya Order, which afterwards spread in the whole Muslim world

and it is still very popular in the form of many groups²⁹. Hadrat Sultan Bahu also belonged to one of them that was named by him Qadiriya Sarwariya. The other Master junior to Shaikh Abd al-Qadir Jilani, was Abu al-Hafs Umar bin Muhammad Suhrawardy (d. 1234) who had friendly relations with the rulers. He was *Shaikh ash-Shuyukh*, the official Sufi Master of Baghdad. His order was brought to India by his *Khalifa* (nominated as deputy leader) Shaikh Bahuddin Zakaria Multani (d. 1262).

Abu Hamid al-Ghazzali (d. 1111) a few decades ago had tried to bring *Sharia* (the way of external religious law) and *Tariqa* (the Sufi Path) closer to repudiate the objections of the scholars of external law and he succeeded in his efforts to the extent that Sufism became an authentic branch of Islamic knowledge and discipline. J.S. Trimingham calls him therefore "a theorist of ethical mysticism."

Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi (1165 - 1240) called Shaikh al-Akbar (the greatest Shaikh) was the genius among *Sufis* who was the saint, seer, visionary, thinker, philosopher and theosophist acknowledged by various scholars according to their own opinions formed about him. But his books have widely been studied by the eminent *Sufis* of all times. He was the principal propounder of the doctrine known as *wahdat al-wujud* (the unity of Being). Even the *Sufi Murshids* who interpreted the *Tawhid* (Unity of God) differently were lavish in his praise of saintship and learning.³⁰ It was he who explained every spiritual problem in the light of *wahdat al-wujud*. He discussed immanence and transcendence of God, *wilaya* and its various states and sta-

tions, the light of Muhammad (peace be upon him), different levels of creation and Perfection of man. He wrote comparatively in an intelligible way about all the visions and illuminations which the other *Sufis* had been incapable to express and communicate. His books like *Tarjuman*, *Futuhat* and *Fusus* are still read by the litterateurs and the readers with philosophical bent of mind. Though he talked of love too but it was he who laid stress on enlightenment (*marifa*) in Sufism.

His younger contemporary Maulana Jalal ad-Din Rumi (d. 1273) was another Sufi poet, thinker and teacher whose *Divan*, *Mathnavi* and Discourses have affected the minds and souls of great and small upto our own times. When Ibn Arabi was sometimes severely criticised, Maulana Rumi was lavishly praised. Although he expressed almost the same spiritual mysteries but as he put forth in the genera of poetic language, he was appreciated. Otherwise how it would have happened that many eminent Muslims scholars could interpret his statements in the terms actually used by Ibn Arabi³¹. His influence upon the Muslim Culture and among the Sufis have been so great that his *Mathnavi* has been called "Quran in Persian" by Jami (d. 1492) the famous poet and hagiographer. While the spiritual pattern brought about by Ibn Arabi has been called theosophical Sufism³⁵, that of Rumi is the Sufism beginning in Love and ending in Love. Here "the relation between man and God is perceived as that ... of a lover yearning for his beloved." It may be called *Tassawwuf-i-Ashiqana* (Sufism of Lovers).

If I should praise Love in a hundred
Thousand tongues,
It's beauty greater than all vessels.

First I was born of his Love; in the
end I gave my heart to him,
As the fruit is born from the branch
and hangs down from the branch.³⁶

Intellect says: "the six directions are
a limit, and there is no way out".

Love says: "There is a way, and I
have gone it several times." (*Divan*)

The Persian poetry is steeped in love. The mystic poets perceived essence of God as Love and Creation as its natural result. Both the ways of looking at the Creator and Creation with the eyes of Love and Intellect were, however, intermingled in later times. When Hadrat Sultan Bahu appeared on the scene a long time afterwards, two views of love and gnosis combined together had already gained approval of the Sufis as the whole truth — a perfect *Sufi* doctrine in synthetic form. It had been acknowledged that *Ishq* (love) and *Marifa* (knowledge) were the outcome of the same spirit that inspired the Sufis and saints.

So far the *Wahdat al-wujud* is concerned, though it had been criticised by many *Sufi* thinkers from Syed Ala ud-Dawla Simnani (d. 1336)³⁷ to Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi, Mujaddid Alif Thani (d. 1624),³⁸ yet none of them had been able to reject it as a whole. Hadrat Mujaddid called it a

state not a station or the final goal. Many theologians and theosophical-minded scholar, among them Shah Waliullah Dehlavi and Hadrat Mujaddid's own predecessor like Mirza Mazhar Janjanaan reconciled both the extreme views of Ibn Arabi's *Wahdat al-wujud* (the unicity of Being) and Mujaddid's *Wahdat al-shuhud* (unity of witness or phenomena) and considered them only as putting forth the same view in a different manner. One of the later *Sufi* commentators³² ventured to explain the paradox in a different way. He came to conclude his study with the view that the *suluk* (Sufi journey) of Hadrat Mujaddid took him and his followers from one circle of consciousness (*latifa*) to another and then to the next, so their intuitional vision took every level of Reality analytically while Ibn Arabi and the followers of his school envisaged the Existence as a whole. It was why the difference arose between the theories of *Wahdat al-wujud* and *Wahdat al-shuhud*.

In spite of all this, the discussion still continues in some sections of Sufis who insist upon maintaining the difference.³³ So far the position of Hadrat Sultan Bahu is concerned he followed Ibn Arab like other Sufis of Punjab, many of them poets like him, from Bulleh Shah (1692-1758) to Khawaja Ghulam Farid (1845-1901). However he sometimes seems to give concession to the theologians retaining the view of Reality differently.³⁹

Previously two Sufi Orders were mentioned i.e. Qadiriya and Suhrawardiya. In Sultan Bahu's times two other Orders, Chishtiya and Naqshbandiya, were most prevalent in the Indian sub-continent. Khawaja Moin al-Din

Chishti (d. 1236) came from Khurasan and making Ajmer his centre revolutionised the whole Indian society within a short time. Many tribes of Rajputs and the members of other castes were converted to Islam. Khawaja's *Khulafa* made the Chishtiya Order very popular in India.

The Naqshbandiya Order founded by Khawaja Bahaud-Din of Bokhara (d. 1390) was brought to India by Khawaja Baqi billah (d. 1603) during Akbar's reign. Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi called Mujaddid Alif Thani, formerly the disciple of a Qadiriya Shaikh, became his *Khalifa* who spread this Order far and wide in India.

Hadrat Sultan Bahu was spiritually initiated by Hadrat Shaikh Abd al-Qadir Jilani in a vision but in the state of awakening. So he adhered to his *Tariqa* (Order). Moreover it is said that during his lifetime in the valley where his ancestors came to live, the Qadiriya Tariqa prevailed.⁴⁰ Both of the versions about Sultan Bahu's initiation in *Tariqa Qadiriya* may be true. He did not, of course, adhere to any traditional group; he called his own *suluk* (Sufi's inner journey) Qadiriya Sarwariya. He was obviously *Awaisi* (initiated spiritually by some Shaikh after his death) among the Sufis. He had some particular spiritual exercises to teach to his disciples. He was lavish in praise of Hadrat Shaikh Abd-al-Qadir Jilani and led the seekers of Truth on his and the Prophet's behalf. In *Risala Ruhi* he mentioned the spirit of Hadrat Shaikh among *Sultan al-Faqr* in these words: "One is the spirit of our Shaikh ___ reality of the Truth, light of the Absolute, witnessed for being on Haqq ___ Hadrat Mehbubub Subhani"⁴¹, and then

added:

“Bahu was allowed by the Mustafa (the Prophet) to instruct the mortals in the name of God.

We were initiated by the *Mustafa* himself and the *Mujtaba* himself called us his son!” (R, p. 20)

One last word about the term he always used for the Path he and his followers traversed. Upto the fifteenth century the term *tasawwuf* had actually lost its real meaning and purpose. In the past *Tasawwuf* was a dynamic movement to inculcate virtues, work hard to build up one's personality and character, seek guidance of a *Murshid*, do spiritual exercises for self-realization and perfection and then serve the people while adhering all the time loyally to the external Islamic law (*Sharia*) and discipline. But it lost its spirit when the Sufis started to quarrel and indulge in the intense discussions about details and minor points of the Sufi Doctrine. Now *Tasawwuf* became just a compendium of theosophical ideas. A poet once jokingly remarked: “Tasawwuf is good to give grace to the poetry”. And it is a fact that most of the poets, while having the life style quite contrary to the practical Sufis, exploited Sufi ideas and terminology to give an impression of depth to their thoughts while all that had been borrowed and only used creatively in poetry. The Sufis were averse to these intellectual games and wanted to use a new title or name for their Path and spirituality. So at this point the Sufis of later times and especially Sultan Bahu chose and adopted the

term *Faqr* in place of *Tasawwuf*. And the self-realized Sufi was called a perfect Faqir. Actually this term had already been used by the Sufis of the past but only scarcely. Hadrat Ali bin Uthman Hujwiri and many others knew that “central attitude in Sufi life is that of *faqr* (poverty)”⁴². Sultan Bahu discarded the term *Tasawwuf* and adopted Faqr for his Doctrine, Way and Method. For him it became a comprehensive term with all-pervasive dynamic spiritual qualities like *fana* (annihilation in God) *tawakkul* (complete trust in God) *sabr* (patience) *shukr* (gratitude) and *rida* (contentment) etc., etc. In the Indian sub-continent the mystic-philosopher poet Iqbal also came to use the term *Faqr*⁴³. The reasons were almost the same mentioned as above. But Hadrat Sultan Bahu's idea was very sublime about his *faqr*. He had been one among the Spirits of *Sultan al-Faqr* (king in the realm of Faqr) even before the Creation. To him the rank of a perfect Faqir was higher than all the Sufis and gnostics of the world. He himself declared to enjoy such an honour. He belongs to the group of Spirits of Faqirs who surpassed the status of all the *awlya* (Friends of God) and *Ghaws* (Helper) and *Qutub* (Pole of the saints). He declares, “You are justified if you call them God and it will also be true if you know them as the servants of God. He knows who knows.” (R, p.19)

He has often repeatedly mentioned the famous Sufi saying: “When the Faqr is perfect, so He is Allah!”

It simply means that when the Faqir reaches the destination of Faqr, the divine attributes are manifested in his person. So “it is not easy to be a Faqir, the greatest

mysteries of the Omnipotent are contemplated in Faqr.”
(MFK, p.164)

Now at the end it may be easy to understand what Sufism is or as to how it was understood in the past. Even today the Sufis are found still trying to put their ideas about Sufism in a different way. For example:

“Sufism is a way of looking at the world and a way of living in the world. It emphasises bringing one’s highest ideals with every day practice”.

(Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan)

“Sufism is education in that it has a body of knowledge which it transmits to those who have not got it.” (Idries Shah)

For most of the Western Sufi thinkers it is “Islamic esoterism.” But Hadrat Sultan Bahu defined Sufism in the term of Faqr by adding “action” to love and gnosis. Faqir is a Sufi who is proactive.

“Faqir always steers his vessel through storms” said Iqbal in one of his beautiful lyrical poems. And Hadrat Sultan Bahu advised:

“O seekers!

One who acquired knowledge and did not act, is not a man. One who acquired knowledge and duly practised it, is a man of wisdom.” (MFK, p.75)

and:

“The plane of Faqr and gnosis is higher and nobler than all the planes.” (MFK,p.214)

Life



The Ancestors

Hadrat Sultan Bahu's ancestors came from Arabia and they were Alavids¹. When the persecution of *Syeds*² was continued by every government of the *Omyyids* and after them the *Abasides*, many clans of *Syeds* migrated from Arabia and Iraq, guarded by their kinsfolk, the *Alavids*, to *Khorasan* and *Afghanistan*. It is said that a group of *Alavids* captured *Hirat* and for some time established their rule over the region while others joined the armies of *Sultans* of neighboring states and countries. One of the troops of *Alavids* under the command of their chief *Mir Qutub Shah*, accompanied *Sultan Mahmood* of *Ghazna* during his campaign to conquer *Somnath* in *India*. Finding them so brave and loyal, the *Sultan* granted them the title of *Awan* (assistants)³. After the capture of *Somnath*, *Mir Qutub Shah* sought the permission of the *Sultan* to conquer the smaller but independent states of the *Rajas*, *Janjua* and *Chauhan*, of the northern areas of *Punjab*. The *Sultan* acceded to his request and *Mir Qutub Shah* with his tribesmen attacked these states of *Rajputs* located over the platitude of *Pothohar* and the area stretched as far as *Kalabagh* at the bank of *River Indus*. He conquered them all and the ruling *Rajput* families were scattered taking

refuge in their forts down the hills of Salt Range mountains or to their settlements in the east of Soan areas. Mir Qutub Shah got vacated a beautiful tract of land south of Soan river called Soon Valley⁴ for the settlement of his own men and he himself after handing over the administration of the colony to his sons, left for Baghdad where he died and was buried there.

There was and still exists, a village called Anga⁵ in the Soon Valley where Mir Qutub Shah had camped with his troops for a while. A few important families of his tribesmen decided to settle there. It seems that some of the local tribes of previous castes which stayed and had accordingly accepted Islam got mixed up with Awans and so by intermarriages all the inhabitant came to be known Awan. One may rarely find pure Awan now because of such relationship. This phenomenon is not exclusive among Awans, this is almost universal. One may see in the Muslim History that the North African nationalities wholly turned Arab due to the mixture of race and culture.

The Awans occupied themselves for livelihood in farming and getting themselves employed in the Muslim armies as soldiers and warriors. The Awans in Soon Valley or elsewhere still follow the footsteps of their forefathers, though now many of them may also be found listed in the Civil Service of Pakistan. Moreover the Awans also came to be well-known as *Qaris* (reciters of the Quran) and *Huffaz* (memorizers of the Book) with a considerable religious knowledge. They preserved most of the Arab customs and traditions which were observed amongst them

even in the days of Hadrat Sultan Bahu. His biographer Sultan Hamid describes about the social culture:

“Due to their ancestry as being Hashimites and Alavids the Awan tribes still retain their good habits and excellent qualities. All the men and women are generous, brave, loyal, modest, honest and keep the promise. They give away charities and may spend all that they have to entertain their guests so their great and small are not rich enough. They believe in fair means of livelihood. Their *ulema*, *fuqha* and religious authorities take care of their fair and just earning These people serve their guests, *Huffaz* and the students of religious studies in the mosques and madrasas to such an extent that one can find no such instance in India anywhere. . . . Not a village may be seen where a man of vision is not found there. All the men and women say their prayers five times in the mosques in congregation and their mosques are established and refined like *darbars* (royal courts) In every mosque the lectures on Islamic jurisprudence or *Tafsir* (commentary on Holy Quran) are delivered regularly. In Ramadan all the people keep fast and any thing to be found for eating

and drinking during the day-time is not possible...”⁶

In such a religious community the elders of one of the Awan families were prominent among others for being Sufi Shaikhs⁷ and as pious men of knowledge. Nothing is known about others but the grave of Hadrat Sultan Bahu’s grandfather, Hadrat Shaikh Sultan Fateh Muhammad still exists with the *kataba* (inscription) of his name. The patients of arthritis come to see his *baraka* for recovery. It means that he must have been an outstanding *Sufi* or saint well-known for his powers of healing and for others miracles.

The Parents

Sultan Fateh Muhammad had a son Sultan Bazeed Muhammad. He grew up as a young pious man, *Hafiz-i-Quran*, strict follower of Sharia and *fiqeeh* (scholar of Islamic jurisprudence) and at the same time worldly-wise and the chief of his clan. He joined the army of Mughal Emperor and served under Prince Khurram who became the emperor afterwards under the title of Shah Jahan. It is not known whether he got married during his youth or not but it has been stated that during his middle age he returned to his village and married a very pious lady of his clan whose name was Bibi Rasti. A rock at the foot of a hillock surrounded and overshadowed by the tall trees of olive, acacia and fig and other bushes has been preserved where Bibi Rasti sat in seclusion absorbed in *dhikr* (remembrance).

There are traces of a water-spring around the rock but now it is dry. The people still come to pay visit to the place for seeking *baraka*.

Sultan Bazeed Muhammad was very much impressed by his wife’s piety and her religiosity. After thinking for sometime he decided to leave the service under the king and spend his later life in prayer and worship at some far off place.

It is said that he took his horse and after a few days he reached Multan where he was recognised by the guards who had orders by the king of Delhi through the governor of Multan to send him to Delhi at once. Sultan Bazeed Muhammad sought an interview with the governor and asked his permission to let him stay there. He took him into his service and moreover finding him a pious man accepted his three conditions as well:

- i) that he would stay in a separate house in the clean suburban area,
- ii) that he would remain independent,
- iii) that he would not salute as a courtier.

But as it happened, after a few months there appeared a discord between the governor of Multan and Raja Marwat of Bikanir somewhere on the boundary lines. The governor prepared his army for a battle and did not remember Sultan Bazeed Muhammad. When he, however, heard about the governor’s intention, he presented himself to the governor and asked his permission to go alone for the combat. The governor and others were surprised but still the brave warrior was allowed. He took the picture of Raja

from the court, rode his horse and reached the enemy's capital city. He went straight inside the fort, left the horse aside and entered the court where the Raja sat upon the throne. With electric speed he rushed headlong, cut the head of Raja, threw it in a bag and riding his horse fled out of the fort and city. The enemy's soldiers chased but he got away soon out of their boundaries of state. Sultan Bazeed Muhammad presented the head of Raja Marwat to the governor and the matter between the rulers ended there without further bloodshed.

But now Sultan Bazeed Muhammad could not remain unknown any more in the vicinity. First the brothers-in-law of Sultan Bazeed Muhammad with their servants reached Multan looking for him. They found him out easily because of his fresh fame of bravery and requested him to return to his home-village. Sultan Bazeed Muhammad agreed to return on one condition. They should go back then and duly ask their sister's willingness about his return. They did as they had been told to do. Then Bibi Rasti disclosed all that had been revealed to her in a vision. She told them that she was pregnant with a son who would be a born saint and he was destined to be born in the region around the bank of river Chenab. She asked them to take her to her husband at Multan.

At the same time the governor of Multan received orders to dispatch Sultan Bazeed Muhammad to the capital to join the Royal Army. Sultan Bazeed Muhammad, on knowing this, submitted an application to the king of Delhi through the governor that he might be permitted to retire

from the active service and allowed to spend the rest of his life in prayer and *Dhikr Adhkar* somewhere peacefully. Not only the sanction for retirement was granted, he was also honoured by a reward in the form of a *jagir* near Shorkot Castle. So the husband and wife with their servants shifted to settle in the Shorkot Town and occupied their *jagir*. It is said that Sultan Bazeed Muhammad had another village also as a *jagir* at Multan that might have been granted to him by the governor or the King himself.

The child and his education

It is narrated that one or two sons were born before Hadrat Sultan Bahu. As Bibi Rasti had already been told in a vision about the birth of a son with great spiritual powers, she concentrated spiritually upon each son when he was born and he died. She, of course, neither worried nor grieved because she knew that the promised son was still awaited. When Sultan Bahu was born, the mother concentrated spiritually upon him but the babe accorded duly with the forceful blessed power. She was assured that it was certainly the baby destined to be a saint of great spiritual prowess. Then she saw that he did not take milk during the month of Ramadan and he was not like ordinary children. When he was a few years old and came out of the house with one of his servants, a distinctive aura could be seen around his person and especially a bright light on his forehead. The Hindu yogis became his admirers and if the statement of Sultan Hamid is to be believed, most of the

Hindus were converted to be Muslims which shocked the other members of their community.

Hadrat Sultan Bazeed Muhammad died when Sultan Bahu was just a child. He was buried in a graveyard nearby. His *mazar* (grave) is still visited by the *murids*. Then his mother Bibi Rasti took over to supervise his training and discipline and education.

Even since the beginning he was ecstatic by nature. He was often found absorbed in spiritual states of visions and super-sensory experiences. Consequently he could not concentrate on books for a long period.

This is, of course, natural with the people endowed with the propensities of ecstatic nature, to think intuitively and not to be able to concentrate on intellectual theories and the intricacies of jurisprudence and religious external laws. But they are always so intelligent inwardly that whereas others can gain something after the study of long hours, they can gain that within a few minutes. It is often thought that Hadrat Sultan Bahu was an illiterate or semi-literate Sufi. This is certainly not believable. Though Sultan Hamid does not give a hint about his early education, yet after the study of his books one can easily see that Hadrat Sultan Bahu was a well-read author and possessed all the knowledge of a man of letters to study others' books and write his own in the language of Sufis using their terminology that only a Sufi scholar could know and understand.

The misunderstanding about his lack of learning and scholarship arose first due to the hints proffered by Sultan Hamid. He wanted to show the saint as *ummi*

(unlettered) like the Prophet and his knowledge as merely *ilmi Ladunui* (knowledge directly from on high). Partly he was right but this was only half the truth.

The study of Hadrat Sultan Bahu's books on Sufi topics shows him a competent writer in Persian. He is so original in his style of prose and poetry that he could not have attained to this uniqueness in expression if he had not gone through a vast study of the Persian language and literature. Then we find so many references to Quranic Verses, *Ahadith*, commentaries of the religious authorities, Sufi authors and poets like Abu Talib Makki, Ghazzali, Rumi, Hafiz and even Khaqani etc., etc. How could he know the special terminology of the Sufis, which only the well-read Sufis would comprehend? But he often uses it to express and communicate his metaphysical ideas. It seems to be certain that he was *Hafiz-i-Quran*. Then he had read all the original books of Sufis in prose and poetry. One can also deduce this fact from his writings that he had photographic memory; he could easily employ his memory while quoting *Ahadith*, poetic lines and the aphorisms of the Sufis of the past. Actually he can be called a very learned person among the Sufi authors.

Why did then Sultan Hamid and others come to believe otherwise? There seem to be two reasons for this misunderstanding. The first has already been mentioned. Obviously Sultan Hamid, the author of *Manaqibi Sultani*, along with others wanted the readers to believe that all of the books of Hadrat Sultan Bahu were written under divine inspiration and most certainly they were. But they missed

the point that for that purpose the Sufi should not necessarily be illiterate. Even the scholarly Sufis like Hadrat Ibn Arabi, Abdul Karim al-Jili and others have claimed their writings to be *ilhami* (revealed through intuitive knowledge). It was quite inappropriate to declare Sultan Bahu illiterate merely to justify the fact that his books were divinely inspired.

The other reason is the casual utterances or jottings of Hadrat Sultan Bahu himself. For instance:

“This Faqir (Sultan Bahu) had not sufficient knowledge of external sciences.”

“Though we have little of formal learning, yet the spirit has been blessed with holiness by esoteric knowledge.”

“I and Muhammad-i-Arabi were both *Umami* (lit. illiterate) but he received knowledge from God and I gained it through the Apostle of Allah.”

Now in the first two instances the author has not wholly rejected the idea about his education. As far as I can see these phrases are only the expressions of the author's humility. He seems to be telling the reader that he is not the kind of man with erudition of scholars committed to intellectual pursuits. Obviously he wants to say that he is neither a *mufti* (religious scholar with “the knowledge of external sciences”) nor a *Qadi* (judge) nor an *Alam-i-Deen* (a religious authority); he is a practising *Faqir* and a *Murshid*.

In the third instance Hadrat Sultan Bahu likens him-

self to the Prophet who was *ummi*. But nobody has meant by *ummi* as a man, ignorant of knowledge. In Quran *nabiyy-il-ummi* for the Prophet (peace be upon him) has been used in Ch. Araf, V. 157. It only means in the context as “the Prophet among the illiterate Arabs.” In his *Tafsiri Hussaini*, Kamal-ud-Deen Hussain Waiz Kashfi Harvi has pointed out with reference to *Bahr al-Haqaiq* that the Arabs use the word *umm* for the original source as Makkah is called *Umm al-Qura* because all the cities and settlements originated from it and the Tablet⁸ has been called *Umm al-Kitab* because it is the source of Books⁹. The knowledge and existence of the Prophet has, therefore, been alluded to the Sacred Source (*umm*) so that it may be known that he is the First of all the worlds that formerly lay hidden and were indeed blessed with manifestation through him.

Now when Sultan Bahu calls himself *ummi* he only means to say that the source of all of his learning and knowledge is the Prophet of God. Elsewhere he declares:

I made the *sharia* my guide,

I got the knowledge of Reality from
Muhammad.

So now it is clear that Hadrat Sultan was a learned man of his time. When he claims not to have much of *ilmi zahir*, it only means that he had never been a student of any well-reputed *madrasa* (educational institution) and so he never graduated from any well-known institution with *dastar-i-Fadital* (a degree awarded for the eminence in knowledge).

The Training in Faqr

The words *faqr* and *faqir* have somewhat different connotations in the terminology of Sufism used by Hadrat Sultan Bahu. Faqr signifies the spiritual dynamism with a zeal for inner or outer action while the older terms Sufi and Sufism have generally come to be understood as contemplative or just doctrinal aspect of the Sufi theosophy. It is why Hadrat Sultan Bahu discarded the terms Sufi and *Tasawwuf* and preferred to be called a *faqir*. The *faqr* is therefore a suitable term about the Path that he had to traverse.

During the earlier years Hadrat Sultan Bahu's life there were all the worldly things available to attract him to the pursuit of pleasure. He was married sometimes earlier and later he married twice or thrice. He was the sole inheritor of a *jagir* and could afford to live like a rich and wealthy family man or he could even aspire to become a courtier or a military officer in the Royal Mughal Army but his career, due to his nature and family tradition, was predestined as a *Faqir*. His mother was sure about it due to her vision before his birth and then because of all his inclinations and propensities towards *faqr* since his childhood. The boy clearly showed the tendency to choose the Path of men of God.

Everybody will agree with the statement of *Manaqibi Sultani* that Sultan Bahu's mother was his first tutor, teacher and *Murshid*.¹⁰ She was the first exemplar

before him as a saint passing through all the states of absorption in the *dhikr*. During the remembrance of the name of Allah practised inwardly (*dhikri Khafi*) by her, she often sighed and seemed to be "shedding the tears of blood." He was the witness of her anxiety and at the same time of her contentment. Afterwards when he himself experienced such a state he called it *Hadoor-i-Haqq* (Presence before God). He often praises her and prays for her. (MFK, p. 94) She was a perfect preceptor for the born saint. Now, Hadrat Sultan Bahu, through his natural disposition to pay visits to the living darveshes and faqirs, to seek their company and share his spiritual experiences with them, set out on longer or shorter journeys. Here again the statements of the author of *Manaqibi Sultani* cause some confusion in the mind of a discerning reader. At first he describes a highly significant and meaningful vision seen and experienced by the young Sultan Bahu in detail. On the authority of his forefathers he reports:

"When Hadrat Sultan al-Arifin grew up and reached the age of maturity and wisdom, it happened one day that as he stood somewhere in the suburbs of Shorkot Town, suddenly a luminous, awesome and dignified horse-rider appeared before him. He took him by the hand and asked him to ride behind him. He felt awe and trembled, then asked: 'who are you, please?' The rider first looked at him attentively and said: 'I'm Ali bin Abi

Talib.' Then he enquired respectively: 'where are you taking me to?' He said: 'By the orders of Hadrat Muhammad (peace be upon him) I am taking you along to deliver in his illumined presence.' There and then he presented him in the meeting. At that time Hadrat Siddique Akbar (Abu Bakr), Hadrat Umar bin Khattab and Hadrat Uthman bin Affan were also present in the meeting of the people of the House (*Ahl-i-Bait*). As soon as Hadrat Siddique Akbar saw him at first, he met Hadrat Sultan al-Arifeen and left after blessing him with spiritual concentration. Then Hadrat Umar Bin Khattab and after that Hadrat Uthman met him in turn and they also departed after spiritual concentration. Only the People of the House stayed.

"I (Sultan Hamid) have heard through my forefathers the narrative that Hadrat Sultan Bahu used to say: 'By looking at Hadrat Ali's face it seemed that the Prophet, chief of the Universe, (peace be upon him) had authorised Hadrat Ali about my *baia* (vow of allegiance), but outwardly the Prophet maintained silence. Though Amir al-Mominin Assad Allah al-Ghalib Ali bin

Abi Talib was my first patron (*wasila*) and perfect guide, yet the Prophet stretched his both hands and he took *baia* and initiated me with *talqin*.¹¹ Hadrat Sultan al-Arifin in his book *Ain al-Faqr* and elsewhere, too, says that the perfect *Murshid* should be such a one like the Prophet who taught me *kalima*:

There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah.

After that the First and the Last became one Then the Prophet authorised Hadrat Pir Dastgir Shaikh Abd al-Qadir Jilani and he after blessing me with honour commanded me to guide and teach (*talqin*) the people.'¹²

After this lengthy statement the author goes on to assure the reader that Hadrat Sultan Bahu was a born saint, he became perfect after this vision and he was blessed with the spiritual attractions, illuminations and epiphanies which are only granted to the saints.

His description is accorded with Sultan Bahu's own revelation in *Risala Ruhi* where he narrates:

"Know that the author of this treatise ___ the perfect gnostic of Qadiriya (order) who is capable of every power and present at every station, absorbed in the Divine Essence of the Absolute ___ is pleased to say that when he was granted

the exaltation by the eternal favour of the Truth of Truth and commanded by the most noble Prophet of effluent light (may peace be upon him) to show the right path to all the mortals whether they are Muslims or infidels, fortunate or unfortunate, alive or dead, he with his tongue that scatters pearls, bestowed upon, me the titles of 'Mustafa, the second' and 'Mujtaba' of the last phase'.

Bahu was allowed by the Mustafa to instruct the mortals in the name of God. We have been initiated by Mustafa himself and the Mujtaba himself called us his son...." (p.29)

Having these evidences in view, there should have been no doubt about the *baia* of Hadrat Sultan Bahu. It is quite obvious that he had been spiritually initiated by the most high authorities in Islamic spirituality i.e. the Prophet (peace be upon him), Hadrat Ali and Hadrat Shaikh Abd al-Qadir Jilani whom he calls "Our Shaikh". In his own case Hadrat Sultan Bahu may be called *Awaisi* (having no direct initiator) which means free from the usual chains of the Orders. Hadrat Sultan Bahu calls such order in *Qadriya Tariqa* as "*Sarwaria Qadiriya*"¹³.

But the author of *Manaqib* has referred to Hadrat Sultan's oft-repeated statement always misunderstood in regard to its real meaning.

"This faqir Bahu has been roaming about

looking for a *Murshid* for years and now many years have passed that I have been looking for a seeker of Allah but I have found none". (QD, p. 138)

Here Hadrat Sultan Bahu simply means to tell that he did not find in his times any perfect murshid capable to give proper guidance to *murids* and at the same time he did not see any sincere seeker of Truth in his days. Now, we often read such views in the books of Sufis of the past when they were dismayed over the lack of sincerity as well as the incompetence of the *murshids* and *murids*. Those who have taken the Sultan Bahu's statement literally are grossly mistaken.

Then the author of *Manaqib* remarks that all the early journeys of Hadrat Sultan Bahu were just to find out a *murshid* (guide) for himself and at last he found out one in the person of Syed Abdur Rehman Qadiri in Delhi.

The author and all those who believe in this legend ignore the fact that Hadrat Sultan Bahu fervently mentions his mother with her pursuits in *dhik* and her spiritual states that he witnessed. He calls Hadrat Shaikh Abd al-Qadir Jilani his *Shaikh* (spiritual teacher) and not even once he gives a hint of any other Pir or Murshid. Finally one seems justified to hold the view that at home during his early boyhood his mother instructed him spiritually and then he was blessed by the Vision of the Prophet's meeting and was initiated by the Prophet himself. After a critical study of the story of *baia* at the hand of Syed Abdur Rehman Qadiri none can believe it to be true. It was perhaps just a guess-

work.

The Tariqa

Hadrat Sultan Bahu's *tariqa* (school of guidance for traversing the Path) was Qadiriya. The Qadiriya Order was founded by Hadrat Shaikh Abd al-Qadir Jilani (d. 1166). He has been acknowledged by the Sufis all over the world as a great spiritual personality in the history of *Tasawwuf*. Though some of the orientalist have expressed their doubts about his position among his contemporary Sufis and his influence during his life-time yet all their views seem to be the outcome of their lack of vision while studying "about Sufism". It is a pity that they are sometimes deluded by their own suppositions regarding the method of their so-called "neutral" research. They have their own way of looking at the Sufis' work of the past and present and they pose themselves as impartial observers. They look at the outward phenomenon of Sufism like the number of followers of a *Shaikh*, the evolutionary process of the *tariqa* and the writings, if any, ___ indeed all that they on their part like to discover. While probing into the biographical data of their subject, they so often completely ignore the evidence of other Sufis of his days or that of those coming afterwards. They obviously do not believe how the darveshes and Sufi wayfarers, after the death of a great saint, can visualise his spiritual influence upon their progress on the Path and feel his special *barak* (spiritual force) still flowing towards them inwardly. Otherwise there seems no reason

for their exaggeration to eulogize about the Shaikh's extraordinary favour and support or his spiritual *faid* (emanations from the heart of a shaikh even after his death). The scholars, studying "about Sufism", unfortunately do not consider these important factors justifying a shaikh's fame as a great Sufi and saint. Even the sympathetic type of the research scholars like Dr. Annemarie Schimmel (whom I personally believe to be a Sufi scholar)¹⁴ remarks casting doubts about Hadrat Shaikh Abd al-Qadir Jilani's greatness:

"At the same time that elder Suhrawardy laid the foundation of his order, a Hanbalite preacher in Baghdad was attracting large crowds of faithful by his sermons and exhortations, though his works reveal but little of the lofty mystical states of which his contemporaries spoke. This ascetic preacher was Abdul Qadir al-Gilani (1088 - 1166) from the Caspian Sea, probably the most popular saint in the Islamic world, whose name is surrounded by innumerable legends that scarcely fit the image of the stern, sober representative of contrition and mystical fear..... A satisfactory explanation of the transition from the sober Hanbalite preacher (that he was not a pure ascetic is clear from the fact that he had forty-nine sons!) to the prototype of saintliness venerated

all over the Muslim world is still lacking.”¹⁵

J. S. Trimmingham among others, though his vast study of the history of Sufism is admirable, is harsher in criticism of Hadrat Shaikh Abd al-Qadir Jilani's personality and tariqa:

“It is difficult to penetrate through the mists of legend which formed even during the life-time of Abd al-Qadir Ibn Abi Salih Jangidost and thickened rapidly after his death, and to discern why he, out of the hundreds of saintly figures of the period, survived in a unique way to become the inspirer of millions, a heavenly receiver of petitions and bestower of benefit, right up to the present day..... As for as his Sufi reputation there is not the slightest indication that he was a Sufi at all or that he struck any new note”¹⁶

J. S. Trimmingham does not give credit to the author of *Bahjat al-Asrar* for collecting evidence regarding the biographical information about the saint. He refers to the opinion of Taqi ad-Din al-Wasiti who calls him “a liar” and his book “a tissue of lies”. But on the contrary one finds the book so important that such a great Sufi scholar like Shaikh Abd al-Haq Muhaddith of Delhi (d. 1642) translated it into Persian. The orientalist do not pay heed to the views of the great Sufis from Maulana Abdur-Rehman Jami (d. 1492) to Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi Mujaddid Alif Thani (d . 1624)

who have acknowledged the authority of Shaikh Abd al-Qadir Jilani as a saint of the highest rank — “*Ghawth al-Azam*” (the greatest Help). Maulana Jami affirms that all the Contemporary Sufis regarded Hadrat Shaikh Abd al-Qadir with reverence. They witnessed his miraculous powers and they used to attend the meetings to listen his sermons. Among the later Shaikhs, though Hadrat Mujaddid himself claimed the highest rank for himself under the title *Qayyum* (the greatest permanent spiritual guide) yet he clarified his position by giving an explanation that even he, so many centuries after the death of Shaikh Abd al-Qadir, worked as his *naib munab* (mere vicegerent). Shah Waliullah Muhaddith of Delhi recorded his views about the Shaikh and his *Tariqa* more explicitly. He calls him a “real Awaisi” and believes him to be a grand (*buzurg*) Sufi with strong spiritual influence even after his death.¹⁷ Then he reveals through his intuitive knowledge that the *Tariqa* of Ghawth al-Azam is, in fact, Awaisi. It is like a stream that upto a distance goes on flowing upon the surface of the ground and then it passes on underground. Again it appears and flows in the form of a stream. Throughout the history of Sufism its appearance and disappearance has continued. Once the *tariqa* came to be invisible, next time it was revealed through the *batin* (interior) of some greater Shaikh. Such masters (*buzurg*) with *Awaisi* spirit, according to Shah walliullah, are always the superior saints of eminence and authority.

One can understand now that such views revealed through visions and spiritual intuition may not be accept-

able for the Orientalists but a "real" Sufi would not hesitate to believe in what he discovers or knows through *ilham* or *ilqa* (knowledge received through spiritual inspiration).

Certainly Hadrat Sultan Bahu himself was one of the great revealers of the Qadiriya Tariqa and may be counted among "the superior saints of eminence and authority" as observed by Shah Waliullah.

Hadrat Shaikh Abd al-Qadir Jilani was born in a Syed family of Jilan (Tibristan, Fars). His family was renowned for piety: His father and mother were Syed Abu Salih and Umm al-khair Fatima. His father died when he was just a child. His mother after his earlier education sent him to Baghdad for higher studies. He attended the *madrasas* and *khanqahs* and went through ascetic exercises under the Sufis like Hammad bin Dabbas and Abu Saeed Mukharrami.

Shaikh Abu Yusuf Hamadani suggested to him to teach and give sermons in the mosque. For forty years he taught religious subjects, guided the darveshes, sometimes exhorted the Caliphs on their misconduct and prayed for the whole Muslim *Ummah* (nation)

He lived like a teacher and scholar and dressed like them but the Sufis and *Mashaikh* recognised his rank. He married and had sons who were educated and continued his work in the *madrasa* and *khanqah*.

He has become a legendary figure due to the fame of his miracles during his life and afterwards. But his speech can be called a supreme miracle because thousands of people attended his weekly sermons delivered formerly

in mosque and later on outside the city in the vast ground. It is said that his voice was miraculously heard for and wide even at a great distance. Sometimes in a trance-like state he uttered inspired phrases and the Sufis among the audience never entertained any doubt about their genuineness. Once he said: "This very step of mine is upon the necks of all the Friends of God." All the Sufis and saints bowed their heads when he said so.

He was right when he wrote or uttered this verse in his poem (*qaseedah*):

The suns of others disappeared.

But our sun shining sky high

will never set.

The Sufis coming after him attested the truth and validity of this claim. Hadrat Shah Waliullah considered the fact and made it known by telling that "Shaikh Abd al-Qadir has been entrusted with the department of bestowing bounties upon the world. Therefore when he died, his spirit was transformed and posted among the Exalted Chiefs (angels of higher rank) so his spiritual existence became bountiful for the whole world.¹⁸"

Hadrat Sultan Bahu who was the spiritual heir of Hadrat Shaikh has been lavish in the praise of his master. According to him the Shaikh possesses the oceans of knowledge. Even a drop out of them can soak one. He got this rank through prayer and worship inwardly and outwardly. He who denies this claim is mad, unfortunate and devoid of the divine knowledge. His *Tariqa* is like the naked sword and whoever becomes his enemy, he is

beheaded by it. He is the command of God (*Amr-e-khuda*) and holds the command of every thing that is to happen. His key (to open the locks of hearts) will never be lost. His *murids* are divine gnostics (*Arif-i-billah*) and key-holders. His title is *Ghawth al-Thaqalan* and *Ghawth al-Jinn wal-Ins wal-Malaika* (The Help in both the worlds and the Help for jinns, human-beings and the angels).¹⁹ Hadrat Shaikh Abd al-Qadir Jilani died in (A.D. 1166) and lies buried under a magnificent tomb in Baghdad. His pupils, darveshes along with his sons spread the *tariqa* all over the Muslims world. Hadrat Sultan Bahu, through his vision, found his son Shaikh Abdur Razzaq among the immortal spirits of Fuqara. (R, p. 20)

Hadrat Sultan Bahu, grouped the Tariqa into two sub-orders: Zahidi Qadiri and Sarwari Qadiri. First is the regular order with the usual chains of saints. In this order the disciple is guided by a living murshid who takes him along to the high ranks through spiritual exercises and ascetic practices. But in Sarwari Qadiri one is directly guided by Hadrat Shaikh Abd al-Qadir Jilani or a revealer of Tariqa deputed by him at times. In this order the Shaikh al-Jilani himself or his deputy of the age can grant high ranks and stations only through *tawajjuh* (attention) and *jadhb* (attraction). There might be formal exercises but those are considered secondary before the Shaikh's dynamic spiritual power to help the disciple to reach his destined station. Hadrat Sultan Bahu was the upholder the Tariqa Sarwariya Qadiriya. J. S. Trimmingham neither knows about Hadrat Sultan Bahu nor he mentions Sarwariya

Qadiriya in his list of Qadiri Groups²⁰.

The Journeys

For a considerable period during his youth Hadrat Sultan Bahu wandered around to pay visits to the graves of the saints or to seek the company of the Faqirs and darveshes. Such journeys suit to the spiritual temperament of a born saint so that he may come out and travel about to see the signs of God in the outer reality of the world. For a Sufi or mystic the men of God are also His Signs. Therefore the author of *Manaqib* gives some detail of his journeys. He, however, does not indicate the earlier or later journeys but the reader can distinguish the earlier from the later trips.

He had believed in the living spiritual power of the saints of the past ever since he set out for Sufi journeys. He used to recite Quran over the graves of the saints in his own manner to awaken their spirituality for the sake of *baraka*. Among the Sufi practices, recommended by him, the disciples can still learn how to recite some specific chapter from Quran while visiting the saints' graves. (See the 6th chapter)

During his youth he visited the grave of Suhrawardy Shaikh, Khawaja Bahaud Din Zakriya at Multan. He recited Quran and prayed. He was there when a young Hindu girl, daughter of some local trader, saw him. She was so impressed by his luminous personality that she instantly accepted Islam and accompanied him. He married her in a nearby village in the presence of elders of that area and

brought her home.

He continued his journeys with the approval of her mother. He visited the grave of one, Pir Abdur-Rehman Qureshi, and many others like the graves of saints of Hujra Shah Muqim. It seems that he met the successor of the saint there as he has left hints about it in one of his treatises. (GA, pp. 16-17)

The author of *Manaqib* has described his meeting with Shah Habibullah Qadiri of a village situated somewhere at the bank of Rive Ravi called Garh Baghdad. It is said that he kept a pot of water boiling over the fire: whenever a seeker of truth approached him, he asked him to put his hand in the pot. As he put his hand, he would become a man of vision (*sahib-e-kashf*). When Sultan Bahu went to pay him a visit, he saw this charisma and just sat aside quietly. Then he told the Shah about the purpose of his visit. He asked him as to why he had not put his hand in the pot. Hadrat Sultan told him that he had seen the state of those who had put their hands, but he was not satisfied with what they had gained.

Hadrat Shah Habibullah was probably an ascetic. He asked Hadrat Sultan Bahu to stay and employ himself to fetch water for its use in the mosque. Hadrat Sultan Bahu took the leather bag for carrying water and in one turn filled up the baths and the yard with water. When Shah Habibullah was told about it, he called Hadrat Sultan Bahu and asked him: "O Darvesh! Do you possess some property or any other worldly thing?" When he replied "yes", the Shah said: "No duality here. Go and first relieve yourself of

money and property."

Hadrat Sultan Bahu went home and told his mother about what had been required of him. He took all the money and ornaments from the house and gave away to the poor. He came back to the *khanqah* of Garh Baghdad but the Shah asked him: "What about your wives?" Hadrat Sultan Bahu returned home and told his mother about that. The wives, as advised by his mother, told him that they could relinquish their claim to his benefit. When Sultan Bahu presented himself before the ascetic, he paid attention to him and concentrated upon him. But the visions, states and stations he saw, could not impress him. Hadrat Sultan Bahu addressed the ascetic Sufi: "O Shaikh, I had passed through these stations even when I was in my cradle."

Shah Habibullah tested him thrice in various ways but found him perfect. Upon that the ascetic suggested to him to go and pay a visit to his own Shaikh called Abdur-Rehman Qadiri at Delhi.

"When Hadrat Sultan al-Arifeen set out," the author of *Manaqib* says, "many *abdals* (substitutes) *awtads* (supports) and *majadhubs* (enraptured ones) came to meet him of their own accord on his way to Delhi."

His disciple Sultan Hameed of Bhakkar accompanied him. It is said that Syed Abdur Rehman came to know beforehand that a darvesh was coming to see him and he sent one of his darveshes to receive Sultan al-Arifeen and bring him to his place. For a while both met in solitude and as a devotee of the Hadrat Sultan Bahu's Order in the later period expressed his view, Pir Abdur Rehman just ac-

knowledged his perfection among the saints²¹. Apparently he did nothing more.

It seems Hadrat Sultan Bahu was, all the while that he stayed in Delhi, in a state of rapture and attraction (*jadhb*). Whosoever met him in the bazaar or mosque, felt the unusual emanations. On Friday, the whole assemblage in the mosque was overpowered by extraordinary feelings though Hadrat Sultan al-Arifeen waited for the seat in the back rows. The Emperor Aurangzab perceived all what was happening and ordered his men to find out the Faqir somewhere in the gathering. When they both met, the Emperor requested the Faqir for his blessing. He blessed him and prayed for him. Then he wrote a treatise "Awrang Shahi" for his benefit and asked him to promise that he would not again try to meet him. The Emperor promised and Sultan al-Arifeen returned home.

There is no evident proof if he ever met any other renowned Sufi of his time. Though he must have visited them as he himself repeatedly tells that for so many years he had wandered about looking for perfect *murshids* and sincere seekers, but he kept the record of his quest in secret. Moreover, it is not usual with him to be personal during the exposition of what he wants to teach. Out of all his disciples, followers and darveshes or those whom he respected, he sometimes remembers only his mother and even that merely because he wants to illustrate some particular states to be experienced during the *dhikr*. He was not a demonstrative type of Sufi or Pir. Most of the time he kept traveling alone or accompanied by one or two disciples and

declined to disclose his identity and distinctive status among the saints.

He spent almost all his life traveling in Cholistan, desert areas of Sind and Balochistan, hilly regions of Pothohar and Soon Sakesar. His smaller treatises must have been written or dictated during such travels for the people whom he met. These travels had only one purpose: "to show the right path to all the mortals." (R, p. 25)

He himself has never even once mentioned any of his miracles though as a Faqir of the highest rank (*malik al-Muliki Faqir*) he had been blessed with abundant of powerful spiritual powers to exercise for the betterment of humanity. Only his *murids* and hagiographers related the detail of some miracles in later periods.

Once he was passing through Cholistan and he cast a glance upon a woodcutter. He fell into a trance-like state and kept standing thereafter just unconscious of his whereabouts. After a considerable period when Hadrat Sultan Bahu returned by the same route, he found him still standing in "wonderment." As he stroked over his head, he came to senses but now he was a changed man. He had become a man of God (*muqarrib*).

During one of his journeys he and his devoted disciple Sultan Hameed were walking in the suburbs of Bhakkar. They came upon a mound with signs of ruins. As soon as Hadrat Sultan Bahu thought of sitting there for a while, he instantly left the spot telling Sultan Hameed that it had been a dwelling place of some cruel person.

They came down to the plain ground and Hadrat

Sultan Bahu lay down to sleep resting his head in the lap of Sultan Hameed. When the faithful disciple saw his *Murshid* in such a position that his body and clothes were covered with dust, he felt sorry for the master. He wished for enough riches to enable him to make a soft bed for him. But then he was only a poor man whose *Murshid* lay on the ground before him.

Hadrat Sultan Bahu immediately raised his head and looking at him, said: "Hameed, what were you thinking of?" The disciple told the truth. Hadrat Sultan Bahu asked him to close his eyes. As soon as he did so, Sultan Hameed found himself in a garden. A very beautiful lady gorgeously dressed sat there. She persuaded him to come near and marry her. Sultan Hameed declined her offer feeling the presence of his *murshid*. The vision ended and he opened his eyes. Hadrat Sultan Bahu asked:

"Why did you not accept her offers."

Sultan Hameed was sorry and replied, "O my perfect master! I only wish for the Light of God, I do not need wealth."

Hadrat Sultan Bahu said:

"Good! The effect of *Faqri Muhammadi* shall never part from your family.²²"

Once he was lying by the roadside that a group of Hindu yogis impolitely inquired about the way. He raised his head and said: "*La ilaha ill-Allah Muhammad-ur-Rasul al-Allah* (there is no god but God and Muhammad is the prophet of God)." Their hearts were moved by the *kalima Tayyiba* (sacred formula), so they were converted to Islam

and became enraptured saints.

During one of his journeys, a woman was baking loaves for the darveshes while her baby girl cried in the cradle. Hadrat Sultan al-Arifeen sat beside the cradle and looked at her. She became quiet. When she grew up, she remained intoxicated by the love of God. Many people came to her and she helped them spiritually. It is said that still the visitors come to her grave to receive *baraka*.

Hadrat Sultan Bahu met a Sufi elder named Shaikh Junaid in a town located at the bank of River Ravi somewhere in Multan region. He demonstrated some miraculous powers to impress and subdue the visitor. Hadrat Sultan Bahu changed that something he produced into another form. He and his son afterwards became his faithful devotees.

Another encounter with a Shaikh named Sher Shah has been related. The Shaikh used to attend the spiritual meeting of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) daily. When he was told that Hadrat Sultan Bahu also regularly attended *Majlisi-Nabwi*, the Shah saw him and said that he had never found him there. Hadrat Sultan Bahu informed him that such meetings were held at different planes and some of them are higher than the others. There are some levels where the Sufis of lower ranks are not allowed to enter. Hadrat Sultan Bahu spiritually took him to such a meeting of the highest level. Sher Shah's misunderstanding was removed. Then he appointed the Shah his *khalifa* and elevated him to some higher station.

Hadrat Sultan Bahu often used to come to Soon

Sakesar valley and visit the places around. This is the valley where his ancestors had lived and his parents had migrated from there to Shorkot, Jhang. According to the record left by the author of *Manaqib*, his successors, too, from time to time came and used to stay there particularly during the summer because the climate is cool and moderate there. During one of such sojourns Hadrat Sultan moved eastward a few miles away to Wanhar area where a tomb over the graves of Hadrat Ghawth al-Azam's great grandsons stands upon a hill near Kalar Kahar Lake. Hadrat Sultan Bahu was accompanied by one of his *Khalifas* Sultan Nawrang and a servant who had met them on the way. It was the month of Ramadan and Hadrat Sultan Bahu chose a secluded place to get himself absorbed in *dhikr-o-fikr* (remembrance and contemplation). He felt neither hungry nor thirsty. Only when the prayer time came, he duly offered prayer and again resumed the routine in a trance-like state. During the whole month a deer used to arrive at the meal times with a bag full of food hanging on its neck. They ate the meal and the deer went away. This continued until the *Ramadan* came to end. Hadrat Sultan Bahu was about to leave when both the companions told about the strange source of their daily meals. Then the deer appeared before Hadrat Sultan Bahu. As soon as he looked upon it, it lay dead. The servant perceived that the deer had gone to Heaven; he also requested the saint to grant him this honour. When Hadrat Sultan paid attention (*tawajjuh*) to him, he also expired. Both were buried somewhere upon the hill and the spot is still called Aahu Bahu. (*Aahu* in

Persian means "deer"). The place is still visited by the devotees from far and wide.

He never desired to show miracles; those just happened. Apart from these miracles, it is obvious that Hadrat Sultan Bahu traveled through the regions of Punjab, Sind and Balochistan just to teach the common people. Among them he felt at home. Staying amidst them, he never concealed his name and his credentials as a saint. He wrote *Dohas* (Abyat) for them which must have first been sung in his presence. He recorded his talks for their sake and left with them in the form of *risalas* (treatises or pamphlets). These very simple-hearted and semi-literate people kept his books and all other writings safe and even made efforts to propagate his teachings by copying the manuscripts and distributing among those who wanted to read.

Though after short and long journeys he always came back to Shorkot where his family was permanently settled, to look after his household affairs yet he never built a *Khanqah* or *Dargah* (Sufi monastery). His house was just like a *dera* (country-house) like those of other farm-owners. He was a *faqir* free from all the customary proceedings of Sufis. In one of his books he compares the position of a *Sajjadah Nashin* and an *azad faqir* (free from formal customs) and admires the later. In his opinion an *azad faqir* can remain truthful and just while a *Sajjadah Nashin* has to pacify both the parties so he cannot express his view clearly and exactly. In fact, Hadrat Sultan Bahu himself was an *azad faqir* who neither made a party of followers nor organized a *halqa* (circle). All this was done

and arranged by his *Sajjadah Nashins* and *khulafa* many years afterwards.

Life Style

A Sufi saint's life is the expression of all that what he thinks, feels, teaches and prays. One of the Prophet's wives Hadrat Aisha said that the Prophet's whole life was in accordance with the Quran. Hadrat Sultan Bahu was a perfect Faqir. Such a man is a leader and exemplar for all in the community he lives in and among those who meet him during his travels and sojourns. The author of *Manaqib* has given a few hints about as to how Hadrat Sultan Bahu lived.

One may observe that he is the obedient son of his dear mother and that hers is the sole influence upon the child who has been left orphan since his father died during his childhood. When he grows up, he seems to have gathered knowledge at various *madrasas* and under a few teachers unknown to us. We do not know what books he read and what courses of study he followed. Perhaps he did not complete any of them. He acts upon her mother's advice to go out and pay visits to the graves of the *Awlya* of the past and to see the living Sufi elders of his own day.

Like a born saint that he was, he knew the rules of the Way of Faqr intuitively even when he first found himself in the company of darveshes and Faqirs. For instance when he met Shah Habibullah Qadiri of Garh Baghdad, he already knew the meaning of detachment

(*tark-i-duniya*). He had learnt how to renounce anything he possessed when demanded by an emergent need to fulfill a mission.

On the other hand he was a family man. It was an *Inaamdar's* family that must have been known among the inhabitants of the area as feudal. Sultan Hamid, his first biographer from his own family narrates on the authority of his elders that the *jagir* had consisted of more than twenty-five thousand acres of land²³. Though Hadrat Sultan Bahu was often away from home, his household affairs must have been looked after by his mother or the servants. The life inside the house must have been formally peaceful, orderly and regular. He had sons and daughters and he took care of their training and education diligently.

Some of the so-called research scholars have objected about the number of wives he had. Such observations only show the ignorance of those who actually know nothing about the basic principles underlying the life style of a Sufi or Faqir. A genuine Sufi always tries to follow the pattern of his Prophet's life. The Prophet himself had wives more than one and allowed his followers to have four wives at a time. Only he ordered to do justice in dealing with them. Then the Sufi saints married twice or thrice and had as many sons. Actually this objection has been brought to light during the modern time, otherwise this was never considered a problem during the previous ages. Even now in certain Muslim countries, the men have more than one wives. They live together and none takes such living so seriously as the outsiders look at it.

So Hadrat Sultan Bahu had eight sons and he saw to it that they should not be left uneducated.

Economically it must have been a well to do family, though not very rich and wealthy one. As it has been mentioned earlier there was another tract of agricultural land somewhere in Multan area. A considerable income was added to the existing financial benefits from that source, too. Though Sultan Bahu himself could not supervise regularly but the family would never have suffered financially because of his pursuits to fulfill his mission.

It is said that only once or twice he bought a pair of bullocks to plough the fields himself. Once he was ploughing when a respectable looking gentleman appeared and asked him to pray for his economical welfare. He just picked up a bit of clay and threw it in the field. The man saw that the whole field became full of the pieces of gold. Hadrat Sultan said, "Well, pick up as much as you like." He took away as much as he could and left. But Sultan Bahu set the bullocks free and started on a journey towards the deserts and thinly populated places.

He was a strict follower of the *Sharia*. He advised the seekers of truth first to adhere to the exoteric law and then adopt the Way of Faqr. Outwardly he lived like all other pious Muslims and never entertained the idea of showing distinction of his rank in the realm of Faqr among others.

But we can imagine that his disciples and *murids* must have been coming at his *dera* to pay a visit to their Murshid and seek guidance. The people in the vicinity

would have also known him as a *pir* (Spiritual guide) who often went out journeying in distant parts not known to them. Now-a-days there is a majority of people belonging to the Shia community living around the area of Darbar who do not care about *Sunni Tasawwuf* and their representatives. If the situation was similar even in those days, then Hadrat Sultan would not have attracted much attention of the people in his neighbourhood. Though they must have seen the strangers coming to the Awan Pir of Sunni sect from far and wide being duly entertained at his *dera*, yet they would not have been unduly alarmed because he had great respect for the People of the House (*Ahl-i-bait*). (R,p.30)

They must have observed the sights of deep reverence to be paid to him by his disciples on their arrival and departure. Hadrat Sultan Bahu expresses his own feelings in a doha:

May God shower mercy
over the *Shor* Town
where Bahu
passes the time ___ O Hu!

He takes care of his *talibs*
like the gardener
taking care of his plants ___ O Hu!

He nourishes them
in his presence
and casts a glance of love

and mercy upon them ___ O Hu!

Only they deserve
the title of Faqir
who can show you
the Friend

within your own house ___ O Hu!

He was a leader among his well-wishers and *murids*. The people did not come to him because he was a thinker, a poet or an orator who was capable to speak and express well but indolent in the practice of that he uttered or wrote. No, they could see for themselves that he was one of the saints who always present their own lives as example for others and teach them by demonstrating practically how to live in accordance with the moral and spiritual values ordained by God and conveyed by His Apostle to the mankind. Such men, like Sultan Bahu, may not be more well-known in their life but after their death "their sword comes out of the sheath" and they appear as Sultans among the saints and gnostics. Sultan Bahu lived thus during his life and now lives in the hearts and souls of the people. One can see that for oneself at the time of annual gathering (*urs*) at his *Darbar* in Jhang District.

Khulafa

A *Khalifa* (pl. *khulafa*) who may be called "deputy", is the disciple who is carefully and intentionally trained by the *Murshid* to continue his work. *Khilafat*

(deputation) is not awarded indiscriminately by the responsible spiritual directors. Generally it takes many years to remain in the service of one's *Murshid* to learn all that he has to teach. It has also happened in the history of *Tasawwuf* that a *darvesh* came to a *Murshid* already prepared and he was nominated *khalifa* within a day or two. But such occasions may be considered exceptions. Normally it was a rule that a disciple should stay in the company of his *Murshid* and regularly receive his spiritual attention. When the *Murshid* perceived stability in his character, balance in his temperament and perfection in spiritual discipline, he permitted and sometimes commanded him to initiate others as disciples.

Sultan Bahu would have initiated and guided many but a few of them were educated and trained by him to be teachers and masters in their circles. One of them was Sultan Nawrang Baluch of Kehtaran clan who accompanied him during his journey to Kalar-Kahar.

Sultan Nawrang belonged to a village of of Dera Ismail Khan. Sultan Hamid does not mention about his training period or any detail about his tutelage under his *Murshid*. He, however, narrates that he was often found in meditation surrounded by the disciples and *murids*. Whenever he raised his head and looked at them, "they would become men of vision and light of God illumined their hearts and they were blessed with Divine ecstasy."

Once he cast a glance at a dog, it was transformed due to his attention. It became a chief among the other dogs. They would get food for him and sat in a circle

around him. When Hadrat Sultan Bahu heard about it, he disliked it but upon being told that Sultan Nawrang did it unknowingly, he excused him.

It is said that he admitted many of his disciples into the *Majlisi Nabwi* by meditation.

He also left many *khulafa* like Shah Murad, Sultan Sitho, Noor Muhammad, the cobbler, and many others.

He had only one son. He lies buried somewhere in Dera Ismail Khan.

Mullah Maali of Dhadar (Baluchistan) came to Hadrat Sultan Bahu accompanied by two darveshes Mullah Misri and Alam Shah. They remained in the company of Murshid for a long period. When he was permitted to leave and guide others, the Murshid granted him the title of "*Kul*" (wholly perfect) among the darveshes. Mullah Maali's tomb is situated in a village near Sibi while Mullah Misri and Alam Shah were buried in Dhadar and Kandhar respectively.

Mohsin Shah Gilani of Ghotki (Sind) is a renowned khalifa of Hadrat Sultan Bahu. He was sent by his mother to the Murshid when he was just a child. Hadrat Sultan Bahu asked his companion to take the child back to his mother with the advice that he should first complete his studies. When he grew up and graduated from a madrasa, he proceeded to present himself before Hadrat Sultan al-Arifeen. But when he reached Shorkot, he found out that the Murshid had died a few days ago. On his death-bed Hadrat Sultan Bahu had advised his sons to present a *Naqsh* (figure) of Allah to the young man named Mohsin Shah

who was on his way to see him. As Mohsin Shah saw the *naqsh*, he fell unconscious and lay there for two days. When he came to his senses, he felt that he had been blessed with what he had wished for. He then returned to Ghotki and started to guide the seekers of truth.

He came to visit the *mazar* (grave) of Hadrat Sultan al-Arifeen thrice afterwards in the company of thousands of his murids. Through the efforts of Mohsin Shah, the people of a wide area came under his influence and many evil-doers gave up their bad ways. He had built a hospice where hundreds of guests were entertained daily. On being informed that somebody had arrived from the region around the River Chenab, he would come out to serve the guest himself personally.

After the death of Syed Mohsin Shah his sons and *khulafa* continued the work. His grandson Syed Jamal Shah was a poet and two of his verses have been recorded:

A little opium that the cup-bearer
put into the wine,
so intoxicated the companions that
they lay down unconscious of
themselves and their surroundings.

As the wine-jar and the goblet of
the cup-bearer were taken away,
nothing remained with us but grief
and sorrow²⁴.

One of Syed Mohsin Shah's *khulafa* was one Sultan Ibrahim who belonged to Awan tribe of Soon Sakesar. His

grave in his village *Amb shareef* is still visited by the devotees for seeking *baraka*.

At present we have more than a hundred of *Pirs* and *khulafa* amongst the descendants of Hadrat Sultan Bahu and others whose chain of *baraka (silsila)* reaches direct to the saint. It is why every year the number of murids are increasing.

Many *khanqahs*, *madrasas* and hospices can be found throughout the country where the *khulafa* and *murshids* supervise the multifarious functions. There are also trusts, academies and research-centres which publish the saint's books and carry on the research work about him and his Way.

The final point

When Hadrat Sultan Bahu reached the final point of attainment in this world, he was sixty three. He had spent all his life to accomplish his duties according to his calling — teaching and guiding the people. He took the spiritual blessings from door to door among the men and women living in the far off country-side and desert areas. He wandered about through neglected communities, generally disregarded by the Sufis and scholars alike, of the common people who were simple but possessed receptive minds and hearts. He had trained the *darveshes* and *faqirs* who could pursue the requirements of their Master's Order as the inspired deputies among the people whom he was to leave under their care. He must have felt quite contented that the

divine command to leave the world was in accordance with the destiny determined by God. He must have been ready to obey the Command of God.

On the first of *Jamadi al-Thani* 1102 A.H (February 1691 A.D.) Hadrat Sultan Bahu died on the Friday night just before dawn at Shorkot. The burial ceremony would have been very simple. He was buried inside the court of a small fort called *Qahrgan* located probably just at the foot of a high mound where the bigger fort of Shorkot had been built. The grave at that time was left without a tomb or any distinctive structure around it.

For seventy years the saint lay buried in the same place. His descendants, *Khulafa* and *faqirs* took care of the grave. Then a time came that his descendants had to migrate to far off places because of the atrocities committed against the Muslim population during the *Sikha Shahi* in Punjab (1839-1849). Only a few *darveshes* and attendants stayed there to supervise the grave. During the absence of the saint's family the river changed the direction and the water rushed to the walls of the fort. The *darveshes* digging out the graves took out the coffins of all others but they couldn't find out the coffin of Hadrat Sultan Bahu in his grave. They cried in anguish and prayed. Just then most of them were told in dreams and visions that somebody would appear and before the water reached there, he would dig out the coffin. They were satisfied and as they had expected a veiled person in green dress came upon the place and helped them in digging out the grave. He took out the coffin and disappeared as suddenly as he had arrived.

The *darveshes* buried the coffin at a lonely place as directed intuitively by the saint's spirit.

One hundred and fifty-seven years after the second burial the grave was endangered again due to the change in river's direction. At that time Hadrat Sultan Noor Ahmad, the sixth Sajjadah Nashin was present to supervise the removal of the coffin and its re-burial at some other place. *Khalifa* Muhammad Din Gujrati was probably there on this occasion because he has described the event in detail. Again it so happened that Hadrat Sultan Bahu's coffin couldn't be found out. At night the nephew of Sultan Noor Ahmad, Sultan Dost Muhammad was ordered to dig up the ground deeper. In the morning he along with a *darvesh* of Syed family dug out the coffin. Then after some consultation Sultan Noor Ahmad chose a spot one-mile away, for the burial. It was Friday when the coffin was placed in the grave. It took six months to build up the tomb, the mosque and the guestrooms. The mausoleum was decorated with beautiful coloured tiles and calligraphic art by the next Sajjadah Nashin Hadrat Muhammad Ameer Sultan. His refined taste for architecture and decorative art is appreciated by all who come to visit the saint's *mazar* (place of visitation).

Dr. Annemarie Schimmel remembers: "... And as one visits Sultan Bahu's mausoleum in the Jhang district one feels like encountering the joyous flowers of the spirit represented in the colourful tiles, which shine through the vast landscape." ²⁵

The murids and devotees call it *Darbar* (court).

They believe that it is a place where the invisible spiritual forces reside presided over by the spirit of the saint. These are there to bless the visitors, say "Amen" to their prayers and bestow *baraka* upon them. There is not a day that hundreds of people do not pay a visit to the Sultan's "Darbar".

Hadrat Sultan Bahu was a great a believer in the blessings and the exercise of spiritual power of the saints buried in the graves. He used to teach the disciples how to recite Quran in a particular way over the graves and pray to God to receive support from them. His claim about his own grave is known to everyone who has read his books; he revealed that his grave would provide guidance, support and *baraka*. (AF, p. 189) The devotees openly verify the truth of this claim when they are asked about their experiences on their visits.

Faqir Noor Muhammad Kulachvi, a well-known author of the books on Sultan Bahu in the past decades, has expressed his vision in these lines:

Consider the grave of Bahu
like the mount of Sinai.

Get up like Moses to see the light clearly.
From his grave "O Hu!" Can be heard
every moment.

Even the particles of earth say aloud
"O Hu!" ___ then they repeat
"O Hu! O Hu!" (NH., Preface)

A visit to his "Darbar" refreshes the spirit of a wayfarer and he can pursue the Path with a new spiritual

vigour. A tormented suffering soul of a common man can find solace and comfort for his psyche. Even a worldly person, it is said, can find the best suggestions intuitively for his better future. The *darbar* seems to be a spot exuding miraculous powers to bless the expectant pilgrims.

Sajjadah Nashins

1. As narrated by the author of *Manaqib*, Hadrat Sultan Bahu's eldest son Hadrat Sultan Noor Muhammad had migrated to some other place, posting his younger brother Hadrat Sultan Wali Muhammad as the first Sajjadah Nashin of the *Darbar*. Hadrat Sultan Wali Muhammad had been sent by his father to Delhi and other seats of learning for education. He was a learned man and a good calligrapher. He had undergone spiritual training under his own father. Like his father he often left home to wander about in ecstatic moods. He also traveled frequently in the Saraiki regions. It was during one of such travels that he died in a village of Dera Ghazi Khan called Martah and was buried there.

2. His son Hadrat Sultan Muhammad Hussain was his successor, the second Sajjadah Nashin. When the Persian king Nadir Shah sacked Delhi (1730 A.D.) the disorder spread in the whole country. During such turbulent times Sultan Muhammad Hussain migrated to Layya area (Dera Ghazi Khan District) and took residence in a village called Naushera Syedan. He was still there when he died and was buried at the same place.

After sometime when the peace was restored, his son and Sajjadah Nashin Hadrat Hafiz Sultan Muhammad brought his coffin from Naushera to the *Darbar* and buried him under the Mausoleum of his great grandfather.

3. Hadrat Hafiz Sultan Muhammad became Sajjadah Nashin in 1200 A.H. He was the grandfather of Sultan Hamid, the author of *Manaqib*. He has written about his capabilities of organizations in detail. He was a man of influence who could inspire others to be good and pious. The doors of his guesthouse and hospice always remained open for all the people, rich or poor, high or low.

Sultan Hamid relates his daily routine and tells that at night he went out alone to the jungle and stayed there absorbed in remembrance of God. In the morning he would say the prayer in the *Jami* Mosque along-with others. At sunrise he again said prayer (*Ishraq*) and came out to receive visitors in the *khanqah*. He listened to them one by one and fulfilled their needs. He was generous; he helped and prayed for every helpless and needy person. At the same time he supervised his farms and agricultural lands. Wherever he was and whatever he did, he never forgot to remember God and say prayers in time.

He served and guided the *murids* for twenty-two years. It seems that he was the first Sajjadah Nashin who organized the Order of his ancestor and established the *khanqah* on regular basis.

4. Hadrat Sultan Ghulam Bahu was the fourth Sajjadah Nashin. He was born in 1197 A.H. in Khairpur Tanwen where his father with his family had taken refuge

during *Sikha Shahi* disorder. His name was Qutbud-Din but afterwards he came to be known under the title Ghulam Bahu (the slave of Bahu). It is said that he was still a baby when the well-known saint of that time Khawaja Muhkam Din Sehisrani came to see his father. He took the baby in his lap, blessed him and said, "This boy will be pious and felicitous; he will live long."

The local rulers and feudal lords had a great respect for him. He never hesitated to approach them to seek help and support for the poor.

He often stayed at Multan and most of the people there became his *murid* and some of them were nominated as *khulafa*.

Sultan Hamid, his son and the author of *Manaqib*, narrates that though he had not much of exoteric knowledge, yet in spirituality he was perfect. He was very regular in the performance of acts of worship, meditation and contemplation. His spiritual attention was so effective that the hearts were melted and moved. His miraculous powers reminded the devotees of *Sultan al-Arifeen's* overwhelming spiritual forces. So he was called *Bahu Thani* (The Second Bahu) by his *murids*. He died at the age of eighty-two.

He appointed many *khulafa* in various regions. Among them there were two *khalifas* from Soon Sakesar. One was Hafiz Khair Muhammad who came from Anga, the village of his ancestors. The other was Faqir Sher Shah who received instructions directly from the spirit of Hadrat Sultan Bahu himself. He was associated with Sultan Hamid who came to Soon Valley on his invitation once or twice.

He died at the Darbar and was buried there.

5. Hadrat Sultan Hafiz Salih Muhammad, the eldest son of Ghulam Bahu and the elder brother of Sultan Hamid, was the fifth *Sajjadah Nashin*. According to the statement of Sultan Hamid, he was detached, generous and selfless. He followed the *sharia* strictly. He was a good speaker and *Hafiz-i-Quran*. Just as he thought about an event, it materialized accordingly.

His eldest son Sultan Noor Muhammad died at the age of thirty-nine, so the younger brother Sultan Noor Ahmad was entrusted with the *Sajjada*.

6. Hadrat Sultan Noor Ahmad had performed Haj (pilgrimage to Makkah) earlier in the company of his elder brother Sultan Noor Muhammad. He is renowned for his piety and humility. He respected the *Sadat* (descendants of the Holy Prophet) and helped the poor. In summer he used to come to Soon Sakesar and pitched tents for himself and his companions where they stayed.

7. His son Hadrat Muhammad Ameer Sultan succeeded his father Hadrat Sultan Noor Ahmad. He was a man of very refined tastes and sometimes wrote poetry. It was he who decorated inner and outer walls, the ceiling, and the tomb of Darbar.

Moreover it was he who allowed a publisher of Lahore to publish the Urdu translations of Hadrat Sultan Bahu's books and treatises. Before that these lay hidden in the form of manuscripts with *murids* or *Sajjadah Nashins*. It was then that the reading public not related directly with the Saint's Order became acquainted with his teachings for

the first time.

Hadrat Muhammad Ameer Sultan built the bungalow where his father used to pitch tents near Ochhali village in the Soon Valley. It still stands there tolerably in good condition.

He had four sons:

- 1) Sultan Noor al-Hasan,
- 2) Muhammad Habib Sultan,
- 3) Hafiz Faiz Sultan,
- 4) Sultan Ghulam Jilani.

He nominated Hadrat Muhammad Habib Sultan for the seat of *Sajjadah Nashin* of Darbar and entrusted the supervision of *Mazar* of Hadrat Sultan Bahu's parents at Shorkot with Sultan Noor al-Hasan. (His eldest son Hadrat Haji Sultan Abd al-Majeed is the present *Sajjadah Nashin*). Hadrat Muhammad Ameer Sultan died in 1931 AD. and was buried at Darbar.

8. Hadrat Muhammad Habib Sultan in his time added construction around the Darbar and completed the buildings, which had been started earlier. He fulfilled his duties as *Sajjadah Nashin* for a long time and died on 1st January 1970 AD.

9. Muhammad Habib Sultan had no son. His younger brother Hadrat Hafiz Faiz Sultan declined to occupy the seat. It was then decided that Sultan Ghulam Jilani should be the next *Janashin* (successor).

Hadrat Sultan Ghulam Jilani is the direct descendant of the saint and ninth *Sajjadah Nashin*. The visitors often find him quiet but occasionally he talks with *faqirs*

and *darveshes* and scholars willingly. By nature he seems to be ecstatic. He reads *Risala Ruhi* as a *wird* of power and knows the doctrine and method revealed in it. All the ceremonies at Darbar are held with his permission and under his supervision.

The Work

Around the Darbar there is a vast area, consisting of ploughed fields, gardens and farmhouses, which is under the possession of some of the Sultan Bahu's descendants who preferred to stay close to the mausoleum of their great ancestor. The contours of the old *jagir* have been forgotten by the present generation. Perhaps there is no record available about its location. The existing tracts of land were probably purchased by the members of the later generations (specially Hadrat Sultan Noor Ahmad) afterwards. Now they live at their *deras* (country houses) situated all around the Darbar at certain distance.

Every clan and sub-clan of the tribe has a head who is a rightfully a *pir* (Spiritual guide / elders) but he cannot interfere in the administration of Darbar and all the other arrangements and management related to it. The *Sajjadah Nashin* of Darbar is venerated by all.

Obviously apart from the *Sajjadah Nashin*, the other descendants of the saint are also *pirs* and *murshids* and most of them have considerable following throughout Pakistan and even in the foreign countries. They have built *khanqahs* with *madrasas* and mosques at various places.

Hundreds and thousands of *murids* come to them for seeking guidance and *baraka* (blessing).

There are *khulafa* of *khulafa*, too, who can claim a large following. On the occasion of annual gathering they have their own provisional arrangements for themselves and their followers' accommodation.

In the past no attention was paid by the *Pirs* of the Order to publish the books and magazines for the propagation of Hadrat Sultan Bahu's teachings. Now some of the educated and enlightened members of the clan have paid attention to this important function of the calling. The performance and accomplishment of a few of the following research centres is appreciable:

1. Hadrat Sultan Bahu Academy, Lahore.
2. Hadrat Ghulam Dastgir Academy,
Darbar Hadrat Sultan Bahu, District Jhang.
3. Hadrat Sultan Bahu Research Institute, Lahore.
4. Hadrat Sultan Bahu Trust, Birmingham, U.K.
5. Hadrat Sultan Bahu Organization, Lahore.
6. Anjuman-i-Ghawthia (Islahi jamaat)
Darbar Hadrat Sultan Bahu, Jhang.
7. Al-Arifeens Publications, Jauhar Abad & Lahore.

Even three hundred years after the death of Hadrat Sultan Bahu, his blissful influence as a *Faqir* and saint, as a poet and writer and as a theosophist is increasing day by day. It is a fact that the work that was initiated by the Sultan al-Arifeen still continues.

Hadrat Sultan Bahu's Books

It is said that Hadrat Sultan Bahu wrote one hundred and forty books²⁶. Faqir Noor Muhammad claimed that he collected one hundred manuscripts and it is not known what became of them. At present only thirty-two books and treatises are available²⁷. During the early decades of the previous century these were printed and published in the form of Urdu translations except one or two of them alongwith Persian text. A religious minded and Sufi oriented Publisher Malik Fazal Din of Kashmiri Bazar Lahore, came forward and requested the then *Sajjadah Nashin* to entrust to him the manuscripts preserved in the *Khanqah* and allow him to get them translated and publish them for the benefit of the students of *Tasawwuf* and general readers. It is deplorable that most of the translations are not satisfactory. Though the meaning has somehow been conveyed almost correctly but the translation is not exact and appropriate. At the same time the publisher's sincerity of purpose is not to be doubted. It must be acknowledged that in spite of these shortcomings, the Sufi Publisher rendered great service through his Publishing House *Allah Wale ki Qaumi Dokan*, to make it known to the general public that Hadrat Sultan Bahu had written so many books containing "direct spiritual knowledge" of the saint.

However, the books in the form of original Persian manuscripts (copied by various *darveshes* at different times) are still found in the custody of many *murids*.

Hadrat Sultan Bahu Academy, Lahore and Hadrat Ghulam Dastgir Academy, Darbar Sultan Bahu, have published the English and Urdu translations of a few important books, which have to some extent fulfilled the need of the time. For example:

Hadrat Sultan Bahu Academy:

- i) Divan-i-Bahu (edited by the board of scholars)
- ii) Divan-i-Bahu (with Urdu translation by Dr. Sultan Altaf Ali)

Hadrat Ghulam Dastgir Academy (Pakistan):

- i) Abyat-i-Bahu (with Urdu translation and notes by Prof. Dr. Sultan Altaf Ali)
- ii) Abyat-i-Bahu (English translation By the present writer with the title "Says Bahu")
- iii) Divan-i-Bahu(English translation By the present writer)
- iv) Risala Ruhi (English translation of Ruhi & Ruhi Khurd By the present writer with the title "Of the Spirit")
- v) Risla Ruhi (Urdu translation by Dr. Sultan Altaf Ali)
- vi) Risala Ruhi Khurd (Urdu translation by present writer)

There is an other publishing Organization of Islahi Jamaat at Darbar Hadrat Sultan Bahu, which has published reliable Urdu translations of the saint's books like

- i) Ain al-Faqr
- ii) Nur al-Huda
- iii) Kalid al-Tawhid

by Said Ameer Khan Niazi. Recently Dr K.B.Nasim has also published a considerable number of books with text and Urdu translation. There are still many manuscripts which may be discovered in the due course²⁹. Anyhow the

presence of texts in the form of manuscripts or published books provide an opportunity to the keen reader to study and conceive an opinion about the author's way of expression and communication.

Language and Style

It may be noted that Hadrat Sultan Bahu is so original that sometimes the language he uses appears unpolished. Actually Hadrat Sultan Bahu has no regard for formalism. While writing, his whole attention is concentrated upon the communication of knowledge that is outcome of his own inner experiences. He adopts the diction which he thinks suitable for its correct presentation. He is so particular about it that he often uses the terms coined by himself with the combined or condensed phrases and words not in much use.

Hadrat Sultan Bahu, even as a writer, never forgets about his own position as a Sufi master and he is well aware of the originality of his views and visions. It is remarkable that as an author he presents his teachings with high degree of intensity and seriousness.

His language may be unrefined and his style may be the manifestation of his individualistic characteristics in writing but it is not so because he had not studied others and he was not wellacquainted with the others' style. As it has already been remarked, whatever he wrote, he wrote in the light of his own states and stations (*Ahwal-o-Maqamat*). Like many other Sufi authors, almost all of his writings

were the the dictates of his spiritual inspiration (*ilham*). In the beginning of many of his books he mentions about the presence of the Prophet who blessed the composition with approval. Some of his treatises seem to be written in trance-like state. Frithjof Schuon explains about such states and their effect upon the Sufis' attitude:

"..... Now the authors see in these states sources of inspiration, and of course not without reason; they do not dream of re-reading what they have written, nor, least of all, submitting their productions to the scrutiny of a critical intelligence which in their eyes is 'profane' because not ecstatic, and thus alien to the breath of the Spirit; they leave to the reader the task of fishing for pearls in the deepest and darkness of waters."³⁰

In such cases the method of presentation and style may be considered at a secondary level while the inspiration reigns supreme. It is the sublimity of inspiration that is important. Consequently the general reader whose literary taste has been cultivated by the study of literary masters finds difficulty in the appreciation of *Sufis'* works. Then the *Sufis* often use "scatter method" by mixing up theories, stories, fables, legends and verses in their books. For that reason modern reader often maintains that the whole work is illogical. He can see no scheme in the arrangement of material for production and the topics under discussion seem to him unrelated to each other. The most prominent

example is Maulana Rum's *Mathnavi* with all the characteristics of the Sufi style. The way of description seems to be illogical. "Yet there is a secret order behind this seemingly illogical work, similar to the design of the dome of Karatay Medrese, where large and small many-pointed stars are connected in mysterious ways."³¹

Hadrat Sultan Bahu obviously belongs to the tradition of these Sufi masters. He claims that he did never copy or imitate others. He always wrote under the inspiration "in the Presence of God and His Apostle." (NHK, p. 44)

He realizes that although his language is not refined but it is rich and tasteful due to the meaning and contents it communicates. It is sweet like the mixture of butter and honey. The diction and style of the "*faqirs*" is distinguished from that of the poets. The "*faqirs*" write with the awareness of the Presence when the poets make use of intellect and feelings. (NH, p. 227) He declares:

"I am the lover of the art of madness.

I don't care about the learning and sensibleness."

While reading his books one can see many aspects of his personality. He is a teacher, a poet, a theorist and a practicing *Faqir*. But the most important point to note is the fact that he always writes prose or poetry as a Grand *Murshid*.

The reader has to be cautious while reading the books of Hadrat Sultan Bahu. One who superficially studies him, is sometimes baffled by the repetition. Whether the author writes under inspiration or he dictates

the lecture in an ecstatic mood, in both cases one comes across this embarrassment. It is true that he repeats but at the same time he adds some points or makes an effort to explain in some different way. Then his style has its own subtle qualities. One does not know whether he uses these techniques knowingly or unknowingly. For instance, sometime he introduces a topic or uses an unfamiliar term but he does not elaborate. Yet the reader's confusion is removed when the author explains all that in some other book or in the same book somewhere else quite unexpectedly. The reader who knows this, becomes familiar with his method of expression and discussion and if he patiently and consistently continues the study, he feels no more uneasiness over the digression or repetition during the discourse.

Hadrat Sultan Bahu wrote prose and poetry in Persian, which was the cultural language of his time. The only exception is a small collection of *Dohas* (Abyat) that he wrote in his mother tongue, Punjabi.

Although the works of Hadrat Sultan Bahu have been published by different publishers yet almost all of the books and treatises in the form of translation, sometimes along with the original texts, are available at the bookshops to the general readers and scholars. But if a research scholar needs them for research purposes, he may look for various copies of manuscripts (*makhtutat*) in different libraries or seek help from the individuals who possess them.³²

Here is the list:

A. Prose

- 1) Ain al-Faqr
- 2) Ain al-Arifeen
- 3) Ameer al-Kawnain
- 4) Aql-i-Bedar
- 5) Asrar-i-Qadiri
- 6) Awrang Shahi
- 7) Dedar Bakhsh
- 8) Fazl al-Liqā
- 9) Ganj-i-Asrar
- 10) Ganj-i-Deen
- 11) Jam i al-Asrar
- 12) Kaleed al-Tawhid (Kalan)
- 13) Kaleed al-Tawhid (Khurd)
- 14) Kaleed-i-Jannat
- 15) Kashf al-Asrar
- 16) Majalisatun-Nabi
- 17) Miftah al-Arifeen
- 18) Mihk al Faqr (Kalan)
- 19) Mihk al Faqr (Khurd)
- 20) Muhabbat al-Asrar or Tarfat al-Ain
- 21) Muhkam al-Fuqara
- 22) Noor al-Huda (Kalan)
- 23) Noor al-Huda (Khurd)
- 24) Qurb-i-Dedar
- 25) Risala Ruhi (Kalan)
- 26) Risala Ruhi (Khurd)
- 27) Shams al-Arifeen
- 28) Sultan al-Wahm

29) Taufiq al-Hidayat

30) Tegh-i-Brehna

B. Poetry

1) Si-Harfi ___ Abyat-i-Bahu (Punjabi)

2) Divan-i-Bahu (Persian ghazals)

Persian : *Divan-i-Bahu*

Divan-i-Bahu is a small volume containing fifty-four Persian *ghazals* (oads) written in the tradition of classical Sufi Persian poetry. It was translated into English by the present writer and published with the foreward by Dr. Annemarie Schimmel.³³ The thought system is the same that has been fully discussed and explained in his other works like divine beauty, love, Unity of God and the related feelings and ecstatic states. So far his language and style are concerned I had offered a few hints in my introduction to the Divan already mentioned above:

“Sultan Bahu has generally adopted the usual mystical language and the style of Persian Sufi poets. But his language well phrased like that of Maulana (Rumi), is not well chiseled and polished yet it has its own grace, ardour and attraction. It assures the reader of poet’s sincerity and trust in his belief. He himself was aware of the originality though seemingly inelegance of his language and style.

“Although the language of this *Faqir’s* books is unpolished and lacks savour but it is, in fact, all like butter and honey. And the poets whose poetry seems to be

ripe with knowledge and learning are at a remote distance from the Divine Presence.” (NH. Persian, p. 160)

His inspiration came to him from the sacred sources. He stood upon the celestial level and sang of the Love Divine.

The ascetics and worshippers left this world behind, but the high ambition of the Gnostic (takes him away) from place to the Placeless.

Elsewhere he claims:

None can possibly reach the station where I reached;

I am the great falcon in the celestial realm:

no place for poor flies;

the Throne, the Pen, the Chair, and both the worlds have no way to the height.

Not even an angel can get there; that is not a place for mere desire. (KT, p. 11)

“Poets are generally considered to be the pupils of God (*Talamiz-ur-Rehman*). It is so because the source of mystical as well as poetical experience is the same. Both have the same characteristics³⁴ because the spiritual intuition and the poetic inspiration seem to be alike though the Sufis claim to enjoy union and communication with the Divine on a higher plane. Many Sufis have recorded their dialogues with God. They profess their books to be heavenly inspired like the Scriptures. But Hadrat Sultan Bahu

claims for himself the higher level of intuition and revelation among the Sufi authors.

‘Most of the elects and authors write books through inspiration (*ilham*) and this Faqir writes books after having been honoured by the presence before Muhammad, the Apostle of Allah (may peace be upon him), and blessed by the nearness of God.’

It is the same with the poems of this small collection (*The Divan*). The spirit and form is traditional as well as classical..... the reading exalts the soul and the disciple is transported to the higher planes of spiritual realm. This is the poetry of a great Sufi teacher and poet, and may, therefore, better be studied within the context of meaning and purpose of his Sufi thought system. This dictum of Dr. Samuel Johnson is as true of Sultan Bahu as it was of Rumi: ‘He (Rumi) makes plain to the Pilgrimage the secrets of the way of Unity, and unveils the mysteries of the Path and Eternal Truth.’ ”

As described earlier, the *Divan* has been edited and its translations in Urdu and English have already been published.

Punjabi : *Abyat* or *Si-Harfi*

The collection of Hadrat Sultan Bahu’s *Abyat* is very important because this has been the only means of keeping his name alive among the laity as well as literati. These quatrains have been composed in the form of *Dohas* which were popular mostly in Saraiki regions and also in

his ancestor’s living place called Soon Valley. One can find many instances of even illiterate persons of Soon Valley who could compose *dohas* to be sung in the public. Hadrat Sultan Bahu also chose this favourite form of lyrical poetry but he was a well-read poet who was conscious of diction and other requirements of the versification. So he wrote and composed *dohas* like an artist, which were later on collected under the title of *Abyat* or *Si-Harfi*.

The first collection was perhaps published by Malik Fazal Din of Lahore who, selected the title *Asli Mukammal Majmua Abyat-i-Sultan Bahu* (The original complete collection of *Abyat-i-Sultan Bahu*).

Then many copies of *Abyat* with various changes in numbers, arrangements and even words and phrases, were printed and published throughout Punjab and Sind.³⁵ A full collection, after a long time of search and research by Dr. Sultan Altaf Ali came into the readers’ hands in 1975. The first scholar who realized the mistakes of metrical system, committed by the transcribers and singers, in the *Abyat* was probably Dr. Syed Nazir Ahmad. He appreciated Hadrat Sultan Bahu’s poetry but he had no sympathy with his Sufi Order and his Sufi beliefs. Though he regulated the lines of some *Abyat* according to the specific metre but his opinion about Sufism behind the attempt led him to misconceived corrections.

There is no reason to doubt his good intentions. He did what he thought best. He did away with the name “Bahu” that according to the traditional use in the fourth line was therein quite appropriate. The words and phrases

were also inserted without discrimination. The serious students of Sufism and poetry did not like such experimentation by the scholar actually coming out of a science laboratory to delve into the aestheticism of poetry.³⁶ Even then the credit should go to him that he identified the problem.

Afterwards two improved collections were published, one by Muhammad Sharif Sabir and the other by Mumtaz Baluch.³⁷ For certain reasons I prefer the work of Sharif Sabir. Mumtaz Baluch, like Dr. Nazir Ahmad took liberty with the text by inserting words independently while Muhammad Sharif Sabir made a successful attempt to remove the same metrical disorders on the right lines. He took up the volume of collection compiled by Dr. Sultan Altaf Ali and just through setting the words in right order he corrected the metre of the verses. Now, I think the tasks of collection and improvement of metre in respect of *Abyat* has been completed.

The main subject of Hadrat Sultan Bahu's poetry is *Faqr* and its relevant topics. Whereas Dr. Sultan Altaf Ali collected the *Abyat*, he wrote a commentary, too. He has explained the *Abyat* with reference to the other books of Hadrat Sultan Bahu. This scholarly work shows it clearly that the topics of Hadrat Sultan Bahu's *Abyat* are the same as already presented by him in his works of prose.

Hadrat Sultan Bahu's *Abyat* are also admired due to the peculiarities of his language and style. He seems to be eclectic in the use of language. The people speaking different dialects of Punjabi find his language familiar and

closer to themselves. Most of all the people of Saraiki regions claim to own his language as their own. But the fact is that keeping the social and ethnic background of Hadrat Sultan Bahu in view one can perceive that he writes in the dialect that was spoken by the people in his own house. That dialect is still spoken in the Soon Valley with all-embracing effects of its neighboring dialects like Saraiki, Pothohari and to some extent even Hindko. So far Hadrat Sultan Bahu's language is concerned it was also influenced by the Jatki dialects of Jhang and Shahpur with the result that it became appreciable and acceptable to all.

Hadrat Sultan Bahu followed the formal style of *Doha* with the addition of "Hu" after each line. He did not compose his *dohas* like a Sufi singer but like a *Sufi Murshid*.³⁸ Sometimes one finds difficulty to associate the meaning of one line with the others. Dr. Nazir Ahmad particularly blames the poet for the disassociation of ideas in his verses. For our research scholar it is hard to distinguish a Sufi poet from a poet as understood in general sense. For a Sufi poet, meaning is more important which is often the outcome of his own spiritual experience. It is why the *Abyat* of Sultan Bahu are like inner monologues. The feelings have their own logic and one can comprehend the idea only when he reads each quatrain as a whole.

Similarly the imagery of Hadrat Sultan Bahu has some subtle aspects. Whereas he usually chooses the images from his own immediate environments like trees, flowers, floods, rivers, moonlight, stars, mountains and the whole atmosphere of agricultural farms, he also uses the

Sufic terms seemingly like ordinary metaphors. For example he uses tulip (*Lalah*) which is a symbol of the Sufi progress. When the wayfarer is directed by visions and dreams, his heart seems to him like a blooming "tulip". (Ab, 64) Even Baghdad is not just a city, it is the habitation of Love. (Ab, 31) The words used in *dhikr* of the Name of Allah like *lam* (L) *Lahu* (everything for Him) and *Bismillah* (In the Name of Allah) have also been employed to communicate a particular meaning.

Then he is prone to use the condensed form of words as he does so in his prose. He seems to make efforts to portray the whole atmosphere of spiritual world within the narrow form of a quatrain (*doha*). It is, however, interesting to note that where as the intellectuals find it strenuous for themselves to find out the real meaning, the singers as well as the listeners are enchanted and transported to a higher plane by the melody and music of the lyrical Abyat. The Abyat or Si-Harfi has been translated in many languages. The credit goes to Hadrat Ghulam Dastgir Academy for this accomplishment. At present the following volumes of Si-Harfi in various languages are available:

- i) Abyat-i-Bahu, *Ma'a tarjama wa Sharah* (Urdu translation and Notes by Dr. Sultan Altaf Ali)
- ii) Says Bahu (English translation by the present writer)
- iii) Abyat-i-Sultan Bahu (Sindi translation and Notes by Dr. Gul Hassan Laghari)
- iv) Abyat-i-Bahu (Pashto poetic translation by Faqir Abdul Hameed Kamil, Sarwari, Kulachvi)

And the following translations are under process.

- v) Abyat-i-Bahu (Arabic translation by Dr. Zahoor Ahmad Azhar)
- vi) Abyat-i-Bahu (Persian translation by Dr. Sultan Altaf Ali)
- vii) Abyat-i-Bahu (International edition with Arabic, Persian, Urdu and English translations by various writers, compiled by Sultan Arshad Al-Qadiri)
- viii) Ux-i-Bahu (Urdu poetic translation by Masood Qureshi)
- ix) Abyat-i-Bahu (Birahvi translation by Pir Muhammad Zubairani)
- x) Abyat-i-Bahu (Gojri translation by Dr. Sabir Aafaqi)
- xi) Abyat-i-Bahu (English translation by Maqbool Elahi)
- xii) Abyat-i-Bahu (Pakistani languages edition with Urdu, Sindi, Pashtu, Birahvi, Balochi, translations by various writers, compiled by Sultan Arshad Al-Qadiri)



Faqr

(Spiritual poverty)

www.yabahu.com

“Seek a humble life and poverty, and be content and happy with it. We learn from Abul-Faraj al-Warathani that Bishr Ibn al-Harith said:

“So Allah considered martyrdom a hidden pearl and offers it only to his most beloved servants. In the opinion of the believers, poverty (*Faqr*) is also such a hidden pearl.”

(Abdur-Rehman al-Sulami)

Sufism and Faqr

The Muslim Mystics in their own esoteric tradition are known as Sufis in the West. The other titles like *Faqir* and *Darvesh* are seldom used although these are well-known to the students of Sufi literature. Generally the three words *Sufi*, *Faqir* and *Darvesh* are understood synonyms; the spiritual wayfarer (*salik*) and seeker of truth (*talib-i-Haq*) can be called Sufi, Faqir or darvesh.¹ If we probe into the shades of their meaning in the historical or philological sense we can find out that they came out of different origins.

The term Sufi was coined sometimes in the second century of Hijra and the first man to be called Sufi was one Hashim of Kufa. Whether *Sufi* was derived of *safa* (purity) or *Suf* (woollen cloth) is not clear. Most probably it was due to the dress that this name was given to the group of ascetics who used to wear woollen clothes. It is why the word Sufi was translated as *pashmina-posh* (one who wears woollen clothes) in Persian.

The names *faqir* and *darvesh* came into use later on. It has been said that *faqir* (beggar) in Arabic is the same as *darvesh* (hanging on the door) in Persian. According to the Sufi sayings *faqir* and *darvesh* seem to possess the same qualities and attributes among the members of *Sufi* fraternity.

It cannot be known exactly why the *Sufis* were inclined to discard the title *Sufi*² and started by and by to introduce themselves and others in their company as *faqirs* or *darveshes*³. The pious ones and more sensitive amongst them probably felt that the *Sufis* had digressed from the Path or they had become rigid in their beliefs and discipline. They had become more academic and liked debate. Our Persian poets though themselves attached to the *Sufi Murshids* and their orders voiced their feelings of dislike about *Sufis* but admired the *faqirs*, *darveshes* and *qilandars*⁴.

Abu Hafs Hadded, when asked, "who is a *Sufi*?" retorted, "The *Sufi* does not ask who a *Sufi* is."

Previously the *Sufis* kept themselves busy in activity but eventually Sufism was used just to provide a topic for joyful discussion and the practice was wholly or partially ignored.

Saadi told in *Gulistan*: "what is the reality of Sufism?" one of the *shaikhs* of Syria was asked. He replied, "Formerly, they were a company in the world who were dispersed outwardly, but were inwardly collected. At present, they are a group who appear collected outwardly, but who are inwardly dispersed."

Dr. Javed Nurbakhsh has published a small volume of quotations about *Faqir* and *Faqir*.⁵ Before the exposition of Hadrat Sultan Bahu's views on the subject, it would be appropriate to get to know the use of these words in the Quran, Hadith and the books of great Sufi masters.

In these verses of Quran the word *faqir* has been

used in the sense as the *Murshids* understood it:

"O mankind! You are the poor (*fuqara*) in your relation to God, and God is the Rich, the Praiseworthy." (35:15)

"And God is Rich, and you are poor." (74:38)

"So Moses watered their flocks for them. Then he turned aside into the shade, and said; 'My Lord I am needy (*faqir*) of whatever good thou sendest down for me.' (24:28)

These verses provide a basis for all the qualities to the *Faqirs*.

In *hadith* (sayings of the Prophet) *faqir* has been lauded thus:

"Poverty is my pride and I glory in it."

"Poverty is glory to its possessor"

"Poverty approaches the point of infamy."

The last *hadith* has been explained by Dr. Javed in this way: "The esoteric explanation of this tradition is that when the *faqir* attains a state of complete self-negation, absolutely no need is sensed for anything at all. Here one, in the words of a Sufi shaikh, may even exclaim, "The true *faqir* has no need of God⁶."

On different occasions and according to their own points of view the Sufi masters have attempted to define *faqir*, describe its attributes and subsequently the levels of its perfection.

Abu Bakr Waseti related: "For quite a while I was

puzzled as to why the Sufis had chosen poverty over everything else. No one gave me a satisfactory answer until I asked Nasr abu Hammami. He replied, 'Because poverty is the first of the stations of Divine Unity (*tawhid*)' his answer made me content."

Muhammad Abu Fadhl Balkhi: "Concord (*mowafiqat*) is the basis of love; abandonment of repose is the basis of union; realisation of one's faults is the basis of poverty and poverty is the basis to the Truth."

The meaning of both the saying is clear. There is only One Truth: Allah is one. The first principle formula for a believer or a *Sufi* or *Faqir*. *Faqir* is the man who represents *Tawhid* through his intentions and actions. *Tawhid* is his pivot; it is his centre and he never moves away from it. In every need or situation he looks to Allah for fulfillment and guidance.

Junaid said: "Poverty is emptying the heart of forms."

Abul-Hasan Kharaqani: "The *darvesh* is someone whose heart is emptied of thoughts. He talks without speaking; he sees and hears, yet has neither sight nor hearing; he eats but tastes nothing. He has neither motion nor rest, neither joy nor grief."

Hujwiri: "The *faqir* is not simply one whose hand is empty of provisions, but one whose inner nature is void of desires."

One of the essential qualities of a *faqir* is to remain detached from the worldly desires. He should empty his heart of the forms for the Reality or the Truth. In every

condition or situation the *faqir* relies on God.

Here are few more sayings of the *Sufi* saints in this regard:

Shah Nematullah: "Initially poverty is renunciation of the world and all in it; ultimately it is annihilation (*fana*) in the Essence of the Integration of the Oneness."

Masuhi: "The *faqir* is one who has released detachment from all material means."

Sahl abu Abdullah was asked, "When may a *faqir* rest?" He answered, "When he sees himself as living only in the time (*waqt*) in which he is."

A *faqir* is always at the disposal of his *Murshid*. He acts according to the Divine Commands. His time is the time of inspiration and all the activities of his life are motivated by it accordingly. He is all the time aware of his time.

Yousuf abu Hussain Razi said: "The *faqir* is one who safeguards his 'moment', so if another moment enters his awareness while he is engaged in his 'moment' he becomes unworthy of the name of poverty."

Awareness and vigilance are the qualities, which are hallmarks of a *faqir's* personality. Outwardly he lives like others therefore his inner world remains invisible to the worldly people. They guard their secret carefully and prefer to stay away from the places of distinction. It only means that they may hold some important position or they may be assigned higher government posts but even then they remain detached.

A perfect *faqir* is the real man of God:

The man of God is a king 'neath darvesh-cloak,

The man of God is a treasure in a ruin,
 The man of God is a boundless sea,
 The man of God rains pearls without a cloud.
 The man of God hath hundred moons and skies,
 The man of God hath hundred suns.
 The man of God is made wise by the Truth,
 The man of God is not learned from books.
 The man of God has ridden away from Not-being,
 The man of God is gloriously attended.⁷ (Rumi)

Though Dr. Annemarie Schimmel recounts *Faqr* among the stations of Sufi way but she has very accurately observed: "The central attitude in Sufi life is that of faqr, 'poverty'.....The Sufis considered outward poverty a necessary station at the beginning of the Path, and they tried to preserve it as long as possible, often throughout their lives."

She notes: "Others have praised faqr as the central quality of the mystic" and quotes Rumi and Hujwiri:

Rumi: "*Faqr* is like the highest *Shaikh*, and all the hearts are *murids*, the hearts of lovers turn around it⁸."

Hujwiri: "Dervishhood in all its meanings is a metaphorical poverty, and amidst all its subordinate aspects there is a transcendent principle. The Divine mysteries come and go over the *dervish*, so that his affairs are acquired by himself, his actions attributed to himself, and his ideas

attached to himself. But when his affairs are freed from the bonds of acquisition, his actions are no more attributed to himself. Then he is the Way, not the wayfarer, i.e., the dervish is a place over which something is passing, not a wayfarer following his own will.⁹"

Faqr

The path of Faqr
 is far thither
 with no goal
 visible ___ O Hu!

Knowledge as well as teaching
 and
 learning as well as logic
 and even legends and stories,
 nothing is of use there ___ O Hu!

This world
 is an idol-temple.
 Nobody should trust it ___ O Hu!

Only that Faqir
 knows this,
 says Bahu,
 who dies before death

in the way of Faqr ___ O Hu!

AB,100

This *bait* reminds one of the following verses of Maulana Rumi:

“The affairs of *faqr* are beyond your comprehension; Do not look upon *faqr* with contempt. Because dervishes are beyond property and wealth, they possess abundant sustenance from the Almighty. Is “Poverty my pride” vain and false? No, there a hundred glories are hidden in it.”

With this perspective of Master’s tradition regarding *faqr* and *faqir* one may find it easier to understand what Hadrat Sultan Bahu has to say about *faqr*. He almost totally discards the terms of Sufi and *Tasawwuf* (Sufism) and expounds all his teachings under the heading of Faqr claiming for himself the title of Faqir.

How does a man or woman think of making the start on the Way of Faqr? One starts with the urge to know the purpose of life in the world and to realise it by following a specific code of conduct recommended by the great men like saints and Prophets. One begins with a feeling, which is ingrained in every human being’s nature to know God as a creator, believes in Him, worships Him and obeys His Messengers. It is religion indeed but here the seeker is concerned with its esoteric aspect. The inspiration comes in the form of an emotion in a deeper sense. Hadrat Sultan Bahu remarks:

“Faqr begins with a longing and ends in im-

mergence and submergence.” (AF,p.146)

Hadrat Amir Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani calls this feelings “an eternal light” that specifically shows the way to enlightenment¹⁰. One becomes certain about the Divine aim to create Adam and his superiority over the whole creation. Then he understands what has been told in the Quran:

“I only created mankind and the jinn that they might worship Me.” (51 : 56)

Man is required to worship God so that he might know Him (*la-yarifoon*). It is the knowledge or gnosis (*marifa*) which is to be attained.

The first part of the journey begins thereafter but here a *Sufi* and a *Faqir* seem to be fellow-travellers. They have to pursue the exoteric law regularly and sincerely. The exoteric law originates from the Islamic *sharia* because “Sufism is the spirituality or mysticism of the religion of Islam¹¹.” *Sharia* offers the guidance to the believer who willingly follows the external rules and regulations ordered or approved by Quran and *Sunna* (the Prophet’s way). It is the *sharia* that teaches how to worship God and take care of *awamir-o-nawahi* (commands and prohibitions by the divine law).

A *Sufi* or *Faqir* is a man of deep religious nature. He worships God devoutly. He is God-fearing and God-conscious so he adheres to the commands of God (*sharia*) most ardently.

He passionately follows the ethical system passed upon through Quran and *Sunna* as explained by the relig-

ious authorities.

After the *irada* (intention) the seeker as an individual struggles to get rid of the excesses in satisfying his appetites and controls his carnal desires. He has so often to say "No" to his commanding self (*Nafs-i-Ammara*) or the demands of his baser nature until he achieves the balance. He has to inculcate virtues, which are charity, humility, sympathy, sincerity, truthfulness and honesty etc., etc. He does not indulge what has been prohibited like gambling, eating pork, drinking wine, taking interest on loans and fornication.

When one develops morally an equilibrium resulting from his well-disciplined character, he should be ready to traverse the path. Now he is a seeker ___ seeker of Truth (*talib-i-Haq*).

Seeker (*Talib*)

Whosoever is the seeker of Truth, I am
at his service;

I shall take him along from the beginning
to the end.

O seeker, come! O seeker, come!
O seeker, come!

So that I convey you to God the
very first day. (R. 17)

The history of Muslim saints and Faqirs provide ample evidence of the fact that even in the first meeting with his *Murshid* a seeker is transported to some higher

plane. It is true but it is rare and it happens only in exceptional cases. It is expected of a seeker that he should approach the *Murshid* (spiritual guide) after some preparation. He must qualify himself to be admitted as a disciple in the circle of his teacher.

A seeker must know that neither his family title nor his family's prestige can help him in his pursuits of spiritual development and progress. Hadrat Sultan Bahu exhorts the aspirant: "O seeker of truth! If you are a Syed, let you be qualified with the morals and manners of (your ancestor) Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). If you are a Qurashite, let you be compassionate. If you are a theologian, aspire to be a *darvesh* and don't go out begging from door to door¹²." (NH, p. 98)

A seeker is careful and cautious to mix up with the people whose company may have bad effect upon his usual disposition. He should avoid the situations where he may get angry or irritated and greedy or jealous. (MFK, p. 300)

He looks always toward God when he is disturbed by a problem within. He prays and seeks spiritual help of the saints. (KTK, p. 91)

A seeker should give up the worldly ambitions and desires; he should always seek the company of pious scholars and faqirs. (GA, p. 24)

A seeker should prepare his mind for comprehension of mystical realities through studying books of classical Sufi authors. The person who studies the books of the Friends of God will partake wisdom in every respect. The *Baraka* of these books will bless him with sincere intention,

invocation and awakening of the heart. (KTK, p. 69, 222)

A seeker should always keep himself in touch with the saints by his studies. Hadrat Sultan Bahu's books can attract the seeker towards the world of spiritual realities. Hadrat Sultan Bahu claims almost in every book or treatise written by him that his writings may provide special guidance like a living *Murshid*. (NHK, p. 145)

Risala Ruhi (tr. Of the Spirit) is a revealed scripture. Its reading exudes special bliss and *baraka*:

"..... And if a seeker of the path of the spiritual conduct has an access to it (this treatise) and holds it fast, I will make him a gnostic with an enlightened mind." (p. 21)

Most of all, as already pointed out above, the seeker should have no concern or contact with the evil-minded persons:

One shouldn't accompany
the evil-minded.

We shouldn't thus disgrace
the spirit ___ O Hu!

The bitter *tummas* can't grow
into water melon
though you take them
to Makkah ___ O Hu!

The crows ne'er grow
into swans
though you feed them
with pearls ___ O Hu!

The wells
can ne'er be sweet,
says Bahu,
even if you put
loads of sugar into them ___ O Hu!
(Abyat, 182)

"A seeker should always be anxious to live in the company of *faqirs*. Even if he has to travel a long journey to visit him, he should not waver in his decision: "Come out in search of a perfect *Faqir*. Even if he resides at a great distance, don't hesitate to pay a visit to him." (MF, p.16)

A seeker is advised to spend his time in the company of *darveshes* and *faqirs* because "the company of the elect is also the means of (spiritual) ascension." (AB, p.14)

If the seeker is illiterate, Hadrat Sultan Bahu suggests that he should attend his grave and pray for himself; God will grant him the means of guidance. In this way the saint's grave may function for him like a living *Murshid*. (AF, p. 189)

A seeker must not be over-anxious to seek a guide. He may be misled by his extreme emotionality or some false mystic may exploit his over-ambitiousness. If only he is patient he will, by the grace of God, certainly find out the *Murshid* or the *Murshid* will find him out.

"The seeker cannot recognise the guide (*Murshid*) but the guide can know him. The call may discover the caller as the fortune knows the fortunate." (AK, p. 116)

Guide (*Murshid*)

They themselves have not been disciples
of anybody but they initiate others ___

O Hu!

Laborers they are

yet

they take away the whole harvest.

they fear not

the wrath of God ___ O Hu! (Abyat)

Apart from the fact that a *Murshid* helps the *murid* (disciple) with his spiritual assistance (*tawajjuh*) and with his powerful mysterious force called *baraka*, he is a man of knowledge (*ilm-o-marifa*) with a lot of personal experience of the past years when he himself had been a simple initiate. Then he passed through all the stages of moral and spiritual progress and reached the goal. A free-lancer *faqir* cannot be expected to help a wayfarer at every step because he himself is unaware of the difficulties. Only that teacher can guide properly whose career as a disciple has been regular and who has been authorised by the higher spiritual authorities to lead others. William Staddart aptly remarks: "In Sufism, the aspirant receives the rite of initiation from a Sufi master (*shaikh or murshid*) who, in his turn, has received it, at the beginning of his spiritual career, from his *shaikh* or spiritual master, and so on back to the Prophet himself who, by Divine Grace, initiated the first Sufis."¹³

A perfect *Murshid* is thoroughly versed in spiritual

matters and quite proficient to teach, guide and lead as a man of profound knowledge. His actions are imitated by his followers; he is an exemplar in the circle of *darveshes*. He can see deep into the soul of a newcomer and discern his problems. He can inspire him to walk forward with firm steps on the Path.

According to Hadrat Sultan Bahu only an *arif* (gnostic) or somebody higher than him whom he calls *maarif*, is capable to guide. An *arif* is always physically presents in the meeting of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) but the *maarif* is though physically visible in this world, yet spiritually he attends the meeting of the Prophet (peace be upon him). (AF, p.51)

The *Murshid* can transform the character and personality of his disciple. His animal tendencies are substituted with the better human inclinations to do good. (KTK, p. 22)

He can change one's destiny. (JA, p.38). The perfect *murshid* is a key to all the locks of the heart. (JA, p.25) He enters into the soul of the seeker and writes the Name Allah with his forefinger upon the heart and lights a fire within. Then at the second stage he opens the heart so that the seeker becomes an enlightened *arif*. (MFK, p.117)

The *Murshid* inspires love at the time of initiation and consequently the seeker gains everything without a demand or any hardship on his part. (NH, p. 188)

The *Murshid* should assist the seeker spiritually to enable him to cross all the stations. He should take him along to the meeting of the Prophet within a brief period

such as from dawn to sunrise. (AF, p. 112)

The perfect *Murshid* is a humane person but the imperfect one is like a dog, greedy and vicious. The perfect *Murshid* is compassionate but the imperfect one wastes away his own self. (MN, p. 22)

The *faid* (emanation, outpouring) of a *murshid* is like the "rain of Mercy" or wave of the ocean or the ray of the sun. (NH, p. 125)

The seeker is like a wax in the hands of the *Murshid* and he can make him a new man just by improving his wayward tendencies and indicating the right way to his self-development and self-realisation. Now he is the man who knows his purpose of life. This is done by the *Murshid* often imperceptibly:

One achieves all,
says Bahu,
when the old man
casts a glance at you for once ___ O Hu!
(Abyat)

The education starts and gradually the relationship between the *Murshid* and *murid* grows so intense that the *murid* loves his masters passionately. He could never have gained the power and "wealth" that he acquired from his *murshid*. For Maulana Rumi, his *murshid* represented "Absolute Light"¹⁴ as he never saw a person like him in the whole world.¹⁵ Hadrat Sultan Bahu says:

Let this body of mine turn into eyes.
Even then I may not be satisfied
to behold my *Murshid* ___ O Hu!

Let every hair of mine turn into millions
of eyes;
Let each one open and close in turn ___ O Hu!

Even then my zeal would not abate;
where should I go? O Hu!
The sight of my *Murshid* is like
millions and crores of pilgrimages for me
___ O Hu! (Abyat)

It is the *murshid* who teaches the doctrine of Faqr and tells the methods to achieve the goal ___ the Vision of God!

The Lord is neither on the Highest
Throne
nor in *kaaba*¹⁶ ___ O Hu!

The Lord is neither in the knowledge
of books nor He is at the pulpit
nor
in the prayer arch ___ O Hu!

I traveled a lot
but
He was neither in and around the
Ganges nor he was there in Benaris ___
O Hu!

But as I joined
the *Murshid*,

says Bahu,

I got rid of the whole toil ___ O Hu!

The Vision of God

It is necessary to tell the aspirant openly (*taalim*) or secretly (*talqin*) all about God and the Creation, in fact about the reality of the whole existence. In the light of this knowledge imparted to him at once or on different occasions the seeker is enabled to see the light at the end. It must never be considered ordinary knowledge. Actually it is so important that in a way the perfect *Murshid* through a discourse or exposition by any other means conveys the *murid* "to God the very first day." (R, p. 21) *Risala Ruhi* in which the doctrine of Faqr has been revealed, has been called by Hadrat Sultan Bahu "the perfect spiritual guide" for the initiate. He declares:

"And if a seeker of the path of the spiritual conduct has an access to it and holds it fast I will make him a gnostic (*arif*) with an enlightened mind." (R, p. 21)

The *Sufi* Doctrine generally means the theories, beliefs and principles propounded by the *Sufis* or *Faqirs* about the Divine Reality and Truth in the light of their intellectual and visionary experiences and more so in accordance with the Islamic source of knowledge. It serves as mental, moral and spiritual perspectives for the *murid* during his progress on his way to his spiritual destination.

The review in the *Risala* about the Being of Creator,

the Creation and also the position of man in relation to both is authentic. The saint speaks with the authority granted to him by God and His Apostle:

"Know that the author of this treatise ___ the perfect gnostic (*arif*) of Qadiriya (order) who is capable of every power and present at every station, absorbed in the Divine Essence of the Absolute ___ is pleased to say that ... he was granted the exaltation by the eternal favour of the Truth of Truth and commanded by the most noble Prophet of effluent light (may peace be upon him) to show the right path to all the mortals whether they are Muslims or infidels, fortunate or unfortunate alive or dead" (R,p. 22)

His writings abound with the metaphysical insights put forward by him as a grand *Shaikh* (*Shaikh al-kul*) in a "scattered" manner in his books. The modern reader feels difficulty to pick up the pieces and adjust them so that he might perceive the system as a whole. But fortunately here is one small treatise *Risala Ruhi*¹⁷ which contains all that was revealed to him during a highly spiritual trance-like state. "God forbid! If you consider this fine Covenant as the composition of this slave of God," he warns.

Hadrat Sultan Bahu having been stationed at the highest plane of stability (*tamkin*), scribed it in a state of spiritual disclosure. At the same time his spirit seems to be conscious of the seeker's presence who has directly been addressed by his Superior Spiritual Self during the Divine inspiration. (The treatise after the formal Bism-Allah begins with the imperative "know"). Borrowing the term

from Hadrat Ibn al-Arabi this state may be called *tamkin fil-Talvin* (stability in variegation).

The first inquiry that is expected of coming from a mature seeker may be in the form of a direct question: How can you describe the Divine Reality called Almighty God? Hadrat Sultan Bahu's answer is thereupon clear and definite: the vision of God as seen by His friends (*Awliya*) can be called "the Supreme Essence." (R, p. 16)

Then, how the universe came into being, may naturally be the next question. Thence begins the story of Divine Self-manifestation. There is a *hadith qudsi*¹⁸: God said: "I was a hidden treasure; I loved to be known and I created the world."

Hadrat Sultan Bahu follows *Shaikh al-Akbar* and his school of thought while explaining the Divine descent to manifest His Names, attributes, spirits, Universe and Man. One may say that at our level the whole universe may be called as self-manifestation of the One.

The Creation came into existence in stages. Hadrat Sultan Bahu has related these stages in accordance with the words of above-mentioned *hadith qudsi*. The terms for these stages are the same as formerly used by the theological thinkers. At this point of discussion the findings through reason and intuition are quite similar:

"*Kunto* 'I was' means *Ha-Huwiyyat*:

'the Divine Essence';

"*Kanzan* 'the treasure' means '*ya-Hut*':

the

first manifestation calling 'O Hu!';

"*Makhfiun* 'Hidden' means '*La-Hut*': the world of negation.

"*Fa-aradto* 'then I desired' means *Malakut*:

the world of pure intelligence;

"*An-urafa* 'to become known' means *Jabarut*:

the world of power;

"*Fa-khalaqtul khalq* "So I created the world' means *Nasut*: the world of body"

(R, p. 15)

So the Divine descent may be perceived in the following order:

Ha-Huwiyyat Divine nature (Creator)

or Hahut:

Ya-Hut: Sometimes called *Wahdat* or the Reality of Muhammad, the spirit of Muhammad (peace be upon him) ___ "the centre and animating principle of the whole created universe."

La-hut: the "world of Godhead": the presence of the Divine Names and Qualities.

Jabarut: the power, the archangelic world.

Malakut: the spiritual world, "the invisible, spiritual, angelic world."

Nasut: human nature, especially the corporeal form of man ___ and *khalq*: the whole creation including universe and all within it.

According to the metaphysical view of Ibn Arabi school called *Wahdat al-Wujud* "Each higher world contains the principles of that which lies below it and lacks nothing of the lower level of reality. That is why in God, one is separate from nothing¹⁹."

The basic formula (*Kalima Tayyiba*) in Islam is read: "There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the messenger of Allah."

The Sufis explain its meaning in the first clause by reading it in this way:

"There is no existent but Allah,"

Every thing in the Creation exists through Allah who manifested Himself in degrees and the universe came into existence.

William Stoddart has also noted: "the central doctrine of Sufism is *Wahdat al-Wujud*, the 'Oneness of being'²⁰. This is derived directly from the *Shahada*, which is understood not only as 'there is no god but God' but also as 'there is no reality except Reality.'"

Now what is the reality of Reality or what is the Reality of Divine Essence that caused the desire (*fa-aradto*) to manifest the "perfect powers of Beauty and Splendour in the clear mirrors of thousands of objects in the form of earthly elemental bodies.....?" It is Love having "presence" within the Divinity (*Hadrat-i-Ishq*). (R, p.16) In Islamic theosophy, Love and God are the names of One Reality. The author of "The Philosophy of *Faqirs*" holds the same view: "To a *Sufi*, God and Love are mutually convertible terms each implying the others, and both are compromised

in his definition of Existence²¹." Hadrat Sultan Bahu sees "Ishq" (Love) in Eternity where there is neither body nor spirit nor the Name of Rehman (Gracious). (JA, p. 60) Hadrat Sultan Bahu also points out that the intellect fails here and cannot comprehend the whole Truth. "Thousands and endless Caravans of reason were destroyed while trying to find out the nature of the Quiddity of His pure Being²²." (R,p.16)

All that you can say is: "He is Himself the sight, Himself the seer, and Himself the sight; He is Himself the Love, Himself the lover and Himself the beloved." (R,p.16)

Only an "*arif*" can understand who has attained the Union with God: "Wherever the gnostic who has joined (Allah) opens his eyes, beholds nothing but His Countenance, and removes away all the traces of other as well as his own self from himself so that he becomes absolute with the Absolute." (R, p. 17)

Dr. Khalifa Abdul Hakim quotes Rumi who said:

"If there had not been Love, how should there have been existence²³?"

The "Veil of *Meem*"

"There is no god but Allah,
Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah."

The other name of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is Ahmad²⁴. Hadrat Sultan Bahu states the creation of Muhammad at the very early stage of Divine manifestation not like a theosophist or a philosopher but like a poet under spiritual inspiration:

“Know that when the light of *Ahad* (One) desired to come out of the solitude of curtained canopy of *wahdat* (unity) and turned upon the multiplicity of objects, He demonstrated the splendour of His Beauty, greatly enhanced with purity. Both the worlds burnt over the candle of His Beauty like a moth; and then concealing Himself under the veil of *Meem*, took the form of *Ahmad*.” (R, p. 18)

“*Wahdat* is dawning of self on self,” a Sufi Murshid points out²⁵. Many terms have been used for this stage of self-revelation as God — Light of God, Light of Muhammad, Reality of Muhammad, Spirit of Muhammad.

The difference of *Meem* (M) between *Ahad* and *Ahmad* is a very favourite play of words among the *Sufi* poets. The author of *Gulshan-i-Raz*, Mahmood Shebistari said:

Ahad appeared in the *M* of Ahmad.

Or

There is only a difference of *M* between Ahmad and Ahad.

Even Ghalib, the famous Urdu and Persian poet of India, wrote:

Ahmad is the Light of Truth.

Ghalib’s predecessor whom Ghalib sometimes during his youth followed in poetry, Mirza Bedil wrote more clearly in a poem:

Nothing was added to Ahmad by Ahad;
If *M* was added, it was also quite the same.

Hadrat Sultan Bahu followed the Sufi poets in *Ri-sala Ruhi* by describing *Meem* for Muhammad²⁶. Elsewhere he remarked: ‘Be it known that the whole creation came into existence through the Light of Muhammad and the Light of Muhammad was revealed through the Light of God.’ (KJ, p. 21)

The *Shahadah* (the testing of faith) has two parts. One is about the Oneness of God. The Unity of God is in fact a universal belief among those who belong to different religions. But for the Muslims and especially for Faqirs and Sufis amongst them the second part is more important. Sachiko Murata and W.C. Chittick have rightly observed: “Muslims understood the first *Shahadah* as expressing a universal truth, one that all human beings know intuitively because they were created in God’s form and taught all the names. But the second *Shahadah* is different.”²⁷ They have also noted: “The qualities he (Muhammad) manifests are not his own qualities. They are the divine names and attributes²⁸.”

Hadrat Sultan Bahu in his prose and poetry has laid stress on the remembrance of *Kalima* (The sacred formula) and particularly on the second clause about the Prophecy of Muhammad (peace be upon him)

‘We came to know
the meaning of *kalima*
when
the *kalima* opened
the heart — O Hu!

The lovers
recite *kalima*
where the Prophet's light
illuminates
like *Holi* Festival ___ O Hu!

All the fourteen spheres
lie within the *kalima*.
How can the simple commoners
know it? ___ O Hu! (Abyat, 152)

The heart is purified
only when,
says Bahu,
the *kalima* runs
through every pore ___ O Hu! (Abyat, 154)

Seven Spirits

Like all other Sufis Hadrat Sultan Bahu also holds forth the view that Light of Muhammad (peace be upon him) was revealed through the inner Reality of Divine Essence and It is Love (*Hadrat-i-Ishq*). (R, p. 16) So it was the first self-disclosure (*tajalli*) of the Divinity. Then comes the turn of the creation of other spirits. Though some say that in some inexplicable way and due to incredible Divine wisdom they got separated from their origin²⁹ but Hadrat Sultan Bahu states that all the spirits of other creations including jinns, human beings and angels came into being

by the command *kun* (Be). It was addressed to the Light of Muhammad (peace be upon him). Then three sections of mankind appeared significant: they were the evildoers, the pious and the prophets, saints and faqirs. (MFK, p.82) In *Risala Ruhi* (Of the Spirit) he explains that the Divine Creative activity brought about seven spirits of the highest rank in Faqr, perfect even in eternity.

“..... and with the passionate Will and Divine rapture, He stirred all over Himself seven times and with that seven spirits of *Fuqara* ___ all serene, annihilated in Allah, in permanent state with Allah, absorbed in the vision of Divine Being, all Kernel without any crust ___ appeared on the Tree of Mirror of Certainty, seventy thousand years before the birth of Adam (peace be upon him) after having been submersed in the sea of Beauty. They saw nothing except the True Being from pre-eternity to post-eternity and never heard anything that pertained to other than Allah.”(R, p. 18)

In the domain of *faqr*, they are the leaders, and all others are their followers:

“And they surpassed the status of all the *awliya* and *Ghaws* and *Qutb*. You are justified if you call them God and it will also be true if you know them as the servants of God. He knows who knows.”³⁰ (R, p. 19)

In the history of the *Ummah* (nation), these spirits of *Fuqara* appeared in the form of human life as exemplars of the highest order in the realm of *Faqr*³¹. In his own words:

“One is the spirit of the Lady of the Resurrection³² (Hadrat Fatima) One is the spirit of Khawaja Hasan Basri. One is the spirit of our Shaikh ___ reality of the Truth, light of the Absolute, witnessed for being on Haqq ___ Hadrat Mahboob Subhani. One is the spirit of Divine Lights, mystery of the Eternal Being, Hadrat Pir Abdur Razzaq son of Hadrat Peer Dastgir. One is the fountain of the eyes of the Divine Being, Faqir Bahu, the mystery of mysteries of the Being ‘O He!’ ”³³ (R, p. 20)

This revelation of the five *Fuqara* is remarkable because for the first time in the history of *Tasawwuf* (Sufism) a great *Shaikh* pointed out the special ranks of these five spiritual luminaries (they are actually seven: the other two are yet to come). He has included him self amongst them. Though he is very respectful when he describes the great qualities of the Friends of God in his books, yet when he has to pass judgement upon their achievements, he is bold enough to affirm the estimation in clear terms. In his view though Hadrat Rabia Basri, Hadrat Ibrahim Adham and Hadrat Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani were honoured by *Faqr* yet Hadrat Ba-Yazid Bistami, Makhdum Jehanian and

Shaikh Rukn-i-Alam could not attain to the stage of *faqr* in spite of their piety, austerities and visionary powers. (AF, p.144) *Anal-Haq* (“I am the Truth”) was a secret and because Mansur (Hussain bin Mansur Hallaj) could not keep it and claimed it through his tongue, he was hanged and could not reach the extreme goal of *Faqr*. (MFK,p.243) Hadrat Sultan Bahu claimed that he could exercise his powers as a judge because he had the Divine permission and authority. He is *Faqir-i-kamil* (perfect faqir) “capable of every power and present at every station, absorbed in the Divine Essence of the Absolute.”(R, p. 22)

The *Risala Ruhi* (“Of the Spirit”) ends with this statement:

“At the halting place of *faqr* it was decreed: ‘You are my beloved.’ This *Faqir* humbly submitted that he did not have the ability of love for the Lord, all Powerful. He was pleased to decree: ‘You are my beloved.’ Then I humbly kept quiet. The light of the ray of the Magnificent Lord immersed this slave (of Allah) like a mere atom in the oceans of absorption, and commanded: ‘ You are the essence of Our Being and We are your essence. In fact you are Our reality, and a companion in the realm of knowledge, and in Him you have become the mystery of O He.’”(R, p. 23)

The Mirror

Explaining Aziz Nasafi's concept of Perfect Man, Lloyed Ridgeon says: "He is the goal of creation because he acts as a link between God and His creation; he is the mirror by which God sees Himself and he is the form in which the creatures can see God's perfect creation."³⁴

Actually there are two mirrors: the universe and Man. The universe is macrocosm and Man is microcosm. As everything in the universe can be seen in man, he, therefore, becomes the only mirror by which God can see the splendours of His own Majesty and Beauty. Titus Burckhardt put it in this way: "After his own fashion every microcosm is a centre of the universe, but in man the 'subjective' polarisation of the Spirit reaches its culminating point."³⁵

According to Hadrat Ibn Arabi, the Perfect Man is "the point of convergence between the created world and God, the place of manifestation of the pelorama of the Divine Names."³⁶

To the *Sufi* thinkers including Hadrat Sultan Bahu the story of the creation of universe and all that is in it, is in fact the story of Divine Manifestation through stages — Divine descent in degrees called *Hahut*, *Lahut*, *Jabarut*, *Malakut* and *Nasut*. At the end stands the man, "the goal of creation."

Allah is light³⁷ and the only one Source of lights; so the first Light made its appearance as the spirit of Muhammad (peace be upon him). It is why he is called the

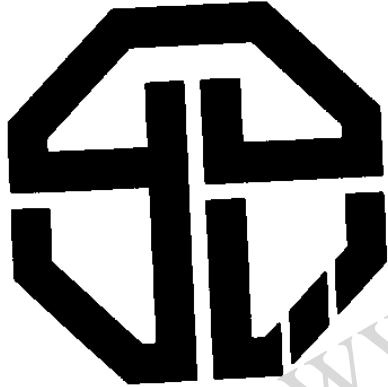
Elsewhere he says: "The *Ulama* expect to be granted positions in Paradise, but it is prohibited to *Fuqara* to halt at a station or think of a place of their destination." (MA, p.23) Viewing the Faqr from this angle, even the perfection seems to be a relative term. Sultan Bahu regards it as an eternal progress and extreme closeness to God, which cannot be even defined. But whatever this perfection may be, it has some characteristics. At least its beginning and after that the status or qualities can be observed during the process.

First of all the seeker starts his journey under the guidance of a *Murshid* (spiritual director). He acts according to *Sharia* (normal external law) and strictly adheres to the rules for moral refinement. So far he may conduct himself like others but henceforth the sublime life-style called Faqr has its own definite values which are the serious concern of the Faqir for the attainment of perfection.

Virtues

Love (*Ishq*): The *murshid* awakens the power of love latent in the heart. From beginning to the end it is love that transports the *faqir* to the highest spiritual plane:

Come away my wise friend, let's
go to
the tavern.
Drink deep like a man and remember



Superman

Superman was considered a novel idea when it was first put forth by Nietzsche at the end of nineteenth century. During the period of Renaissance in Europe the stress was laid on the importance of man at the risk of losing the sight of God. This view found its culminating point in the declaration by Nietzsche when he said: "God is dead!" Thus the Superman took the place of God.⁴¹ This superman was not bound to any ethical or spiritual system. He was just a powerful man to decree and do anything. When in the twentieth century Hitler and Stalin appeared in the garb of superman, the world was shocked and the theory of superman was almost ignored for good. But this disillusionment was only felt as late as the great Second World War when the so-called supermen of modern era wrought havoc in the world by their show of naked power without any sense of remorse or compassion for the humanity. Even before that Dr. Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938 AD.) during his research and study of metaphysical thought in Persia had taken notice of Nietzsche's theory of superman and compared it with the idea of perfect man of Sufis. He noted that unfortunately the German thinker had no access to *Sufi* literature and moreover his intellectual perspective did not allow him

to think farther than the ego or commanding self. Though Nietzsche could not see the truth, yet it goes to his credit that somehow or other he had sensed his own error. One can only sympathise with him when he cries out: "If only I had a Master!" Iqbal remarks in a poem that had he been in his times, he would have shown him the way to real "station of glory."⁴² Others, too, came to the same conclusion when they studied Nietzsche sympathetically. Henry Bayman after discussing the draw-backs and flaws in Nietzsche's thought pattern, comments: "Yet after all is said and done, it cannot be denied that Nietzsche had great potential in him. Had he fallen into the hands of a competent Master, he would no doubt have borne fruit, his mind and his spirit would have declared peace and would have begun to pull in the same direction instead of in opposite direction.....There was nothing in the western intellectual tradition to provide Nietzsche with the master he needed, nor is there still."⁴³

In the East in our Sufi tradition, the idea of Perfect Man has been a familiar topic among the philosophers and the Sufis. The great Sufi thinkers like Shaikh al-Akbar Ibn Arabi, Abd al-Karim al-Jili, Imam Ghazzali and many other Sufi authors have discussed the topic of perfection of man at length and explained all the relevant points in this respect.

Perfect Man

God created man and directed him to perfect himself and be His vice-regent upon earth. The activities of the

vice-regent are supervised by the Creator; He expects perfection and union from the sons of Adam. He has sent his chosen people, prophets and saints, to guide them and show them the way to reach closer to God. If they follow the way faithfully, they are perfected and united. In the union lies the secret of perfection. Now as every man and woman has been granted different abilities and potentialities, their perfection has always been in accordance with their natural capabilities.

There has been only one man among the mankind who is absolutely perfect — the Universal man. He is Muhammad (peace be upon him). He is the Perfect Man who "reflects all the Divine attributes, including even the Essential ones, such as unity and eternity, which he shares with no other being in this world or the next."⁴⁴ He is complete from the first to the last; all others are perfect relatively. Hadrat Sultan Bahu expresses the same view: "The Apostle of God is the perfect man, the others find closeness to God according to their ranks." (AF.p.167) Everybody has his fixed station and he is expected to strive in order to reach there.⁴⁵ All of us here have to develop and progress spiritually while the Creator is to judge whether we have accomplished the task entrusted to us.⁴⁶

Perfect Faqir

Hadrat Sultan Bahu, in his teachings, has used the title Perfect Faqir instead of Perfect Man, Apparently the qualities and attributes of the Perfect Man and the Perfect

Faqir seem to be similar: "When the *Faqir* reaches the extreme stage, the essence is united to the Essence." (QD,p.25) But a deeper study makes the distinction clear when more stress is laid on some qualities or one or two more features of perfection are added. By saying "Poverty is emptying of the heart," Hadrat Junaid mean that the *Faqir* is open to the infinite possibilities of spiritual self-realization.

"The status of *Faqir* is a fathomless ocean; it is the 'farthest lote-tree' ___ the abode of faithful spirit; Only the faithful can see this station of indubitable truth."
(MA,p.8)

His passion (*ishq*) is so intense that all the ranks and grades of *wilayat* (sainthood) are left behind:

Ghawth and *Qutub* linger behind
while the lovers travel onward ___ O Hu!

Ghawth cannot even visit the stage
where the lovers reach ___ O Hu!

The lovers always enjoy union ;
they have place in the Placeless ___
O Hu!

I cherish love for those,
says Bahu,
whose self abides in the Self ___ O Hu!
(Abyat)

to remember God and keep away from God, is the world." (MFK, p. 71)

"A person who is initiated in *Faqir-i-Muhammadi* must give up the love for the world." (KTK, p. 29)

The *Faqir* is never involved in the world to the extent that he may forget his duty towards God and his fellow-beings. He can gain "wisdom" only when he is wholly detached from the worldly things like health and power. He may be a rich man and a powerful political leader but he is principle-oriented. Inwardly he is a *Faqir*, free to renounce or sacrifice any thing when an ethical, spiritual or religious principle is violated. Wisdom cannot be gained without such determined attitude. "Divine knowledge (*Marifat-i-Ilahi*) which is the real victory cannot be attained without the renunciation of the world." (KTK, p. 15)

The positive result of such detachment appears in the character of *Faqir* in the form of two qualities ___ trust in God (*tawakkul*) and independence (*Istighna*). In the words of Iqbal this last quality *Istighna* is like "an armour" which protects the man of God in all conditions and circumstances⁴⁸. Sultan Bahu considers it so important that he points out: "The way of *faqir*, the way to *marifa*, the way of guidance and the way of sanctity can all be found in accordance with the degree of independence." (NH, p.230) **Aspiration and Power of free disposal (*Himmat*, *Tasarruf*):** Actually *himmat* means aspiration, courage, force of decision, resolution even grace and *tasarruf* means

nothing else but the goblet and glass. (DB)

The vision becomes clear in the light of love:

There may be hundred of thousands companions but our Friend is One,
We saw no other intimate friend ___
our beloved is one. (Ibid.)

If there is no love, there is no path because "the path of Allah has nothing to do with knowledge or ignorance: this is the way of sheer love and sincerity." (NHK, p.9)
Love is the blessing of God and it is only due to love that one is blessed by the Vision of God. Love is all in all, all-embracing and encompassing the whole universe. It is the love that provides means and end on the path:

"Love is a *Latifa* (spiritual faculty) which is manifested in the heart by the Invisible; It is never contented without the beloved and never looks towards the Creation." (MF, p. 11)

Knowledge with practice: Sometimes, to a superficial reader of Sufi's books and particularly their poetry, Sufis seems to be deadly against *ilm* (knowledge). Actually they are never against that knowledge which is necessary for practice. They are against only that learning which is acquired to satisfy greed. It also breeds arrogance. Such knowledge becomes a veil between the scholar and the reality. When the bookish knowledge becomes an obsession the practice is neglected. Sufis always rebuked those who followed such tendencies. In Abyat we find such

remarks:

Allah favoured you
and you
memorized the Quran
but the veils were not removed ___ O Hu!

You became a scholar
even then
you seek gold coins? ___ O Hu!

You studied
hundred and thousands books
but the cruel baser self
did not die ___ O Hu! (Abyat 10)

Arrogance increased
by the bookish knowledge.
Even the intellect
turned out dull ___ O Hu!

Neither knowledge
nor logic
was profitable. The right way
was lost ___ O Hu! (Abyat 38)

But on the other hand, he emphasises the importance of knowledge so clearly:

If one strives after Faqr
without knowledge,
one will turn heretic

and
die as a mad man ___ O Hu!

Even if he prays
for a hundred years,
he'll remain ignorant of God ___ O Hu!
(Abyat)

One can easily comprehend the standpoint of Hadrat Sultan Bahu. The knowledge which can help to understand the good and bad and develops an insight to distinguish right from wrong may be termed as a compulsory subject to learn and study. It supports the faqir to purify his heart and spirit, which is the basic qualification for Faqr. "Faqir does not gain anything without the purity of soul, cleanliness of heart and illumination of spirit." (AF, p.88) Hadrat Sultan Bahu, in his theory of education, lays stress on the acquirement of *ilm-i-zahiri* (external knowledge) in the beginning. "The Faqir who does not befriend the *ilm-i-zahiri*, is rejected from the spiritual meeting of the Prophets and does not reach the stage (of Faqr)." (SA, p.15) Ignorance is a sin because one can easily be misled by the evil instincts. "Knowledge is the solacer of soul. An ignorant Faqir is the boon companion of the Devil." (QD, p.163) But the knowledge alone without action, in Hadrat Sultan Bahu's view is useless. It doesn't bear any fruit, whatsoever. "The knowledge is for action. Knowledge without action is like a barren woman." (KTK, p.190) Mere knowledge without practice places the man on a lower level. One becomes wise if only

he digests the knowledge gained through various sources and puts it into practice. The Sultan of Faqr addresses the seeker and tells him:

"O seeker,
one who acquired knowledge and did not
act accordingly, is not a man. One who
acquired knowledge and duly practised it,
is a man of wisdom." (MFK, p. 75)

Hadrat Sultan Bahu lays two conditions for the knowledge to be effective. These two conditions, apart from action, are faith in God and gnosis (*marifa*). "Where did the sheer knowledge lead the Satan to? To the curse and wretchedness. This knowledge works against the spirit. At the very beginning the soul, just because of it, fails to reach God and loses faith.

"The knowledge with faith is a highway and the knowledge without gnosis (*marifat*) leads one astray." (AB, p. 26)

The erudition and action
are imbibed in those
who are sincere
and affirm the real ___ O Hu
(Abyat)

Wisdom (*marifa*): By *ilm-i-zahiri* Hadrat Sultan Bahu generally means the knowledge of *fiqh* that guides the seeker in the light of *sharia* (revealed external law). Religious, moral and social discipline guarantees one to lead a peaceful and useful life in the society. But *tariqa* provides the Faqir with divine knowledge when he traverses the Path

under the guidance of his spiritual director. In fact this is the esoteric knowledge to be acquired through spiritual discipline in the form of *dhikr*, meditation and other exercises and rites. So the exoteric and esoteric knowledge are complementary to each other. "The Gnostic (*arif*) without knowledge is blind ; and the scholar without gnosis never finds out the truth. Knowledge and *Faqr* are intimately associated." (MFK, p.36) In fact knowledge on the higher plane proves useful because *Faqir* can recognise the true nature of guidance and understands what his spiritual intuition reveals to him. "The knowledge is for guidance and for perception of the Divine secrets." (AK, p.19) If some scholar depends only on his learning and scholarship, he cannot become enlightened. His use of intellectual achievements is limited only to gain some benefit in the mundane world. There is no share for him in the Hereafter. "The scholar without *marifa* (gnosis) is ignorant. Those who spend their lives in study of books are like ignorant children who forget everything ___ At the end when they see the angel of death, they cannot recall what they had previously learnt." (TB, p.14)

Hadrat Sultan Bahu considers the Divine Wisdom (*Marifa*) so important that the recipient of such wisdom becomes Allah's helper. Allah created the human beings to worship Him and through worship to know him (*la-yarifun*). When Hadrat Sultan Bahu himself reached at the extreme point of *Faqr*, he was called by Allah His beloved and "a companion in the realm of *marifa*." It was due to his love for Allah and humility before the Apostle of Allah that

"Knowledge of God had therefore become his company." (R, p.13)

Dhikr-o-Fikr (Remembrance and Reflection) : In Sufism or *Faqr dhikr* is so important that if there is no *dhikr*, there would be no spiritual progress. Like other *Sufi Shaikhs*, Hadrat Sultan Bahu calls it "a duty for all times." It means that it is not like *namaz* (ritual prayer) or fasting which can be observed at exact hours or periods. *Dhikr* is a *fard-i-daimi* (a continuous duty forever). (MF, p.19)

Every order has its specific exercises of invocation. J. S. Trimmingham has very accurately noted: "*Tariqa* materialises itself in the *dhikr* (recollection), whose regular practice leads the predestined *arif* to the state of *istighraq* (immersion) in God. *Dhikr*, therefore forms the framework of the *tariqa*"⁴⁷ Although Hadrat Sultan Bahu does not require from a *Talib* (seeker) to repeat longer litanies and incantations but he has, however, prescribed very effective methods for *dhikr*. As the name of Allah is at the centre of every form of *dhikr*, he says:

- "Bahu! Nothing is better than saying 'Allah!' even once." (R, p.27)

The most profitable method that he has devised for all literate or illiterate, is the meditation for visualization or reflection (*Tasawwur*) of the Name of Allah. There are many other forms of *dhikr-jali*, *khafi*, *habs-i-dam* etc., etc., and Hadrat Sultan Bahu has explained their effects upon the *talib*. During the *dhikr*, "the seeker experiences the illuminations of light of the Divine Essence." (TH, p.56) "The wisdom (*marifa*) is revealed upon the heart that

moves with the *dhikr* and finds presence in the Divine Light.” (KT, p. 35) *Dhikr* to him “is a treasure of God and it is a Secret of God’s secrets.” (KT, p. 71) *Fikr* or *Tafakkur* (reflection) can be called contemplation in different ways. It may be about some Quranic verse or some basic formula like *Kalima Tayyiba*. With such practices, the Faqir’s vision becomes clear. “*Tafakkur* is better than the worship in both the worlds. When the *arif* reflects, he sees the sight of eighteen thousand domains.” (MFK, p.198)

When Hadrat Sultan Bahu mentions about *dhikr*, he often cites his own ecstatic states as a true witness. He has also recommended a few exercises of meditation under the supervision of a spiritual guide. (See Chapter, 6)

Renunciation (*Tark-i-duniya*): In the eyes Hadrat Sultan Bahu, all excepts God is other than God; he calls it *duniya* (world) that should be renounced. Here renunciation is not like the way of Christian monks and Hindu Yogis because the Faqir lives in the society. Though he may pass some of his time seeking solitude somewhere yet finally he comes back and resumes his duties like a conscientious citizen. The most proper interpretation of *tark* is detachment. The *faqir* should not be bound emotionally or intellectually to anything or any idea, which may cause hindrance in his spiritual progress. “It is the sign of a wise darvesh and a faqir blessed by the ‘presence’ that he has no love for the profane world.” (AF, p. 181) A faqir is a God-centred and God-conscious man, so he is very cautious to safeguard himself against various attachments:

“O seeker, all that makes the heart forget

first and the last. Dr. Annemarie Schimmel has quoted two poets. Sanai says:

“Adam became visible from Ahmad.”

A poet of Sind exclaims:

Wondrous is the Reality of the Friend ___
One cannot call him Lord, nor creative ___
Similar to the dawn, he unites night and
day.³⁸

Iqbal also declares:

In eyes of a passionate lover,
he’s the first and he’s the last.
He is the Quran, the *Furqan*, and
also *Ya-sin* and *Taha*.³⁹

Now when the Perfect Man is Muhammad (peace be upon him), then he must be followed by all. He is the model in every walk of life. None can achieve perfection without acting according to his *sharia*. Hadrat Sultan Bahu said:

I was led by *sharia*,
I was honoured by every rank
through Muhammad.

None can attain to the stage of Union with God if he is not ready to follow Muhammad (peace be upon him) because he is “the point of convergence between the created world and God,” as already quoted above.

Now the standard of perfection is the model role of Hadrat Muhammad (peace be upon him)⁴⁰. In the language of Hadrat Sultan Bahu perfect man, a *mard-i-Haq*, is called Faqir-i-Kamil.

“It is not easy to be a Faqir. The greatest mysteries of the Omnipotent are contemplated in Faqr.” (MFK, p.164)

The path of Faqr
is far thither
with no goal visible ___ O Hu!

Knowledge as well as teaching
and
learning as well as logic
and even legends and stories
nothing is of use there ___ O Hu!

The world is an idol-temple.
Nobody should trust it _____ O Hu!

Only that Faqir
knows this,
says Bahu,
who dies before death
in the way of Faqr ___ O Hu!
(Abyat. 100)

Perfect Faqir

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taking, claiming, using and ownership etc.,etc. *Himmat* comes first and *tasarruf* (the force of decision and using discretion) is its effect. The spiritual aspiration takes the Faqir to the highest plane of *Faqir* and the perfect *Faqir* is therefore sometimes called *Sultan-i-himmat* (a sovereign in respect of aspiration and courage). A seeker has to determine in the beginning to follow the Path faithfully and reach his "station". The Murshid helps and if the seeker is sincere and continues his efforts, "the Light of favourability" (*Nur-i-tawfiq*) puts all the means of achievement at his disposal and he attains perfection. At the highest point he becomes a power, a great force in the universe. Though he never exercises it except when he is commanded by God, yet "If the Faqirs aspires to achieve a rank, he is blessed with such power that he can become a king ___ the Shadow of God (*Zill al-Allah*)." (AB, p.71) The idea of Perfect *Faqir* has been so much explained and elaborated in his books that if all the relevant extracts are collected, it may form a volume.

'The friends of God who have control over the unaccountable unseen treasures, exercise power over all in the East or West.' (AB,p.19)

"Both the worlds are under the control of *Faqir*." (MF,p.336)

"The man who has no power of disposal internally or externally (*tasarruf-i-zahiri-o-batini*) cannot be called *arif-bi-Allah* (a gnostic with divine knowledge)." (TH,p.44)

"Listen O enlightened *darvesh*, only he is *darvesh* who has realized in himself the power expressed in the Verse: 'He has power over all things'.⁴⁹" (MF, p.334)

Titles

Hadrat Sultan Bahu has keenly studied the stages, qualities, capabilities of *Faqir* during his progress. He sometimes indicates the powers and endowments of a *Faqir* by conferring titles on them. He also point out thereby their assignments, too. A few of them are mentioned below :

Darvesh : Although Hadrat Sultan Bahu, like other Sufis generally uses the terms of *Faqir* and *Darvesh* for one person, but in fact *darvesh* holds the lower rank of perfection. Hadrat Sultan Bahu views *darvesh* as a spiritual man whose *tawajjuh* (spiritual attention) can bring about change in the external affairs but the *Faqir* can change the hearts and souls. It is why he considers *abdals* and *awtads* among the kinds of *darveshes*. The rank of *darvesh* seems lower only in comparison with the highest "station" of Perfect *Faqir*, otherwise even at his own level he may be a saint of high order:

Go to the door of a *Darvesh*
morning and evening,
so that you achieve all
that you wish for. (MFK, p. 145)

Ghawth* and *Qutub: These friends of God in their hierarchical set up begin from *abdals* (substitutes) and go up to

the highest station of *Ghawth* (Help). God has assigned their duties to serve the mankind in various but imperceptible ways. So they are seldom known to the people among them they live. According to Sultan Bahu "Faqir excels because *Ghawth* and *Qutub* enjoy their powers but Faqir seeks only the consent of God (*rida-i-Ilahi*)." (JA, p.49) *Qutub-i-Wahdat* (Pole of Unity) is different from the group of *abdals* ; he is a Perfect Faqir.

Faqir Malik al-Mulki (Master of the dominions): Hadrat Sultan Bahu uses this title for the Perfect Faqir again and again in his books. He is such a saint whose heart is repository of the Divine Secrets. He freely wields power in the universe through his spiritual capabilities. "If such a Faqir intends to turn a beggar into the king of seven kingdoms, he can; and if he desires to suspend the kings of seven lands and turn them into beggars, he can." (TB, p.13) Elsewhere he calls him "the Faqir with creative imagination." (KJ, p. 37) He is absolutely perfect so that he needs nothing more (*La-yuhtaj*); He has the authority to keep control over all the ranks and all the "stations". (NH, p.230) **Hakim, Ulil-amr Faqir** (Faqir, the commander and man of authority): After having equipped himself with contentment and independence (*istighna*) to such an extent that the gold and dust are equal in his eyes, the faqir is honoured with this title. (AQ, p. 55)

Qatil Qatal (Slayer in the battle): If the Faqir endowed with *Ilham* (spiritual instructions) has such power that when he prays for the destruction of incorrigible evil-doers and they perish, he is called *Qatil Qatal*. He is called *qatil*

also for other reasons. He kills his baser self and remains immersed in the Union with Allah. As a *Murshid* he is qualified to know all about the conditions and disposition of the seekers. (MFK,p.115)

Such a Perfect *Murshid* is like the sun who bestows bounties upon the whole world. "He is a man of authority _____ God's Word." (MFK, p. 166)

Sahib-i-Jamal-i-Wisal (Esteemed by the Beauty of Union): Such a Faqir follows *sharia* strictly and finds full share in the illuminations (*tajalliyat*) of wisdom (*marifa*). "He puts on the dress of *sharia*, concentrates upon the Light of God and thinks of no other way than that of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), so he is called *Sahib-i-Jamal-i-Wisal*." (MFK, p. 223)

Sahib-i-Tasarruf Kamil-nazar (All powerful man of perfect vision): This is the title of *Murshid-Kamil* "who can, with one glance, make one immersed in the Union with Allah." Such a Faqir "governs the domains of *Wilaya* and he is a guide who knows how to guide. Such a man of vision shines bright like the sun." (AS, p.26)

Sahib-i-raz Faqir (Faqir, the discerner of Mysteries): The Perfect Faqir who knows the Secrets is blessed with the "presence". He never fails in the performance of external duties. He is such a perfect spiritual director who can elevate the seeker to a higher rank "with his spiritual assistance".

Ghani Faqir (The faqir, rich in Poverty): When the seeker's heart is purified from the doubts and distracting thoughts and his self is overwhelmed by the impression of

dhikr, he is granted one of the ranks of *Ghani Faqir*.

Arif billah (Sage with Divine knowledge): An *Arif billah* is a saint scholar. He occupies himself by practising what he knows. There may be many *arifs* but only a few of them can be found "immersed in Allah with the honour of being chiefs in both the worlds." His rank is higher than *Ghawth* or *Qutub* and he is posted as a world teacher to guide the people. He is the leader, not a follower. He is *Sahib-i-Tasawwur-o-Tasarruf* (Free to bring about change with his creative imagination). His prayer is fulfilled. The armies of spiritual world are at his command. He finds his position at a stage somewhere close to the Perfect Faqir. He lives in the world as an active force and he can exercise his influence over the whole world.

Muhaqqiq (verifier) Arif billah: He is authorised to verify the truth; he acts externally in accordance with the divine knowledge and internally he is occupied with the remembrance of Allah. He is independent and extremely contented so that he pays no attention to the kings and rulers.

He is one out of thousands: *fana fillah Faqir bar Kawnain Amir* (annihilated in Allah, ruler of both the worlds).

Faqir Fayyad al-Fadl (Gracious, bestower of wisdom): Such Faqir is blessed with a higher rank than that of *Arif*: "The spiritual knowledge keeps his external existence in its power, he has full command over the external sciences." He is superior to a scholar of external religious law because "the scholar is a disciplined person and Faqir is a man of authority as expressed in the Quranic Verse : Allah has

power over all His affairs (12-21)". (QD, p. 10)

Sultan al-Tarikeen and Sultan al-Arifeen (Sultan of renouncers and Sultan of gnostics): The Faqir "who gives away for God's sake what is given to him by the people" is Faqir *Sultan al-Tarikeen*. He is Sultan al-Arifeen, too, because "he always keeps Allah in sight and neither the world nor anything in it seems good to him." (AF, p. 169)

Faid bakhsh-i-Alam (Bestower of bounties over the world): This is one of the ranks of *Arif billah*. He attains to this station after passing through all the states and stages of *dhikr*. Then "he becomes enlightened and every kind of knowledge is revealed to him; nothing remains concealed from him." (AQ, p. 6)

In another book he calls him *Sahib-i-jauhar Faqir* (a man of substance, an excellent guide). (QD, p. 52)

Azad Faqir (the faqir who is free): Sultan Bahu prefers an *Azad Faqir* to a *Sajjadah Nashin* (a successor of the saint) because he can tell the truth disregarding the favours or greed for wealth. (MF, p. 32)

Faqir Sahib-i-quwwat al-Ullum (skilful in wielding power of knowledge): Such a *Faqir* is extremely powerful to dispose of things and affairs. He is perfect in all kinds of rites and practices. (NH, p.92)

Faqir Sahib-i-ayan (Faqir who beholds the Truth face to face): It is the "station" of a Perfect *Faqir*. When he realizes the mystery of creation from eternity and knows the degrees of *kun fayakun* (God's command: 'Be' and it is. 19-35) he is called *sahib-i-ayan*." (NH, p. 177)

Kamil-i-Kul (all perfect): This is the highest stage of a Perfect *Faqir*. His *tawajjuh* (spiritual attention) and insight is like a key to every lock. He can resolve and remove all kinds of difficulties and problems. (NH,p.189) Hadrat Sultan Bahu calls him *Faqir Kaleed-i-Kul* (Key for all) too. (QD, p. 39)

Faqir-i-mast (the enraptured faqir): Another title of a Perfect *Faqir*. "The enraptured *Faqir*, united with the Truth (*Haq*) never sleeps day and night because his eyes are all the time aflame like candles with the light of illumination (*nur-i-tajalli*). This is one of the stages of Perfect *Faqir* with divine wisdom, friend of God blessed with union and eternal lover." (NH, p. 66)

As already mentioned above Hadrat Sultan Bahu eulogizes the Perfect *Faqir* in such a manner that a seeker feels elevation and learns about the qualities and disciplines of *Faqir* also. He does not philosophise; he tells just plainly what a Perfect *Faqir* knows, sees and does. According to him a Perfect *Faqir* uses all his powers and faculties to guide and teach the people. He is *Murshid-i-Kamil* (A Perfect Teacher). He does not need anything but he is needed by everyone from the king to a poor darvesh. "Come out in search of a Perfect *Faqir*. Even if he resides at a great distance, don't hesitate to pay a visit to him." (MF, p. 16) A *Faqir* can be recognised by five qualities: knowledge, clemency, assistance and contentment (*is-tighna*). Hadrat Sultan Bahu does not tell clearly like Aziz Nasafi that only one Perfect man exists in the world at any one time.⁵⁰ I think it is due to his humility because he

himself was the one in his own time. It is clear to the person who reads his books carefully keeping this point in view. He was Sultan al-Faqr of his time and Sultan al-Faqr is the Perfect *Faqir* who excels all the *Awliya Allah* (Friends of God) of his time. He is one of those who "surpassed the status of all the *Awliya* and *Ghawth* and *Qutub*." According to him, one is justified if he calls them God and it will also be true if one knows them as the servants of God. "He knows who knows." (R, p. 19) In a state of "overflowing", Hadrat Sultan Bahu exclaims: "..... I am a Perfect *Faqir* and by the grace of God the quintessence of all in both the worlds has become manifest to me. Nothing is concealed from me." (NH, p. 155)

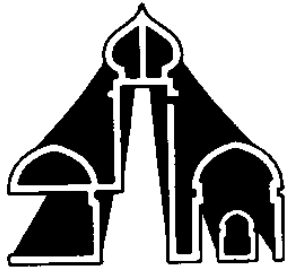
He says:

"*Malik al-Mulki Faqir* is a man of authority. He bestows *wilaya* upon whomsoever he likes and takes back from whomsoever he likes. These responsibilities are entrusted to the *Faqir* who has found out the Essence like *Faqir Bahu* immersed in Hu." (AB,p.44)



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“Be it known that the purity of soul and mind is the real aim in life and death.” (SA, P.69)

Actually this purity is the essence of *Faqr*¹. The Doctrine and Methods propounded by the Sufis and Faqirs are taught to achieve the simplicity and purity at the exoteric as well as the esoteric level. Every grand *Murshid* and especially the founder of a Sufi Order introduces his own *Sufi* practices for the “Permanent actualization” of Truth.² Now the actual motive of every *Sufi* teacher, as mentioned above is always the same i.e., to polish the mirror of the heart in order to attain the purity of the soul is not the end in itself. It only enables the wayfarer to experience the spiritual union with God but the practices in the form of *dhikr* and meditation are followed in variety of ways.

To an outsider these practices might seem different but their result is always the same. The *Sufi Murshids* took special care that the methods and techniques must suit the spiritual aspirants in regard with their temperaments, aptitudes and cultural trends. Hence the *Sufi* musical

concerts like *qawalis* and dances like *dhamal* and the performance of whirling darveshes.

Remembrance (*dhikr*)

“I still remember the advice of
my spiritual preceptor:
Everything except the recollection
of God wastes away.”

The term *dhikr* has been translated into English as recollection, invocation, contemplation, remembrance, quintessential prayer, remembrance and even mention. In fact each of these words conveys a shade of the real meaning of *dhikr*. We have, however, chosen remembrance as the simple as well as almost the proper word to convey the meaning.

“Remember Me, then, I will
Remember you”³

Hadrat Sultan Bahu has mentioned the virtues and rewards of *dhikr* along with the methods usually in all of his large and small books but like all other Sufi teachers he does not give the detail of the well-defined curriculum with regular grades and stages of the course to be followed by the disciple. In fact the Sufis have always believed that these methods and techniques can be used effectively only in the existential teaching-learning situation keeping the initiates' individual capabilities in view. One can, however, get an idea of the instructions at primary, middle and higher levels of practices even through the careful study of books.

The basic formula of *dhikr*, recommended to be repeated as much as possible is *nafi-athbat*, first part of the *Kalima Tayyiba* (the sacred words of *Shahada: La ilaha illa a-Allah, Muhammad-ur-Rasul al-Allah*).

1. ***Nafi-athbat* (negation and affirmation)**: At first when the disciple is initiated by a *Murshid* on the Path, the first favorable sign that appears in his heart is a longing to experience God within and without. It may be called a seed that is sown in the heart of a disciple or a sapling that is transplanted in the depth of his consciousness (*Qalb*).

Alif:

Allah's Name is
a jasmine sapling
planted in my heart
by the murshid ___ O Hu!

Watered through *nafi-athbat*
in every vein and every joint ___ O Hu!

It has blossomed into flowers.
It emits sweet fragrance
all within ___ O Hu!

Before beginning the *dhikr* the disciple is directed to make himself clean ___ the cloths unstained and the body clean through ablution. The place where he sits should also be clean and peaceful. Then he should recite *al-Fatiha* and other verses and prayers and imagine himself to be sitting in the presence of his Shaikh. After he has done so, he is ready to make the start.

Now the *Kalima* (*La ilaha illa Allah*) is practised in two ways. Either take a rosary and just repeat it as many times as instructed by the *Murshid* or sit in a corner and draw *law* from the navel up to the crown of your head while inhaling and then turn your head to the right and say *ilaha*; and turning the head to the left side with concentration at the heart say *illallah* while exhaling. Do it this way or that way, but do it preferably with the permission of a *Murshid*, so that your efforts may be fruitful.

This *dhikr* is called *nafi-athbat* because *La ilaha* (there is no god) is *nafi* meaning negation and *illallah* (but Allah) is *athbat* meaning of affirmation.

When one has repeated it as many times as intended, at the end one may say: "*Muhammad-ur-Rasul al-Allah*" (Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah). An adept at the higher level may not move his head to the right or left but he may just imagine himself doing so during the practice.

2. Dhikr Pas-i-anfas (remembrance during the inhalation and exhalation of the breath): There are two ways to do it.

i) While inhaling imagine your self saying "*La ilaha*" and while exhaling say (*Illallah*). Practise it so often that it may become natural to you.

ii) While inhaling imagine your self-saying "*Allah*" and while exhaling say "*Hu*". This may

also be so frequently practised so that one may follow it naturally and unconsciously.

3. Dhikr Ism-I-Dhat (Personal Name, Allah):

i) The disciple is asked to repeat "Allah Allah" for hundreds of times with the help of a rosary or in any way he likes. **الله**

ii) Then the first letter "A" is removed and in Arabic it may be read "*Lillah*" (For God ___ meaning all exists for God's sake). *Lillah* is also repeated for the same number. **لله**

iii) At the third step "L" is removed and it may be read "*Lahu*" (For Him) in Arabic. It is repeated then in the similar way. **له**

iv) Again remove the "L" and there remains only "*Hu*" (He). **هو**

"Hu" is the favourite and the most effective *dhikr* of Sarwariya Qadriya Order of Hadrat Sultan Bahu. It may be repeated vocally or silently. It may be practised with inhalation and exhalation repeating "*Hu*" each time quietly. It is often considered the Supreme Name (*Ism-i-Azam*). Hadrat Sultan Bahu ends each line of *Abyat* by using "*Hu*" which is some times translated "*O Hu!*"

It is often repeated in the form of *Allah-Hu* with the control of breath (*pas-i-anfas*) by saying Allah while inhaling and *Hu* while exhaling. (see figure 1)

4. Dhikr Asma-i-Husna (The beautiful names of Allah):

Ninety-nine attributive Names of Allah have been related in Quran and *Hadith*. One can choose any Name and go on repeating it with the permission of his

Murshid because every Name has some special influence upon the mind and soul.

(See figure 1)

5. ***Dhikr Kalima Tayyiba*** (the basic formula of Islam):

We came to know
the meaning of *Kalima*
when it entered
into our hearts ___ O Hu!

We came to know
the meaning of *Kalima*
when
the *Kalima* opened
the heart ___ O Hu!

All the fourteen spheres
lie within the *Kalima*
How can the simple commoners
know it? ___ O Hu!

The heart is purified
only when,
says Bahu,
the *Kalima* runs
through every pore ___ O Hu!

I was bathed and cleaned
by *Kalima*
I was wholly absorbed in *Kalima* ___

O Hu!

Kalima

purifies and accompanies
to Heaven ___ O Hu!

With the remembrance of *Kalima*, the practice of *Dhikr* becomes complete. It may be practiced with the same movement like saying *La ilaha illallah* with attention to the right and left and then facing the front by saying *Muhammad-ur-Rasul al-Allah* every time with one breath. Hadrat Sultan Bahu has indicated four stages of *dhikr*.

1. ***Dhikr zawal*** (Decline during the remembrance): In the beginning the rememberer (*dhakir*) risks decline or frustration in so many ways. The people come crowding around him. Many of them become his *Murids* and followers. Some times, on the contrary, most of them leave him abruptly. The rememberer or invoker loses courage and may give up the *dhikr*. Only a few persevere and come to attain the divine knowledge.
2. ***Dhikr Kamal*** (remembrance of perfection): At the beginning of this stage the angels are attracted towards the invoker. When he becomes adept in it, the angels swarm round him and tell him what is good and bad intuitively. They also keep him away from the sin.
3. ***Dhikr Wisal*** (Remembrance of Union): In the beginning one finds himself in the meeting of saints and prophets. At this juncture the disciple reaches perfection in remembrance.

4. **Dhikr Ahwal** (States of remembrance) : One observes the Divine Lights and attains to the states of *Fana fillah* and *Baqa billah* (Annihilated in Allah and sustained by Allah).

“When the disciple transcends those four stages, he becomes capable to attend the meeting of the Prophet (Peace be upon him)” (SA, P.28)

The invocation (*dhikr*), the invoker (*dhakir*) and the invoked (*mdhkur*) become one as Hadrat Sultan Bahu says about himself:

“Glory be to Allah! the body of this slave (of Allah) remains just an insignificant partition in between through which He Himself has revealed thousands of subtle mysteries and fine wonders. He Himself is the speaker and Himself the spoken word; He Himself is the writer and Himself the Book; He Himself the director and Himself the directed; He Himself is the lover and Himself the beloved.”

This is the highest point in the Faqr where one can reach through *dhikr* and meditation.

Elsewhere Hadrat Sultan Bahu mentioned four kinds of *dhikr*.

- i) ***dhikr zabani*** (Vocal invocation): the tongue becomes like a sword with the practice of such remembrance .
- ii) ***dhikr-i-qalabi*** (remembrance of the Heart: such a *dhikr* is blessed with Divine love and he becomes immortal.

iii) ***Dhikr-i-Ruhi*** (remembrance of the spirit): Such a *dhakir* always remains in the company of saint and prophets.

iv) ***Dhikr-i-Sirri*** (remembrance in the Secret): This is the depth of consciousness where the *dhikr* becomes a means of inner and outer illuminations (*tajalliyat*) for the *dhikr* that come to him like rain-drops of the Divine Grace (*Barani Rehmat*).

“When these four kinds of *dhikr* become one, the *dhakir* (invoker) becomes *Arif Billah*.” (SA P.25)

The course of Such practices of remembrance will of course, be devised by the *Murshid*.

Meditation

The rules and principles of meditation are in fact universal — almost the same in all the mystic traditions. In sufi tradition it is called *muraqiba*. “What is *muraqiba*? Be it known that it is the term used for guarding the heart.” It is to guard against the whimsical thoughts, desires, physical and satanic or psychic temptations so that they may not distract the attention during the meditation. (JA,p.32)

According to Hadrat Sultan Bahu all the spiritual secrets are revealed during the *muraqiba*. It transports one to God, Almighty. (SA, p.37)

It is to transcend the physical world. One who does so become *Arif billah*. “*Muraqiba* is the jewel of faith

which is the means of proximity to Allah, the most High. (SA, p.38)

Hadrat Sultan Bahu recommended some essential kinds of meditation.

1. **Tasawwur-i-Ism Dhat Allah (Reflection of the Divine Name):** This is the most important kind of meditation recommended by Hadrat Sultan Bahu. It may be called a panacea for all the spiritual disorders and difficulties of the Path. If some body feels himself deviating from the path and finds no interest in *dhikr* but aspires to make himself enlightened, he should absorb himself in *Tasawwur* (reflection of the Name).

One must take care of time, place and the methods for its practice. The dawn before the morning prayer or the time just after morning prayer may be appropriate. Anyhow one is free to choose any time but he must be free from any other obligation. Then there should be a separate room or just a corner of some place for sitting there peacefully without disturbance. The body and clothes should be clean.

The posture and position while sitting for practice is very important. The disciple may sit as one sits during the prayer — the position called *qaada*. His spine should be straight with neck neither high or low.

Then he should be ready to pray to God and it will be useful if he offers two *raka nafal* (supererogatory prayer) for *baraka* and success. After that he may recite some verses prescribed by Hadrat Sultan Bahu himself.

1. *Alfatiha* (the opening chapter of Quran)
2. The *ayat-al-kurshi*

3. Four suras at the end of Quran beginning with “*Qul*” (say).
4. *Istighfar*
5. The third kalima: *Subhan-al-Allah wa al-Hamdu lillah.*
6. Kalima of *Shahadah*.
7. *Kalima Tayyiba*

(See figure 2)

After reciting this, the disciple may blow upon his body. The card upon which the Name of Allah is written may be pasted or hanged on the wall quite straight before the eyes at the distance of four or five feet. The colour of written word Allah (الله) may be golden or white on red or black paper. This is the essential requirement. “The perfect *Murshid* hands over a paper to the seeker writing Allah in beautiful hand. He tells him to write it on his heart and stamp its image over there. When the seeker gets it written at his heart in his imagination, then *Murshid* with his spiritual assistance asks him to see the Name Allah. So there and then the Divine Name Allah becomes bright and brilliant with the manifestation of Lights.” (NH, p.23)

(See figure 3)

Hadrat Sultan Bahu has defined the role of *Murshid* clearly during the practice. It is he who holds the heart and mind under control. It is who assists to stamp the Name upon the heart. If one does it alone then it may take a long time to reflect and visualise clearly and in spite of all that, the efforts of the disciple might fail due to some faults on his part.

At first the beginner should not practise for more than half an hour. The time limit may be between twenty and thirty minutes at the start. Then he should close his eyes. At first he will see just colours before him along with the image. Let all that pass until the colours disappear and whitish colour comes in the forefront. It is then that the seeker should try to find out the imagined Word written at his heart. During the early sittings he may see the glimpses for a second or two only. But there is nothing to be worried about it. By and by the picture may be clear and then he might see the Name like a rising sun. One may continue to observe it in the mind for four or five minutes. At the end he should open his eyes, say a prayer and then get up silently.

The disciple engaged in meditation regarding the reflection of the Name is advised to avoid a few common faults. He should check up his sitting position and posture. It is not correct to sit awkwardly and gaze at the image of the Name printed in a book. Some initiates have been seen doing so with protruded strained neck and their eyes riveted on the page. They look so pathetic. It is wrong; it produces fatigue or otherwise it may bring drowsiness.

One must be as relaxed as possible. All the faculties of mind should be suspended; the whole attention should be concentrated upon the image of the Name. Nothing should distract the seeker during his meditation. When the seeker closes his eyes to visualise the image within, he should not consider his heart a narrow place like that in the picture of heart on the page of a book. He must behold a broad

expanse before him where he may observe the Name. After a short period, he may imagine the letters of the Name in bright and shining colours and see the whole area filled with stange soothing light.

Moreover the seeker should follow the counsel of the sages to be patient in the beginning for the result, may not seem to him according to his desire, yet he should carry on the practice. If he finds some progress, he may extend the time from half to a full hour. That will be enough.

One may also consider about a few hints for assistance in his practice. For instance, during the day-time, he may put a similar card bearing the image of the Name at his table in front of him at a distance of one or two feet so that he may conveniently look at it from time to time. If there is no table, he may paste it upon the wall. Likewise, he must hang it somewhere on the wall in his bedroom where he can gaze at it for a few minutes before going to sleep. When he gets up in the morning, even then he may look at it.

With this meditation going on, the seeker will find peace within and peace without.

“Surely in the remembrance of Allah all the hearts are comforted.” (Quran 13:28)

2. ***Mashq-i-Marqum-i-wujudia* (Exercise of writing over the body):** The sitting position and the posture may be the same as advised in the case of *Tasawwur*. This exercise is essentially different from the previous one because there the seeker was almost inwardly passive. He had just to gaze at the image of the Name and then after

that he had to imagine it stamped upon the heart while closing the eyes. Here the seeker is required to be inwardly active in the sense that he has to visualise movement and see what he has drawn or written.

When the seeker had read the verses (see fig. 2) as prescribed in the beginning of meditation about the reflection of Name and has prayed, he should gently close his eyes and fancy that he writes "Allah" with his finger upon the inner side of the heart. He may perchance, think that whatever he writes it may look converse from the front. No, in the inner writing the picture or figure to be seen from the back or front is the same. When the seeker has written it, he may keep looking at it inwardly, with closed eyes as before, for about fifteen minutes.

After a fortnight or so the seeker should try to write "Allah" upon the inner part of the other outer organs of the body like navel, three parts of the breast, tongue, eyes, ears, forehead even upon the palms of his hands and upon each side of his torso. (See fig. 4) To himself, his own figure may seem to be completely wrapped with the image of the Name. If the seeker can write like this and it may take a few months to do so, then he should keep sitting daily in the same position and visualise the lights of the Name (its image) illuminating every limb of his body and all around. Hadrat Sultan Bahu has recommended many other Names and words like *Hu*, *Faqr*, and *Muhammad* to write and meditate. One may recite verses and *suras* of the Quran like *Ya Sin*, *Muzammil*, *al-Mulk* during the meditation.

Thus the seeker may experience and observed the spiritual dimensions of his super conscious self.

The higher stage of the exercise ends with the writing of *Kalima Tayyiba* all over the inner vital organs of the body. This needs a lot of patience and perseverance on part of the seeker. At first the seeker may be advised to write the *Kalima Tayyiba* in his note-book fifteen of twenty times daily. I know a *darvesh* who continued writing the *Kalima* many times in his diaries for five years and only after that he succeeded to write with his imaginary finger inside the different parts of his external body. If the seeker is fortunate enough to gain the help of a practicing Shaikh, he may learn this exercise earlier but even then the efforts on his own part cannot be disregarded.

According to Hadrat Sultan Bahu this exercise will bless him with the "Presence" (*Hadoori*) and the Lights will become manifested in his person and his spirit will be enlightened; he will always observe the light of Divine Power and remain ever conscious of the "Presence". (SA,p.30)

An adept may not, however, be so exact about the position and posture afterwards when he has mastered the skill in these two exercises. Then he may meditate even while walking, standing, sitting, lying in the bed or even traveling by bus or train etc., etc. He is outwardly quite normal in his usual activities but inwardly he may always be looking at the bright image of the Name or writing all the Words and Names upon the inner parts of his body. Then he is in "the world of love" according to Aziz Nasafi:

“So at first the *dhikr* is dominant over the wayfarer, then reflection is dominant, then inspiration and the witness and finally he reaches the station of stability and he becomes pure from any variegation.”⁴

3. **Affinity with the Shaikh, the Prophet (peace be upon him) and Allah:** As the seeker is busy in the previous exercises, he has to inculcate a feeling of love for those who may be called the means as well the ends. One may not like to use the term meditation to strength the bonds with his *Shaikh* and the Prophet and to intensity his longing to reach God yet no other word may be appropriate to denote the special attention directed towards those who are truly the models and goals.

There are three stages to be heeded at the same time. It means that posing at one stage, the others may not be excluded in the due course.

i) ***Fana fi-Shaikh* (being one with the mentor):** Sufism (*tasawwuf*) and *Faqir* can only be learnt in the company of one's spiritual director. To put it simply, an initiate learns by imitation of the sayings and doings of his *Shaikh*. The *Shaikh* with his special spiritual power (*tawajjuh*) takes a place in the heart of his disciple and starts guiding him how to tread upon the Path. He is like a teacher in the guidance cell who directs every movement of his pupil. The pupil on his part does what he sees his teacher doing outwardly. A point is reached where there may be complete identification between the teacher and the pupil. This is the stage of *Fana fi-Shaikh*.

According to Hadrat Sultan Bahu the image of one's *Murshid* is like a figure of Light reflected in one's heart. One has in the beginning, to practise “the Presence” of his *Shaikh* until it become a reality. “ At the station of *Fana fi-Shaikh*, when the seeker of God thinks of his *Shaikh* inwardly, he appears immediately before him, grasps his hand and takes him to the meeting of The Holy Prophet (peace be upon Him). Such a man embodies in himself life and death.”⁵ (SA, p.50)

ii) ***Fana fi-Rasul* (Oneness with the Holy Prophet):** The *Shaikh* never creates the feeling of love in the heart of his follower just for his own sake. Actually he exploits it to achieve the higher aim ___ to motivate the disciple to act according to the *Sunnah* (way) of the Prophet. The *Shaikh* now appears merely as a representative of the Prophet. Through his spiritual attention and guidance he introduces the disciple to the Prophet and his companions and even his family members in a vision. (SA, p.50)

Then this vision turns into reality and the seeker follows the Prophet like his Companions. At this stage the *Faqir* becomes enlightened and he is allowed to teach and guide the people. (Ibid, p.50)

iii) ***Fana fi-Allah* (Oneness with Allah):** The path of the *Faqir* is the “path of presence”. The *Shaikh* and the Prophet both lead to Allah. Allah is the final goal. All the religious and spiritual practices are meant to attain the proximity and love of Allah. At the station of *Fana fi-Allah* whoever reflects the Name Allah, he can understand the other than God (*illa-Allah*) and removes all what is other than the

Truth (Haq). Whoever reaches this station, he drinks from the cup filled out of the ocean of the divine knowledge of Unity. He wears the dress of *sharia* from head to foot and obeys the external religious law. He does not mention the divine secrets in the presence of ignorants. He is neither excited nor he boasts:

Conceal yourself from the
people as discreetly as you can;
the gnostics never beat their
own trumpets. (SA, p.50)

These are the three basic principles of Faqr to keep in view throughout all the spiritual practices. The concentration upon them may be considered as important as dhikr and meditation.

4. *Dawat Ahi-i-Quboor* (Prayed by recitation of Quran upon the Graves): Hadrat Sultan Bahu, like all other Sufis, believes in the spiritual favour and help (*faid*) to be derived from the graves of the saints. It has been stated:

“The inner reality of each individual, that is, in terms of attributes, in the grave is fixed”.⁶

Hadrat Sultan Bahu has devised a particular way of approach to seek help from the tomb. At the primary level it is so simple. One has only to read Quran or its chapters (*surahs*) sitting beside the grave. But its higher stages must prove hazardous if the basic rules of the *dawat* are not followed strictly.

i) Primary stage: At first the seeker must ask the permission of his master to recite the Quranic *dawat*. Then

he may go and sit beside the grave so that his breast may be confronting the breast of the saint. It may be remembered that the clean body and clean clothes is the essential requirement of every kind of *dhikr* and meditation. He may offer prayer with two *rakas* and then recite *surah Mulk*, *surah Ya-sin*, or *surah Muzammil* from the Quran. He should imagine that the spirit of the saint is before him listening to what he recites. According to Hadrat Sultan Bahu, the spirit is bound to accede to the request of the seeker and pray for him. Moreover, the spirits of the saints and the Prophets of the past ages rush to the place to say “Amen” to the prayer. The only condition for the effective prayer is the full knowledge of the rules of *Dawat*. This includes the well-defined aims of the prayer. One can pray for the fulfillment of following purposes:

- i) for, the victory of the king in a battle against the infidels,
- ii) for the guidance of the misguided ones,
- iii) for the scholars who are indolent to act,
- iv) for the welfare and prosperity of the people,
- v) for the man who has lost his senses during the recitation of “*dawat*”,
- vi) for the religious scholar who confronts some difficulty in his mission.

It is quite obvious that a “*wali*” (saint) reciting the *dawat* has no personal interest to gain through such prayer.

The beginner can also recite Quran in the case of *dawat* at any pleasant place conducive to spark the inspiration. He can sit upon a riverbank or he can sail in a

boat and recite the Quran. Hundreds of angels and "Presences" would come to help the seeker to become perfect upon the Path.

ii) **Middle stage:** The seeker may find out a secluded place in a corner of some desert. By sitting comfortably he may draw the outline of a sketch of the Prophet's tomb. He should write over the grave: "Muhammad Bin Abdullah (may peace be upon him)." Then he may recite the verse: "The prophet is blessed by Allah and His angels. Bless him, then, you that are true believers, and greet him with a worthy salutation."⁷ He should write it beside the sketch. (see fig. 6) Then he should call thrice: "Muhammad bin Abdullah, please do come, for God's sake." The spirit of the Prophet (peace be upon him) will undoubtedly appear over there. The seeker then may recite *Surah Mulk*, *Surah Ya-sin* or *Surah Muzammil*. He should repeat *Kalima Tayyiba* nine times and then by closing his eyes go into trance so that the sleep and awakening may become the same to him. He should believe then that the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his Companions will certainly fulfill his purpose. Hadrat Sultan Bahu likens this kind of *dawat* to a naked sword (*Tegh-i-brehna*).

iii) **Higher Stage:** The seeker should approach the grave of some grand saint all alone at midnight with a set purpose in view. He may proclaim the phrases of *adhan* (call for prayer). The invisible spirits will rush to the grave. He may even kick the grave with his foot. Remember, the man reciting *dawat* at this stage is not an ordinary saint. He himself is like a king who has come to seek help from

another king. He may even ride over the grave and recite Quran. The saint in the grave is so alarmed that he requests the Prophet (peace be upon him) to pray for the reciter. God and the Prophet (peace be upon him) will empower his spirit to offer help to the praying saint upon the grave so every difficulty will be removed and all the missions will be success. This is the most effective *dawat* and at the same time so full of risks. But as soon as the seeker comes to the end of his *dawat*, four armies are lined beside him to help: Divine favour, Muhammad's (peace be upon him) support, the troop of angels and the spirits of martyrs. (SA, pp.57-70)

All kinds of *dawats* can be helpful to the seeker in every situation. Hadrat Sultan Bahu has emphasised the importance of this spiritual practice in almost all of his major works.

5. **Majlis-i-Nabwi (the meeting of the Prophet):** "The seeker may do as many devotional practices (*wird-o-wazaif*) as he likes but he cannot enter the meeting of the Prophet (peace be upon him) unless a perfect *Murshid* leads him to it. The perfect *murshid* can take him there in a moment." (SA, p.52)

The seeker should first become adept in the reflection of the Name (*tasawwur-i-Ism-i-Allah*). When he is capable to visualise it clearly upon his heart and "the darkness of satanic instincts and illusions have vanished by the flames of the light of divine knowledge", then *Murshid* is obliged to offer guidance for this kind of meditation.

The seeker sits beside the *Murshid* respectfully (in the position of *qaada* as during his ritual prayer) with his

face towards Makkah and Madina. The *Murshid* asks him to close his eyes and to offer salutations to the Prophet (peace be upon him) after reciting the Quranic Verse: "The Prophet (peace be upon him) is blessed by Allah and His angels. Bless him, then, you that are true believers, and greet him with a worthy salutation." Now the *Murshid* directs the seekers to meditate upon the name and continue it until he falls into a trance-like state. If he is inwardly conscious, he may be asked to see the vast expanse by looking around the heart. There is a boundless wide plane. Again the seeker pays attention towards the Name and while coming out of trance tells the *Murshid* that he finds a dome like that of a mausoleum. He reads *Kalima Tayyiba* (*La ilaha illallahu Muhammad-ur-Rasul Allah*) written upon the door. When the seeker utters the *Kalima*, the door opens. The *Murshid* in a vision-like state takes the seeker inside the mausoleum and they enter the place where the Prophet's meeting is being held. They listen to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his Companions talking about Quran and *Sunna*. There the seekers learn truth from Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddique, justice and self-examination (*Muhasiba-i-nafs*) from Hadrat Umar, respect and modesty (*Haya*) from Hadrat Uthman and knowledge, guidance, Faqr and God-consciousness (*taqwa*) from Hadrat Ali. The Prophet (peace be upon him) takes *baiya* (pact) from the seeker and allows him to guide others. It is at this point that the *Murshid* directs the seeker to come out of meditation paying salutation to the Prophet (peace be upon him) all the while.

The meditation has higher stages with their own modes and stations. The places where such meetings are held have been mentioned as below:

The station of eternity without beginning. (*Azal*)

The station of eternity without end (*Abad*)

The world: at *Madina*, at *Kaaba*,
above the heavens and above the Throne

The station of placeless (*La-makan*)

Elsewhere the following places have been added:

Near *Arafat* at Makkah, the station of "Two Bows' length" (*Qaba Qawsain*),⁸

Paradise,

the station of reservoir of nectar in

Paradise (*Haud-i-Kawthar*)

the station of Vision of God (*Didar-i-Elahi*)

The seeker can find fulfillment of all of his spiritual purposes in any of these meetings. He can even reach a state when he does not need to pray for anything. If there occurs a difficulty, it is instantly removed. "Be it known" Hadrat Sultan Bahu tells, "the practicing scholars and their students are blessed with the vision of the Prophet (peace be upon him) every night or every Thursday or every month or every year. Some of them know and some know not." (SA, p.56)

The men of gnosis (*Ahli maarifat*) and those who enjoy the prestige of being in the company of Prophet (peace be upon him) can be recognised by the following signs:

i) emission of fragrance,

- ii) independence, in want of nothing (*Istighna*),
- iii) Talk according to the Quran and *Hadith*,
- iv) Talk according to *Sharia*,
- v) Adherence to *Sunnah* and *Jamaa* (Muslim Community),
- vi) Work for the welfare of Muslim Community,
- vii) Generosity. (SA, p.56)

For the believers the meditation of presence in the company of Muhammad (peace be upon him) is like *miraj* (ascension in order to be into the presence of God). (SA,p.42)

Awrad (Devotional Readings)

Hadrat Sultan Bahu did not prescribe any special *awrad* for the followers of his Order, but the *murids* have chosen a few *awrad* hoping to be blessed by the *baraka* of the saint:

i) *Risala Ruhi sharif* (The treatise translated "Of the Spirit"): The *Risala* is read as a *wird* of power as well as a book of divine knowledge (*marifa*). This treatise was written under spiritual inspiration and it explains the doctrine of *Faqr*. So it is often memorised and read by the devotees.

ii) *Dua-i-Saifi* (the sword-like prayer): Hadrat Sultan Bahu has recommended *Dua-i-Saifi* at one or two places in his books but it is not certain that he meant by it the same *Dua-i-Saifi* which is often read by the Sufis of other

Orders. Faqir Noor Muhammad thinks so and he has recommended it in his book "*Makhzan-i-Asrar*".⁹

iii) *Qasida Ghauthia* (The well-known poem under this heading, uttered in a spiritual state by Hadrat Ghawth al-Azam, Shaikh Abd al-Qadir Jilani): Though Hadrat Sultan Bahu never mentions this poem in his books but Faqir Noor Muhammad has included it in his "*Makhzan-i-Asrar*" and recommended it to be recited as a *wird*. The *Murids* of Sarwariya Qadiriya Order often read it as a *wird* of power.



Kalima Tayyiba



لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُولُ اللَّهِ

La ilaha illallahu, Muhammad-ur-Rasul ul-Allah

(There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah)



Allah

اللَّهُ

Lillah

لِلَّهِ

(For Allah)

Lahu

لَهُ

(For Hu{He})

Hu

هُوَ

(He)

Allah

اللَّهُ

HU

هُوَ

(Allah is He)

Hu wal-Haq

هُوَ الْحَقُّ

(He is Truth)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ۝ لَمْ يَلِدْهُ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ۝

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ ۝ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ ۝ وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ ۝ وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ ۝ وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ ۝

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ ۝ مَلِكِ النَّاسِ ۝ إِلَهِ النَّاسِ ۝ مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ ۝ الَّذِي يُوَسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ مِنَ الْغِيظِ وَالنَّاسِ ۝

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ وَبَارِكْ وَسَلِّمْ ۝
أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ رَبِّي مِنْ كُلِّ ذَنْبٍ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ ۝

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ ۝

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ، وَرَسُولُهُ، صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُوْلُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ وَسَلَّمَ ۝

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ ۝

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝ مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ۝ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ۝ اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۝ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ۝ آمِينَ

آيَاتُ الْكُرْسِيِّ

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ ۝ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ ۝ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۝ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ ۝ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ ۝ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ ۝ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ ۝ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا ۝ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ ۝

سَلَامٌ قَوْلًا مِنْ رَبِّ الرَّحِيمِ ۝

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ ۝ لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ ۝ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ ۝ وَلَا أَنَا عَابِدٌ مِمَّا عَبَدْتُمْ ۝ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ ۝ لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ ۝

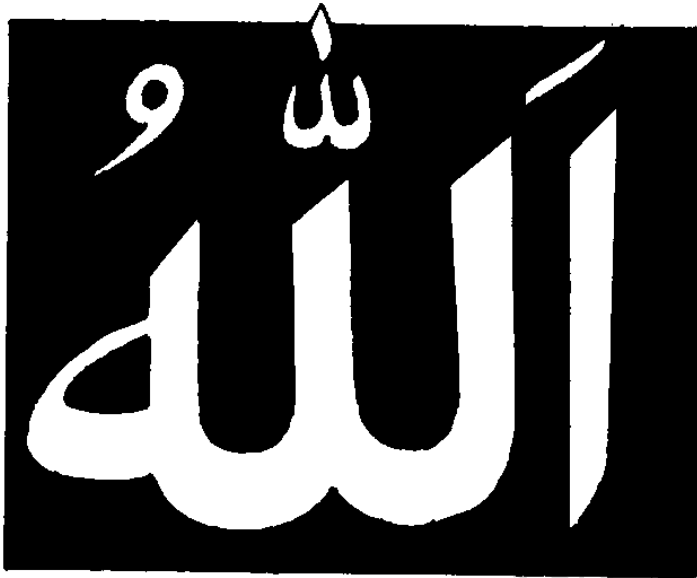
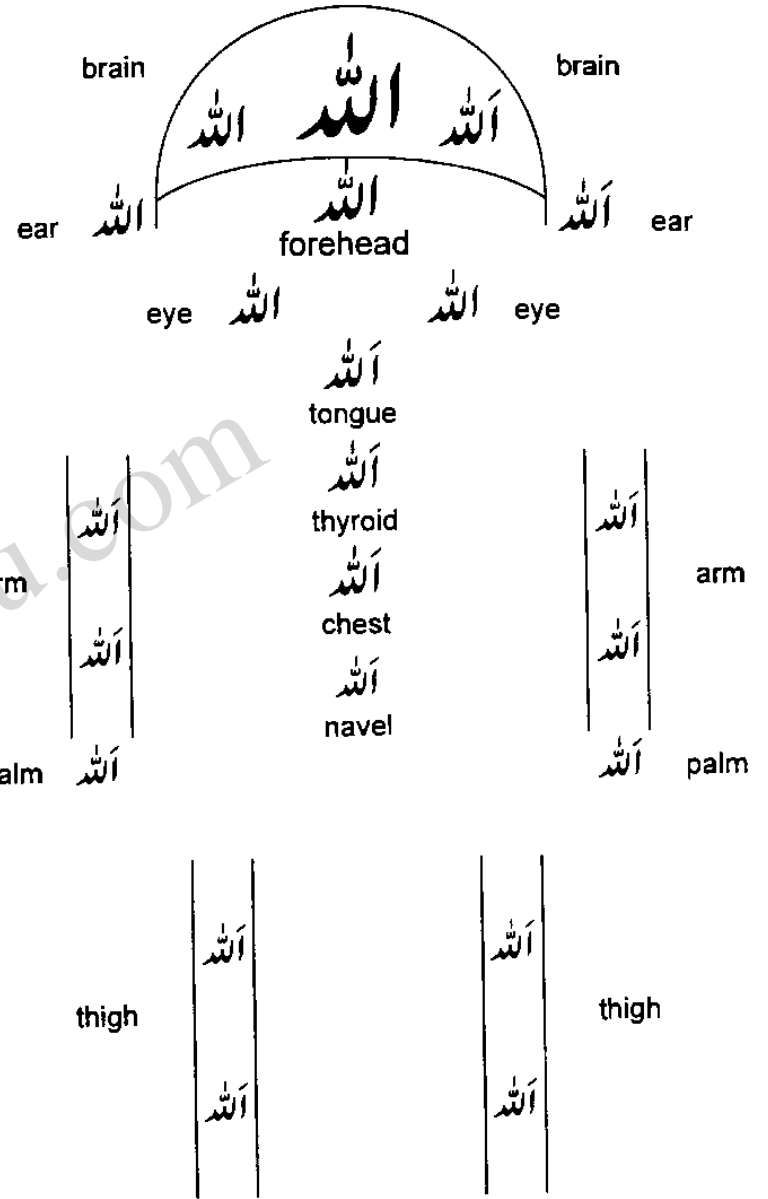
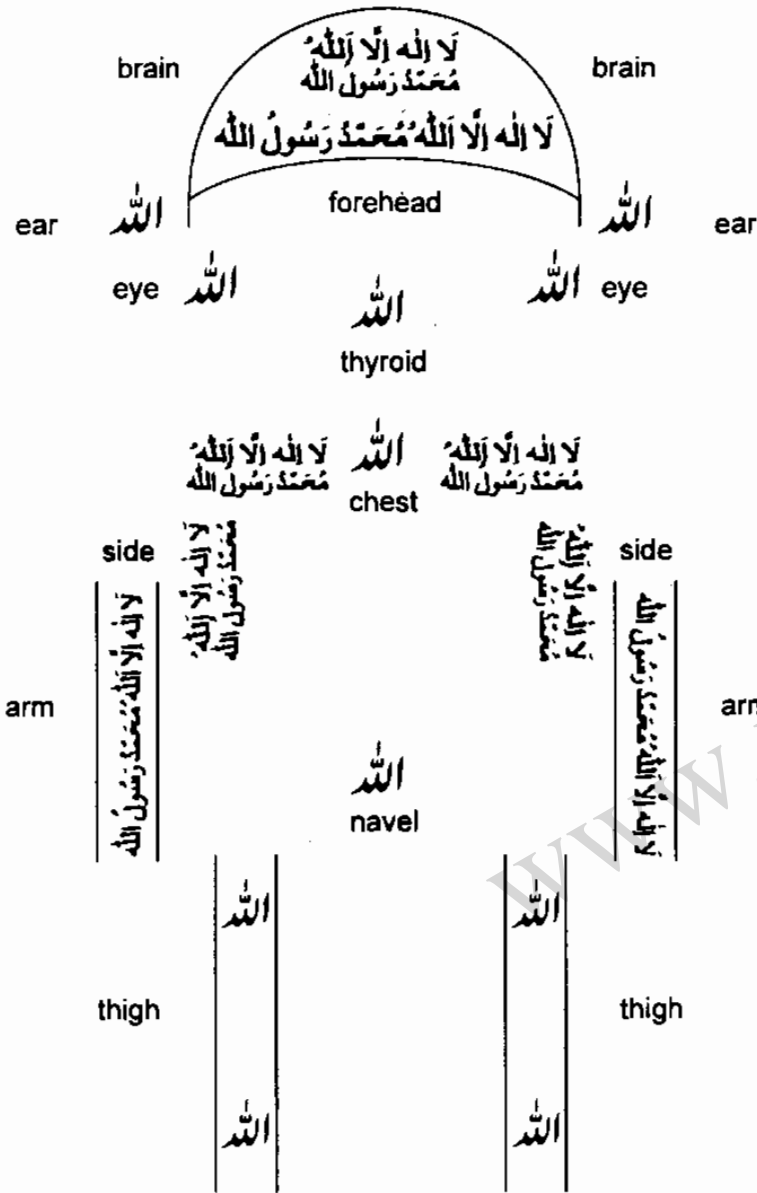


FIGURE 3
202



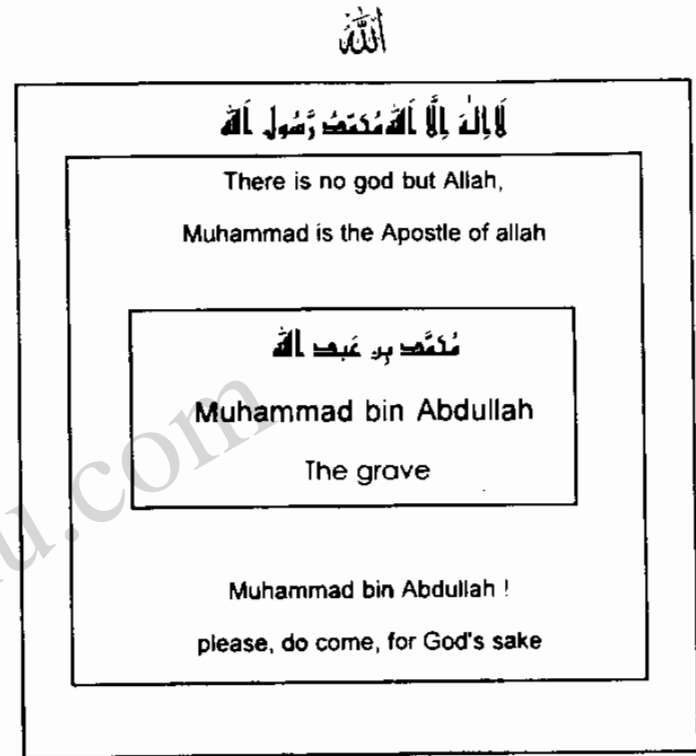
Mashq-i-Margum-i-Wujudiya
(Writing Name over the body)

FIGURE 4
203



Mashq-i-Margum-i-Wujudiya
(Writing *Kalima* over the body)

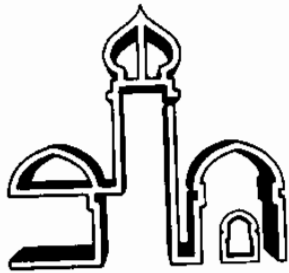
FIGURE 5



" The Prophet (peace be upon him) is blessed by Allah and His angels. Bless him, then, you that are True believers, and greet him with a worthy solution."

Dawat at middle stage

FIGURE 6



Half a Glance

Relevant extracts
selected from the books
and treatises of

Hadrat Sultan Bahu

Covering the topics of his
Sufi Teachings

Neem Nazaram behtar az sad aftar.
(Sultan Bahu)

(Half a glance of mine is better than hundreds of suns.)



Faqir Bahu - the perfect Faqir

1. Faqir Bahu known as Awan, resident of the suburbs of Qala-i-Shor, may Allah protect her from calamity and oppression, says a few words about the philosophy of Faqr,¹ the station of the Essence of Being,² (as Allah has said) "and My mercy encompasseth every-thing". He imparts the higher teaching in the form of commentary with its deepest and most distinct meaning. (R. Tr. p. 17)
2. None can possibly reach the station³
where I reached;
I am the great falcon in the celestial realm:
no place for poor flies.
The throne, the Pen, the Chair,⁴ and both the
worlds have no way to that height.
Not even an angel can get there;
that is not a place for mere desire. (KT, p. 11)
3. I am the great falcon,
I fly in the spheres of Divine generosity ___
O Hu!⁵
Whatever I utter, is like *kun* (Be);⁶
I can change the movement of destiny ___ O Hu!

Plato and Aristotle are nothing to me ____

O Hu!

Thousands and millions of
the wealthy and generous nobles
like Hatim⁷

stand just like beggars at Bahu's gate ____

O Hu!

(Abyat)

4. O seeker of truth! I have completely ascertained every discipline of knowledge with inner guidance and the favour of God. I am not a boaster. I am a perfect Faqir⁸ and by the grace of God the quintessence of all in both the worlds has become manifest to me. Nothing is concealed from me. (NH, p. 155)
5. Know that the author of this treatise ____ the perfect gnostic of Qadiriya (order) who is capable of every power and present at every station, absorbed in the Divine Essence of the absolute ____ is pleased to say that when he was granted the exaltation by the eternal favour of the Truth of Truth and commanded by the most noble Prophet of effluent light (may peace be upon him) to show the right path to all the mortals whether they are Muslims or infidels, fortunate or unfortunate, alive or dead, he with his tongue that scatters pearls, bestowed upon me the titles of "*Mustafa*, the second" and "*Mujtaba* of the last phase":

Bahu was allowed by the *Mustafa* to instruct mortals in the name of God.

We were initiated by *Mustafa* himself and *Mujtaba* himself called us his son.

Knowledge and Action

1. A man must be always aware and knowledgeable. (NH, p. 163)
2. Knowledge⁹ is the solacer of soul. An ignorant Faqir is the boon companion of the Devil. (QD, p. 31)
3. The gnostic (*arif*) without knowledge¹⁰ is blind; and the scholar without gnosis never finds out the truth. Knowledge and Faqir¹¹ are intimately associated. (MFK, p. 36)
4. The knowledge is for guidance and perception of the Divine secrets. (AK, p. 19)
5. The seeker should, first of all, acquire knowledge; after that he may intend to attain *Faqir*. Otherwise he will be misled on the path due to ignorance. (MN, p. 13)
6. Knowledge is always useful when combined with practice. (MN, p. 14)
7. If one strives after *Faqir* without knowledge,
he will turn heretic and die as a mad man ____
O Hu!
Even if he prays for a hundred years,
he will remain ignorant of God ____
O Hu!
The veil will not be lifted because of his
negligence;
his heart will become an idol-temple ____
O Hu!
I cherish love for those who have attained
the union with the Friend unique ____

O Hu!

(Abyat)

7. O seeker! One, who acquired knowledge and did not act accordingly, is not a man. One, who acquired knowledge and duly practised it, is a man of wisdom. (MFK, p. 75)
8. The knowledge is for action. Knowledge without action is like a barren woman. (KTK, p. 190)
9. The pious scholars and perfect Faqirs are the two elite groups. One who adheres to them never comes to grief in both the worlds. (KTK, p. 81)
10. A person who indulges in sensual pleasure through the means of his knowledge is like a snake. He who adorns his heart and spirit, is a wise, all aware, pious scholar and worthy to be seen. It is he who is called a knower of God, a knower in God and a knower in company with God. Such a man rises up from the level of knowledge and attains to the rank of the saints. He is absorbed in the recollection of the supreme Name ___ Allah ___ like Ba-Yezid (Bayezid Bistami, a famous Sufi, d.874). (AB, p.15)
11. What is that type of knowledge that the Devil employs to misguide the mankind? That is which caters for the gratification of self-interest and greed. He, at first, imparts it to the baser self of a person and then the self turns out heretic. (AB, p. 26)

Gnosis (*Marifa*)

1. Where did the sheer knowledge lead the Satan to? To

the curse and wretchedness. This knowledge works against the spirit. Even in the beginning the soul, just because of it, fails to reach God and loses faith.

The knowledge with faith is the highway and the knowledge without gnosis (*marifa*) leads one astray. (AB, p. 26)

2. The sign of the gnostics (*arif*) who realize the truth: they are knowers of divinity. One who is a mere tonguester can find no courage and power to confront the divine scholar.¹² (AB, p.58)
3. The knowledge that does not dissuade one from vanity, lie, injustice, negligence of God's commands and love for riches, is not knowledge. If it does not inspire a person to turn away from negligence and persuade him to keep vigil at night, it does not make him God-conscious and God-fearing, it is no knowledge. (MFK, p. 35)
4. The exoteric knowledge is like a lamp that illuminate every house in the world, and the esoteric knowledge is like the sun which lights up the whole world. The knower of God is like the sun, which rises daily and drives away darkness. Faqir is the sun and the world is dark. (AK, p. 58)
5. I have not as yet come across such a scholar who studied for the sake of gnosis, vision and the proximity to God and his aim was enlightenment and awakening of the heart. The scholars of external law study only for making a living and getting worldly gains by it. (AK, p. 113)

6. The scholars learn from worldly teachers and the Faqirs receive knowledge direct from Allah.¹³ (MA,p.14)
7. Be it known that the scholars are the inheritors of the prophets and the men of reverence. The Faqirs are the men of authority.¹⁴ Allah protects the person who is the friend of scholars and faqirs, against the calamities of all kinds. Knowledge is a mine of rubies. It is the knowledge that bestowes *marifa* (gnosis). It is the knowledge that blesses one with Union. It is the knowledge that removes the hurdles. Allah is sufficient, all else is lust. (AQ, p. 31)
8. The scholar without *marifa* (gnosis) is ignorant.¹⁵ Those who spend their lives in study of books are like ignorant children who forget everything. At the end when they see the angel of death, they cannot recall even a word of what they had previously learnt. (TB,p.14)
9. May God save a person from the impious scholar as well as from the Faqir without trust (*Tawakkul*) and forbearance. (AF, p.160)
10. The remembrance of the Word of God recite and they are arrogant;

the Mullahs¹⁶ give themselves air ____
 O Hu!
 Like the rain-clouds they carry along the
 books____
 O Hu!
 Where there is more and better to eat,

they recite more ____

O Hu!

They are losers in both the worlds, Bahu,
 who wasted away what they had
 earned____

OHu!

(Abyat)

The *Faqirs* - men of authority

1. The men of letters are nothing but listeners, so they are men of audition. The Faqirs gain *marifa* (gnosis) through their heart's eyes, so they are men of vision. (MFK, p. 202)
2. Perfect and wise is he who outwardly studies the pages and inwardly busies himself in the recollection of God. (MFK,p.300)
3. The religious scholars are like the lamps in the world and the *faqirs* are like the sun. Faqir is the sun as he imparts knowledge to the ignorant in a glance and transforms the scholar into a gnostic (*arif*). (NHK,p.25)
4. The end of school men is the beginning of Faqirs.¹⁷ (KJ,p.60)
5. The ascetics and worshippers left the world behind, but the high ambition of the Gnostic (took him away) from place to Placeless. See the beneficences of the Gnostic on the path; he has annihilated himself in the Friend who is Traceless. (DB)
6. The constant study of the books of *awliya* (saints)

- makes one wise. Whatever he does or says is not without wisdom. The study of their books blesses one with recollection, will and life of the heart. (KTK, p.69)
7. The scholar, who is pious enlightened and a praiser of God, is a perfect Faqir. (NHK, p.23)
 8. The path to Allah has nothing to do with knowledge or ignorance. This is the way of sheer love and sincerity. (NHK, p.9)
 9. A compassionate man is the man of God; and the spiritual concentration (*tawajjuh*) of the perfect (Faqir) is unique. A heart that is melted by the attention of men of God is the heart otherwise it is just a piece made of water and clay. (AB, p.113)
 10. The person who is unaware of the states of nearness to God is ignorant even if he may be the doctor of external law. (AB, p.114)
 11. The beginning and the end of Faqir is gnosis (*marifa*) nearness (*qurb*) and spiritual awareness (*hadoori*). (AB, p.144)
 12. The beginning of Faqr is to put on the dress of *sharia* (to act according of the sacred law) and to absorb in *marifa* (spiritual knowledge) after having got to know about the status of truth (*haqiqa*). The Faqir is always generous, regularly present in spiritual meetings of Muhammad¹⁸ (peace be upon him) and annihilated in Allah.¹⁹ (AB, p.54)
 13. Be it known that knowledge is like gold, silver and coins. Faqr as well as gnosis are like a sword of steel. What the sword can do, gold and silver cannot.

(AB, p.67)

14. The baser self dies and the heart becomes alive by the study of the word of God. (AK, p. 76)
15. O pious scholar! don't look down upon the Faqir with disdain. The Faqir is a man of authority by the command of the Judge of judges. The question of Faqir is like the dialogue of *Khidar* and Moses. That is wisdom absolute.²⁰ (TH, p. 65)
16. The Faqir who abandons prayer has not an iota of knowledge of God even if he shows you high and low, from the moon to the fish. It would be just illusion and misguidance. (MF, p.28)
17. If the interior is in accordance with the exterior, it is exact because it is from God. And the interior which is opposite to the exterior, is false. (TH, p.10)
18. Nobody is more wretched and contemptible than the ignorant. (KTK, p. 8)
19. An innovating²¹ Faqir is the disciple of Satan and the Faqir who follows the sacred law is one with God. An innovating Faqir is like a mad dog. Though such Faqirs make claims to Faqr, yet they are not Faqirs. They are only tramps and dogs possessed by ego. They go about begging for the material gain and inwardly they are deprived of the knowledge of God. (AK, p.7)
20. Be it known that the Faqir who acts against the sacred law is inwardly false. He is unreliable and his claim (to Faqr) is a lie. (NH, p.76)
21. The person who does not perform the self-evident duties is wicked and outcast. (KJ, p.29)

22. The Way that is opposed to the sacred law is heretical. (KTK, p. 7)
23. The men of God first of all purify their souls and then keep themselves absorbed in vision of presence and knowledge. After that they don't need anything; they are free from labours of endeavours.²² (AK, p.7)
24. Pay respect to the perfect Faqir and the Scholar without vanity even if there may be just a picture of theirs on the wall. If you are wise, a word is sufficient for you and if you are stupid then stay away imprisoned within your ego-self. The egotist is like a fly; even if it flies, it cannot approach the falcon. (AK, p.34)
25. Rectitude is certainly better than showing a miracle.²³ (MF,p.10)
26. The heart that is full of compassion due to love and warm with light, is cold to the world and men of the world. (MF,p.21)
27. The man is he who judges his soul himself in every state. Ego-worshippers are many but God-worshippers are rare. Allah is sufficient, all else is mere lust. (AQ,p.54)
28. Those endowed with the spiritual presence are silent; and in the state of silence they are in the presence, and go through deep affliction.²⁴ But the stupid are jubilant and sell away their souls. (AB, p.23)
29. The Faqir in person is a mine and his dialogues about the quintessence of God, nature etc., are the valuable rubies. Therefore, O confounded stupid brute! fear the wrath of his terrible displeasure because the anger of

- Faqir is a sign of God's wrath. And the Faqir's advice solves the difficulties. The attention, sight, sitting and rising of Faqir are never without wisdom. Nothing that the sage does is ever without wisdom. (AB, p.25)
30. The mind and the heart are the imperishable kingdoms. Both the worlds are like particle in comparison to the heart. (AB, p.25)
31. The hearts are deeper than the rivers and seas.
Who can fathom the hearts? ____
O Hu!
The boatsman and the boats, the oars and the struggle, all are there ____
O Hu!
All the fourteen spheres are in the heart where love has pitched its tent ____
O Hu!
Only he can know God, who knows the secrets of the heart ____
O Hu! (Abyat)
32. Though in appearance the *Faqir* seems to be needy but in fact he has control over the God's treasure; it is the *arif* (gnostic), the friend of God and the learned who knows God. (AB, p.37)
33. Salvation lies in going on the straight path; and to refrain from cruelty is the means of guidance; and to displease others is a sin.
The God-conscious *Faqir* is aware of each and every (spiritual) stage. (AB, p.39)
34. If the Faqir aspires to achieve a rank, he is blessed with

- such power that he can become a king ___ the shadow of God (*zill al-Allah*). (AB, p.71)
35. The friends of God who have control over the uncountable unseen treasures, exercise power over all in the East or West. A Friend of God is the reflection of God. (AB, p. 19)
 36. The higher the *arif* (gnostic) the more humble²⁵ he is. He is sometimes in desire and sometimes in awe. (AB,p.109)
 37. The noble and the rich even the kings are contemptible in the eyes of a contented and independant *Faqir* because the love of dominance hinders them from the knowledge of God. (AB, p.126)
 38. Those are very imprudent who have a little knowledge and intellect but claim to be all in all. (AB, p.138)
 39. The *Faqir* is a man of authority. A king cannot attain to the rank of a *Faqir*, friend of God, even if he spends his whole life to acquire it. But if the *Faqir* desires, he can approach the king by his spiritual concentration (*tawajjuh*) and by the grace of God. He can draw the king towards himself so that he may come out hastening towards him barefooted, and attend upon him like a humble slave. (AK, p.2)
 40. The *Faqir* is the "whole" and all other sections of *awliya* like *ghaws* and *qutub*²⁶ are just like components in comparison to him. (AK, p.17)
 41. The gnostic who can impart knowledge just by a glance and can bless the disciple with spiritual presence only by his concentration, does not need the exoteric study.

- All the spiritual stages can be seen clear like a mirror through gnosis (*marifa*) and the man of gnosis is not only acquainted with each station and rank but also sees them too. (AK, p.19)
42. The *arif Faqir* has four evident qualities: to cover up other's sins, silence, handicraft²⁷ and compassion. These four are the quintessence of *Faqir*. If one lacks these qualities, he cannot be called a *Faqir*. He is a vagabond, dishonourable and stupid. (AK, p.31)
 43. The gnostic who sees other than God, is an apostate and his gnosis, too, is apostasy. (AK, p.106)
 44. One should know the sign of gnosis and the path of gnostic. The sign of gnosis: it should bring one near to God. The Path of gnostic: he concentrates upon the vision of God and is acquainted with all the ways. These are the ranks of Sultan of gnostics.
The gnostic always concentrates upon the vision. To see other than the vision, is forbidden to his sight.
Another sign of the gnostic: the disciple of a gnostic becomes a gnostic the very first day. (AK,p.39)
 45. Life and death are equal to the gnostic. Even if they are dead and invisible, still they have power over all. Though the people think that they lie buried under the soil, yet the grave for them is a means of proximity (to God). They are in the company of God and His Prophet (may peace be upon him). As the *Faqirs* ___ friends of God ___ guide and educate the seekers and disciples in life, so they are capable of doing it after their death, even better than life.²⁸ (AK, p.107)

46. God alone knows the unseen and He grants this particular knowledge to the elect.
This way was shown by Hadrat Muhammad, the Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him). He who denies this is apostate _ abject and lifeless. He is looking for the carrion. (AK, p. 11)
47. This world is in this universe
like a carcass in polluted water;
whoever takes it, its poison is sufficient
(to kill him). (DB).
48. The world is carrion,
and those who seek it are dogs ____
this word came clearly from the Prophet of the
end time.
Why do you toil in it
for the sake of carrion?
Trust in God! "He, God" is friendly.
God gives you daily bread
without toiling and worrying.
It is carrion ____ why do you circle around the
carrion like dogs?
No, you are not a dog:
you are a human being ____
why do you grieve for the sake of carrion?
Human being! become close friend of
the Divine Truth!
Join truth with Truth.
Don't bark like a dog in this perishable abode!
O friend, don't gnash your teeth like a dog

because of carrion!

This is carrion and unlawful

Like the gland of *qassabak!* (DB)

49. Be it known that it is necessary for the poets to know the excellence and elegance of language but the Faqirs require only the knowledge about the proximity (to God) and the spiritual presence. If the poet's poetry is raw and defective, it brings bad name to him. But even if the faqir's style is unrefined, it is sweet like honey and more precious than gold and silver. (AK, p.120)
50. The station of Faqr is a fathomless ocean; it is the "farthest lote-tree" ____ the abode of "faithful spirit". Only the faithful can see this station of "indubitable truth"²⁹. (MA, p.8)
51. Come out in search of a perfect *Faqir*. Even if he resides at a great distance, don't hesitate to pay a visit to him. (MF,p.16)
52. Stupid is the man who has no consideration for the hereafter and the judgement. He alone is wise and intelligent in the world who is entrusted with Faqr by God. (MF, p.23)
53. There is a touchstone to test everything; the touchstone for knowledge is Faqr.³⁰ (JA, p.6)
54. Allah transforms the sight and person of the one whom he likes, into *alchemy* (that changes any metal it touches, into gold). (JA, p.7)
55. The person who is named "friend" (of God) is earlier tested by God through suffering. The men of God consider such affliction a blessing. (JA, p. 23)

56. Most of the people say that *Faqr* is difficult but Faqir Bahu says that it is not. Difficult is that which does not please our heart.

Faqr is easy for him who likes it. Then men of *Faqr* are in fear day and night lest they come to lose it. (JA, p.31)

57. Be it known that *Faqr* is not inherited. It is to attain union with God. *Faqr* does not depend upon being a Syed or a Quraishite, it depends upon the attainment of sacred knowledge (*irfan*).³¹ (JA, p.51)

58. The way of passion (*ishq*) is very tortuous.

If you want to follow it, then go like a passionate lover, otherwise keep away from the lovers. (JA, p.51)

59. *Faqir* is like the sun. The higher it rises, the more its light and radiance impels the dimness and darkness. (JA, p.71)

60. *Ghawth* and *Quutub* linger behind
while the lovers travel onward ____

O Hu!

Ghaus cannot even visit the stage
where the lovers reach ____

O Hu!

The lovers always enjoy union;
they have place in the Placeless ____

O Hu!

Bahu, I cherish love for those whose
self abides in the Self ____

O Hu!

(Abyat)

61. The faces of men of *Faqr* shine like the full moon due

to their spiritual greatness and grandeur and the faces of worldly men are odious and repulsive.

On the day of Resurrection the learned scholars alongwith the men of the world will have to reckon with accountability. The scholars will be rewarded for the lawful living while the worldly ones will be punished. But the *Faqir*, the gnostic with the divine knowledge, will go free, unaccountable and unafraid. (AQ, p.21)

62. The *Faqir* who aims only at the attainment of proximity (to God) and not at the favours of the kings, is in fact greater than the king. (AQ, p.71)

63. Take up the truth and seek pardon for the innovation and unbelief.

One who is enlightened brings you closer to unity by each and every way. (AQ, p.19)

64. The friends of God will succeed each other and shine like the sun till the day of Resurrection. (TH, p. 15)

64. There is hardly one out of thousands who is a God-worshipper and strives to see the Countenance of his Lord with a heart alive and awake. (TH, p.31)

65. Let us seek God's mercy to keep away from those who are outwardly popular but in fact they are only tradesmen. They are inwardly filled with impurities. Such people are ignorant and utterly lacking in faith. They worry about the worldly riches, gold and silver, they are robbers and infidels. *Faqir*, is only he who traverses the way of Truth. Outwardly he is established firmly and sincerely in the observance of sacred law, and inwardly

- he possesses the divine knowledge. (TH, p.29)
67. Faqir is a king and one who begs is a beggar. The man who lacks inner and outer power and control, cannot be called a Faqir ___ a gnostic with divine knowledge. (TH, p.44)
68. A Faqir is rich; he is rich due to the proximity to God and not due to the wealth and property. The richness because of worldly wealth is false. (TH, p.46)
69. The perfect men remain tongue-tied:
The branch full of fruit bows and puts its head on the ground. (KTK, p.19)
70. Whatever you seek, demand it from the Faqir.³² (QD,p.39)
71. The men of love are those who believe in the omniscience of God and His apostle and remain immersed in their love. (AF, p.100)
72. *Faqir* is neither inherited nor one can find out its essence through talking about it. It is God's mercy and blessing which is like the wave of a river. The Fuqara keep waiting for such a wave as to when God sends it to them.(AF,p.118)
73. As the men of the world worry to gain riches and wealth, similarly the Fuqara are anxious to see the vision of God. (AF, p.158)
74. Mere worshippers are the beginners but men with divine knowledge are perfect. How can a beginner know about the one who stands on the other end perfect? (AF, p.165)
75. Two groups are really free in the world the kings and

the Fuqara.

Nobody would ever have been joyful like them. The Fuqara are *be-niaz* (in want of nothing) because they are the companions of *Be-niaz*. The kings also don't wish for anything because they are intoxicated with the love of their riches and wealth. (AF, p.169)

76. A God-conscious *darvesh* and a *Faqir* with the state of spiritual concentration can be known by the sign that he has no liking for the worldly things in his heart. The person who gives up the sensual desires, is the man with yearning (*shawq*) and the person who detaches himself from wealth and riches is a man of taste (*zawq*). (AF, p.181)
77. Some of the *darveshes* claim that every sector and every town stands established due to the benediction of Fuqara. The walking and wandering of Fuqara is not without reason. (MFK, p.54)
78. A gnostic never talks with anyone without the command of his Lord. (MFK, p.78)
79. As the eye of the sun always spots the mountains, similarly the mercy of God first visits the hearts of the gnostics. Know that God does not look towards the Throne and the Chair, the Tablet and Pen and the Form of man and the knowledge of language and the external acts of worship and the jinns and angels, but He looks into the heart of Perfect Man. The Perfect men are the prophets and saints whose hearts are engaged in the invocation for God. (MFK)
80. The *Fuqara* are like the mirror, in whatever form you

see the *Faqir*, you would be face to face with your own inner reality.

If a person considers the *Faqir* without benediction, he will remain unblessed and empty-handed in both the worlds. (MFK, p.137)

81. Whosoever won victory or kingship, it came to him through *Darvesh* or *Faqir*.

Go to the door of a *Darvesh* morning and evening, so that you achieve all that you wish for. (MFK, p.145)

82. The light-hearted and the wise, does not need to go through self-mortification; he is always in the state of divine presence. (MFK, p.193)

83. He who knows the secret³³ remains busy in the study of the pages of heart and keeps an eye on every spiritual station. (MFK, p.201)

84. *Faqir* is a boon and nobody can receive it except the friends of God like the prophets and saints.

Apart from the prophets and saints, if somebody claims of *Faqir*, he is an impostor. (MFK, p.235)

85. The enemy of a *Faqir* is either a hypocrite, or jealous or an unbeliever. (MFK, p.294)

86. Neither every *darvesh* is capable of saintship and enlightenment nor every body deserves the company of *Khidar*.³⁴ Only one *Faqir* from amongst the thousands is empowered to have control over the gold and silver. (NH, p.117)

87. A gnostic is the man who has contemplated every spiritual state. (NH, p.141)

88. That man is called *kimia-nazar* (empowered with the sight that works like alchemy) who can transform the ignorant into a knower at a glance and thereby unveils the possibilities of all kinds of knowledge to him. (MA, p.53)

89. The purehearted enjoys an eternal and immortal life. (MFK, p.9)

90. Only the tongue of that *Faqir* is like a sword of God who keeps himself busy in remembrance and thought of the Divine and the recitation of the Quran. (MFK, p.54)

91. I wonder at the people who do not serve the *Fuqara* for God's sake and on the contrary pelt stones at them. (MFK, p.5)

92. The tongue in the mouth of a *Faqir* is like a sword in the sheath.

If that sword is drawn, the *Faqir's* anger takes the form of God's wrath and it can kill the whole world because the tongue of *Faqir* is the sword of God. (MFK, p.57)

93. Mental disorder and unawareness are the signs of madness. Such people are deprived of the Divine knowledge. (MFK, p.59)

94. The self-cultured and God conscious person is polite and pious since the beginning of time. He blesses the people with divine grace (*faid*) and mercy. (MFK, p.105)

95. A friend of God is the person who is wrapped from top to toe in the Divine mercy. (MFK, p.158)

96. It is not easy to be a *Faqir*. The greatest mysteries of

- the Omnipotent are contemplated in *Faqr*. (MFK,p.164)
97. The men of the world can beseech the *Fuqara* but it is a sin for the *Faqir* to beseech a worldly-minded person. Well, if he does so with the order or permission of God, then it doesn't matter. The *Faqir*, who eats and drinks with the worldly-minded day and night, is even worse than them. (MFK,p.155)
98. The plane of *Faqr* and gnosis is higher and nobler than all the planes. (MFK, p.214)
99. The earth owes its habitation to the benediction of the presence of darveshes. He who denies the darveshes, remains perplexed in both the worlds. (MFK, p.307)
100. Those who are immersed in the unity and Divine knowledge possess the light within and without, even if they lie buried in their graves. But remember death is only a veil to them. It is indeed a reward for them. (MFK, p.329)
101. The heartless person is unmanly on this Path because the remedy for lovers lies in the heart-felt compassion. (MFK,p.329)
102. What is the sign of the pure-hearted? He eats food of this world but he works for the other world. (JA, p.21)
103. The perfect *Faqir* bestows knowledge and helps others.... So the gnostic *Faqir* does not accept the wealth and property. All this is not useful for the men of learning and to those who attend the spiritual meetings.
The profane knowledge takes away the modesty which is the essential part of life. (AB, p.36)

The Spiritual Guide (*Murshid*)

1. The qualified spiritual guide (*Murshid*) is all powerful and leader of the caravan. (AK, p.12)
2. The seeker cannot recognise the guide (*Murshid*) but the guide can know him. The call may discover the caller as the fortune knows the fortunate. (AK, p.116)
3. All the spiritual states mentioned in thousands of books are contained in one hint of the *Murshid*. (AK,p.38)
4. Let this body of mine turn into eyes.
Even then I may not be satisfied
to behold my *Murshid* ____
O Hu!
Let every hair of mine turn into millions of eyes;
let each one open and close in turn ____
O Hu!
Even then my zeal would not abate;
where should I go? ____
O Hu!
The sight of my *Murshid* is like
millions and crores of Pilgrimages for me ____
O Hu! (Abyat)
5. Tired of fasting for hundreds of days, and
hundreds of prostrations ____
O Hu!
Pilgrimage to Makkah for hundred of times,
but there was no end to the wishful journey ____
O Hu!

Nobody achieves perfection either after
wanderings
in the jungles or the retreats for forty days ____
O Hu!

One achieves all, says Bahu, when the old teacher
casts a glance at you for once ____
O Hu! (Abyat)

6. The seeker (of truth) should abandon the *Murshid* if he does not achieve his purpose within the span of a day and night.³⁵ Allah is sufficient, all else is mere lust. (JA, p.57)
7. The perfect murshid is a key to every lock. In his presence there remains no worry about opening of any lock. All the difficulties are solved at once. (JA, p.25)
8. The effusion of *Murshid* is like the rain of divine grace or the ray of the sun. (NH, p. 125)
9. The teacher who does not enable the disciple to realize God after the initiation, is an enemy of God. (KTK,p.94)
10. The perfect *Murshid* should be like a washerman who cleanses the clothes ____
O Hu!
He just looks and cleans;
he does not use any soap ____
O Hu!
He turns the grimy into white;
he does not leave any impurity ____
O Hu!
The *Murshid* may be such that he

lives in every pore of mine ____
O Hu! (Abyat)

11. *Alif*: Allah is a jasmine bud which the perceiver has planted in my heart ____
O Hu!
By the water of negation and positive statement it remained near the jugular vein and everywhere ____
O Hu!
It spreads fragrance inside when it approached the time of blossom ____
O Hu!
May the efficient perceiver live long, says Bahu, who planted this plant ____
O Hu! (Abyat): tr. Dr. A. Schimmel
12. I wonder at the people who have styled themselves together as seekers and Murshids but neither the seeker knows the reality of search nor the murshid is acquainted with the reality of spiritual guidance. Both are stupid and ignorant. (KTK, p.182)
13. The company of the elect is also the means of (spiritual) ascension. (AB, p.14)

The Seeker of Truth

1. The wise is inclined towards God and the un-intelligent tends to greed and covetousness. What do you choose between the two? Either get the knowledge of Truth or aim at the mundance pursuits. (AB, p.24)
2. The ego-worshippers are many but the God-

- worshippers are rare. (AB, p. 39)
3. The seeker of Truth who has regard for the world and the worldly people, is accursed in both the worlds. He is not a darvesh. (MA, p. 15)
 4. It is easy to be initiated (as a disciple) but it is difficult to give up one's (selfish) ambitions and desires. (KTK, p. 26)
 5. O fool! the disease of heart-deep hypocrisy has eaten up your whole existence. Go out in search of some physician of the souls so that he may restore to you health from this evil disease. (FL, p. 22)
 6. O seeker of truth! If you are a Syed³⁶, let you be qualified with the morals and manners of (your ancestor) Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).
If you are a Qurishite³⁷, let you be compassionate. If you are a theologian, aspire to be a *darvesh* and don't go out begging from door to door.
If you are ignorant, then seek knowledge³⁸ — the knowledge that takes you to the truth and obliterates all other than God, i.e. falsehood. (NH, p. 98)
 7. O Syed! if you want to be a Syed (prince) and lord in fact, then follow into the footsteps of your illustrious grandfather (Muhammad, peace be upon him) and adopt his morals, deeds and acts; and go out to seek a perfect *Murshid* to get the knowledge of God and perceive the unity.
If you found out the perfect *Faqir* and won over his love (as a disciple), you would have nothing to worry about in both the worlds. (NH, p. 226)

8. Remember that all the spiritual stations from the high above to the down below are nothing but the test for the seeker of truth. Any station that hinders him to approach the Creator, is a satan for him. (MN, p. 20)
9. As the people keep on seeking the perfect *Murshid*, so the *Murshid* also remains in search of the perfect seeker. (KTK, p. 67)
10. Because of his bad manners, the self-centred disciple is left deprived of union (with God) because of his bad manners, in spite of sojourn in the presence of a *murshid* for years. (AB, p. 63)
11. Favourable condition (*tawfiq*) is an effusion and blessing of God. It is granted by God to whom He wills without striving. (AK, p. 132)
12. What is that disciple of knowledge that serves as a cause for the devil to misguide the man? That is the knowledge of avarice and greed. (AB, p. 26)
13. May they cease to exist: the head that prostrates before the creation instead of God; and the eye that looks towards other than God; and the ear that listens to other than God; and the tongue that mentions other than Him; and the feet that rise towards other than Him; and the hands that help other than Him; and the waist that is girdled in the service of other than Him; and the chest that is filled with the impurity leaving Him aside; and the heart that tends to other's proximity except Him. (AB, p.40)
14. There are two qualities in a lover: first, he never turns his eyes to other than his beloved; second, he never

cares about the blames of his fellow-beings. (AB, p.55)

15. For a *Faqir* nothing is worse than indulging talk with others about their pursuits and contention and litigation. His heart dies, his speech becomes ineffective and his cares, veils and whims hinder him from gnosis, vision and proximity to God.

It is why the perfect *Faqirs* always live apart and shun the company of people and retire alone to the jungles. They are always in journey and keep themselves away from the people.

If they live in the cities, they often pretend to be mad. Some of them outwardly seem to be out of senses but inwardly they are loved by God. They are happy in the company with the Friend. They are blessed with composure at the sight of God; without it even the beauty of Paradise is a thorn in their side. (AB, p. 60)

16. Leave aside forgetfulness and think of death! Death lives in yourself and your self is a cave of death. (AK, p. 166)
17. One who incurs the wrath of God is overwhelmed by his ego, the satan, the world and his sins; and he is enslaved to them. (JA, p. 37)
18. The seekers of the world are always talking about themselves. Not for a moment they are free from their own cares till death over-powers them. (MFK, p. 22)

Detachment from the profane world

1. All the prophets and saints detached themselves from

the profane world and they expressed their disgust for it. How can one be a Muslim if he disobeys them. (GA, p. 23)

2. Half the curse upon the world
and the whole curse upon the worldly ___
O- Hu!
Those who did not spend in the cause of the
Master would suffer "stern punishment"³⁹ ___
O Hu!
Curse upon the cunning world that instigates the
fathers to kill their sons ___
O Hu!
Those who shunned the world, says Bahu,
will enjoy the bliss of evergreen gardens ___
O Hu! (Abyat)
3. The *dirhams* and coins are like worms in the flesh. The
disease of conflicting thoughts does not allow the peo-
ple to relax. (KTK, p. 4)
4. To wish for anything other than God and to get oneself
involved in it is erroneous. It is the way to incur God's
wrath. (KTK, p. 105)

Pride and Ego

1. Be it known that the greatest sin is pride and self-
centeredness. (KTK, p. 166)
2. One who does not subdue and quell his ego may never
find the gnosis of God. (KTK, p. 168)
3. The human soul is like a cave wherein the ego lies like

a snake. (KTK, p. 134)

4. If the uninitiate does penance and mortifies himself for the whole of his life, he will get nothing from the treasure house of divine knowledge. (KTK, p. 256)
5. The heart is such a vast continent where all countries find place but the heart cannot fit into any place because of its nobility. (AB, p. 60)
6. Inner recollection, insight and contemplation are granted only to a vigilant soul. (QD, p. 58)
7. The way to truth is neither in knowledge nor in ignorance. It is only through the divine favour, sincerity and selflessness that one can approach it. (AB, p. 100)

Wisdom

1. The age is like the sand and the human existence is like a glass, the inhaling and exhaling of breath is like the movement of sand. (AB, p.187)
2. The ritual prayer (*namaz*) of the elect is bestowed with vision. When they prostrate they are face to face with God. The prayer of the commoners is a mere custom. (AK, p. 99)
3. It is necessary for the darvesh that he should be spiritually aware while eating. (MA, p.7)
4. To sit beside the grave of a friend of God is better than striving for forty retreats of forty days each.⁴⁰ (MF,p.31)
5. Listen, my dear, you do not know yourself because of stupidity and thoughtlessness. Your spirit is a mine of

rubies and you stray aimlessly ___ bewildered and confounded. (AS, p.17)

6. This body is the cell of true God.
Faqir! have a peep into it ___
O Hu!
Don't beseech master *khadir*, the fount of life is within yourself ___
O Hu!
Light the lamp of yearning in the dark
so that you may find out the lost abode ___
O Hu!
They die before death, says Bahu, who discern the secret of truth ___
O Hu!
7. To be king to the people and not to harass them is the means of salvation. (TH, p. 46)
8. One's livelihood follows him like death. As death does not spare him wherever he is, so the livelihood, too, does not part his company. (AF, p. 144)
9. It is not incumbent on you to gain more knowledge but you are duty-bound to guard yourself against sins. (AF,p. 150)
10. Seek the help of some perfect man so that you may be perfect because nobody except a perfect man of God can offer guidance. The seeker of God lives like a man and the seeker of the world lives in worry and sorrow and is of no use. (MFK, p. 11)
11. If you want to cross the bridge over the eternal fire,⁴¹ then harass not a Muslim in any way. (MFK, p. 38)

12. Solitude and the cell within the heart are better than the solitude in the cell of clay because the earthen cell is inferior.

He who found out (the truth), found it in the cell of his heart, and he who gained from heart, saved himself from mud and clay. (MFK, p. 153)

13. The word of God is the treasure house of God; the outsider does not know and understand it. (MFK, p. 285)

14. He who does not please the *sadat* (the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), his interior is not clean and he can have no approach to gnosis of God. It is because the person who serves the *sadat* is himself served at the end; and he who denies respect to the descendants of the Prophet and Ali and Fatima is deprived of the divine knowledge. (NH, p. 221)

15. Only he is wise who knows what he had brought with him and what he carries back from the world, and what favour he is to get in the hereafter. (MA, p. 6)

16. First of all get a lawful morsel⁴², then step into *Faqr*. Unless the self finds poverty and hunger more delicious than the worldly delicacies, the way to the divine knowledge is not revealed to it. (KTK, p. 155)

17. A wrong person cannot find out the way to this Path and the blind man cannot have the gnosis of God. (KTK, p. 264)

18. The man with the moral qualities of *khalil* (Abraham) is the companion of *Rabb-i-Jilal* (the Lord, most High). (KTK, p. 267)

19. Don't you know that nothing is softer and finer than

butter because it melts with a little heat? Similarly the hearts of *darveshes*, *Fuqara* and believers move with compassion and their tender hearts are stirred when they see a brother in trouble. (KTK, p. 146)

Says Bahu

1. If one could attain the Lord by washing and bathing,
the frogs and fish would have found Him ____
O Hu!
If one could attain to the Lord by wearing longer locks,
the goats and sheep would have found Him ____
O Hu!
If one could attain to the Lord by vigils,
the birds would have found Him ____
O Hu!
One cannot attain to the Lord by all these, says
Bahu,
He is attainable only to those who are pure-hearted
____ O Hu! (Abyat)
2. I am neither a Sunni nor a Shia⁴³,
I am fed up with both ____
O Hu!
As I entered the sea of Mercy,
all the journeys came to an end ____
O Hu!
Many of the swimmers were exhausted, hardly

- one of them reached the bank ____
 O Hu!
- All those who sought the help of a *Murshid*,
 reached the destination ____
 O Hu! (Abyat)
3. The passion of love, finding us weak,
 charged again and again ____
 O Hu!
- I find love wherever I look,
 no place is left vacant ____
 O Hu!
- I met such a perfect *murshid*
 who has opened the window of my heart ____
 O Hu!
- I cherish love for the *Murshid*, says Bahu,
 Who disclosed the divine secret to me ____
 O Hu! (Abyat)
4. It is not *faqr* that one goes shouting
 at night and disturbs the other's sleep ____
 O Hu!
- It is not *Faqr* that one crosses the streams wading
 through the water and comes out dry ____
 O Hu!
- It is not *Faqr* to spread prayer-rug in the air
 and perform *namaz* ⁴⁴ ____
 O Hu!
- No, *Faqr* is a reward for those
 Who take the beloved into their hearts ____
 O Hu! (Abyat)

5. Lord is neither on the highest throne
 nor in the *kaaba* ⁴⁵ ____
 O Hu!
- Lord is neither in the knowledge of books
 nor He is at the pulpit and in the prayer arch ____
 O Hu!
- I travelled a lot but He was neither in
 the Ganges nor in Benaris ⁴⁶ ____
 O Hu!
- But as I joined the *Murshid*
 I got rid of the whole toil ____
 O Hu! (Abyat)
6. In comparison to a large quantity of faith and the
 books and the litanies,
 a little love is sufficient ____
 O Hu!
- Even if one keeps long vigils at night,
 nothing avails without the guidance of *Murshid*
 ____ O Hu! (Abyat)
7. When He decreed "Be" and all came to being,
 we were also there ⁴⁷ ____
 O Hu!
- We contemplated a lot and found
 only God with his attributes there;
 We lived in the same world ____
 O Hu!
- There was a time when we existed in the
 Placeless;
 and now is the time that we are entrapped

among the idols ____

O Hu!

The baser self has defiled us, says Bahu,
otherwise in our essence we were pure ____

O Hu!

(Abyat)

Passion and Ecstasy

1. From the Truth Exalted comes the announcement:

“If you love one, renounce all else.

We are Glorious,

We are the perfect in Glory,

We are the granting Lord,

seek us from us”. (DB)

2. I know for sure that in this universe is no object

of worship but He.

He alone exists in both worlds,

He alone is the goal.

If you hold the Sword of “No”, come alone;
there’s no worry.

Seek not help but from the *Haqq*
for none else is the *Fattah* but He.

With “No” negate all, say Allah and seek Allah.

Turn your gaze to Oneness

for nothing is needed but He.

He is the First; He is the Last;

His theophany is manifested in all.

Haqq has revealed Himself and
there’s nothing else but He.

My friend, dissolve yourself in One,
say not Two or Three.

He is the One, the cherished goal.

None exists but He.

He is He; He is the Truth, He.

I know none else but He.

He is He; He is the Truth;

I call none else but He.

I say One; I seek One;

I plant Him like a rose in my heart.

I find Him One and

find none else but “He”.

I roamed through the world;
found Him ____ He, the Truth, He.

I called One, I saw One;

I saw none else but “He”.

I’m the sympathiser of myself.

I have nothing with me but “*Ya Hu*”

I have tied up my heart and spirit with He ____
none else but “He” ____ . (DB)

3. Come away my wise friend, let’s go to the tavern.
Drink deep like a man and remember nothing
else

but the goblet and the glass.

Pawn the prayer-rug and get the goblet.
Cleanse your heart and soul
and don't be clever.

Are you clever? So what?
You are still worthless;
be mad and become a man.

You wear Poverty's dress and do not drink!
Why do you try to cheat?
You only tell a story!

Free yourself from fiction and fable,
none but the mad or men can walk this path.

Come forth like the intoxicated.
Why hide yourself?
You can't be drunk without the drink.
Step into the tavern
and take a drink despite old age.

Come here in this valley alone, all alone.
"He" is the One; "He" is the Guide. (DB)

4. O King!
Exalt your loyal followers.
For you are the Lord and Master:

shower your mercy upon your suffering slaves.

Let my mad heart come closest to yourself.
Don't dishearten your followers by your parting.

There are physicians indeed,
but they don't know
any medicine for us.
By a look of mercy
cure your ailing friends!

In longing for you I weep profusely
out of pain for you.
I wail ___ cast a look of abundant mercy
on those who long for you.

I, a poor fellow cherish your sight:
I, a poor fellow lie awake at night.
You should not be so cruel to your *darvesh!*

I've made friendship with my friend
and follow the friend sincerely;
from there I leave alone
but I go
singing and rejoicing. (DB)

5. Desire and you will see me,
detach yourself and you will reach.
How delicious if you taste the honey:

honey is nothing but the desire of Men of the
Truth.

Why do you ask again?

Don't ask.

If you seek the path of purity, come!
The path of the prophets is the clear stream.

If you are not free of all the attachments,
how can you find union with Him ___ the
Unique?

O friend, detach your soul ___ that is enough.
for Union is the ultimate goal.
Break away form the other.

Bahu, know the worth of Friend now,
detach from all that you may not be ashamed.(DB)

6. Wish from God, O friend, whatever you want
for it is He who fulfils your need.

What is he who knows to burn all other than Him?
By God, he is the knower of secrets.

One, the Eternal, the Real, the Existing.
O friend, know that
"All things are liable to perish".

The wise advise that in the path of love
you must have patience.
Give up everything else.

O friend, abandon this perishable place:
turn you face to the Everlasting. (DB)
7. There may be hundreds of thousands
companions but our Friend is One,
we saw no other intimate friend ___
our beloved is One.

I seek closeness with nobody else
except that Friend
who is the Real.
I would love only One,
even if many may be attached to me.

If thousands of hardships break the relationship,
He will remain my only friend:
I saw loyalty from nobody else.

I have experienced love with friends,
I have not estrangement with anyone,
that is the only difficulty.

I found no loyalty from thousands of friends,
for there is One ___
the only consoler, ___ the One. (DB)

8. If you want to be tranquil,
go,
throw away the mantle:
don't take it with you.

O friend, if you want the robe of the fortunate,
go
and put on the woolen dress like a *Sufi*. (DB)

9. From the longing of the soul
I seek the Beauty of Allah.
In every saying
I seek the Beauty of Allah.

I see nothing other than His Face
due to the love of the spirit:
I seek the Beauty of Allah.

I am not all aware of before and after:
from this and that
I seek the Beauty of Allah.

I see nothing other than His Face
due to the love of the spirit:
I seek the Beauty of Allah.

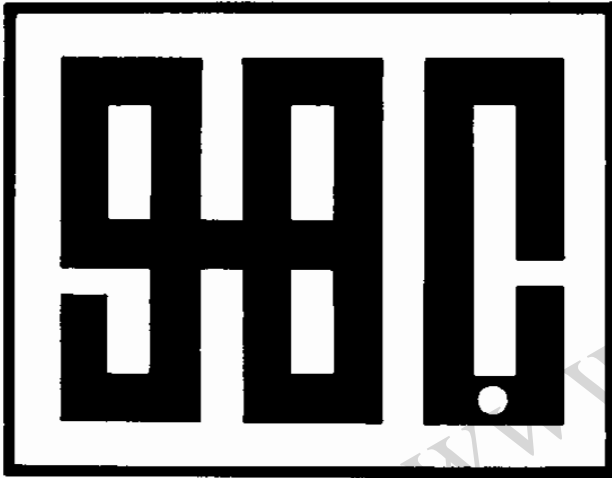
I am not all aware of before and after:
from this and that
I seek the Beauty of Allah.

Though drunk with love of the Friend of friends,
even intoxicated,
I seek the Beauty of Allah.

There is no other way of love for us:
in every atom,
I seek the Beauty of Allah.

My body and spirit have been sacrificed in the
Essence of "Ya Hu".
Even in existence
I seek the Beauty of Allah. (DB)

Notes and References





- Prologue
- The Times
- The Sufi Perspective

1. “ *Gum qabar, gum juthah, be nam-o-nishan*”
(Hadrat Sultan Bahu)
2. *Doha* is a well-known form in Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi languages for expression of love, its longings and aspirations in Poetry. This form was especially popular among the people of Soon Valley and Saraiki areas.
3. *Ghazal* is the most popular form of lyrical Poetry in Persian and Urdu.
4. Now-a-days even the burial place of Hadrat Sultan Bahu is called “*Darbar Haq Bahu*” by the common people.
5. Mullah Shah Kashmiri, a Khalifa of the famous saint Mian Mir Qadiri was the Shaikh of Dara Shikoh.
6. *Safinat-ul-Awliya*, *Sakinat-ul-Awliya*, *Hasanat-ul-Arifeen*, *Tariqat-ul-Haqiqat*, are Dara Shikoh’s well-known books on Sufism.
7. Dara Shikoh prided himself to be a murid of Qadiriya Order, hence the poetic name Qadiri.
8. *Bikrama Jit Hasrat, Dara Shikoh : Life and works*, Munshi Ram Manohar lal Publishers, New Delhi, 1982, p.247
9. *Ibid.* p.XXV (Preface)
10. *Ibid.* quotes Muhammad Kazim in Elliot’s translation. Vol.VII, p.179

11. Dr. I.A.Ghauri, War of Succession between the sons of Shah Jehan, p.79
12. Dr. Lajwanti Rama Karishna, Punjabi Sufi Poets, Oxford University Press, p.29
13. Hadrat Mian Mir was a very broad-minded Sufi Shaikh of his time. He was so much venerated by the people that he laid the foundation stone of Sikh Temple at Amritsar. He died in 1635 A.D.
14. Sultan Hamid, Manaqib-i-Sultani, Urdu Translation, Allah walay ki Qaumi Dokan, Lahore, p.5
15. Ibid. p.5
16. Ibid. p.10
17. Ibid. p.15
18. "We will show them our signs in all the regions of the earth and in their souls, until they clearly see that this is the truth." (Quran, 41-53)
19. *Agar Chih ma ra nist ilm-i-zahir
Zi ilm-i-batini jan gashteh tahir.*
20. Idries Shah, Neglected Aspects of Sufi study, The Octagon Press, London, 1977, p.29
21. Ali bin Uthman al-Hujwiri, *The Kashf al-Mahjub*, Tr. R.A.Nicholson, Islami Book Foundation, Lahore, p.81
22. H.A.R.Gibb, Islam, Oxford University Press, edition 1968, p.88
23. The term Sufism was used by the Orientalists in the West for *Tasawwuf* in the later centuries. By Sufism, they mean "Islamic Mysticism".
24. W.M.Thackston, Jr. Signs of the Unseen, Threshold Books, 1994, Introduction, p.XVI
25. William Stoddart, Sufism, Suhail Academy, Lahore, edition 1999, p.77
26. Dr. Annemarie Schimmel, Mystical Dimensions of Islam, the University of North Carolina Press, 1945, p.28
27. Al-Hujwiri, op. cit., p.74
28. Dr. Schimmel quotes Pere Nwiya, Dimensions, p.41 op. cit, p.41
29. J.S.Trimingham, The Sufi Orders in Islam, Oxford, 1971, p.271
30. Though Hadrat Ala-ud-Daula Simnani and Hadrat Mujaddid Alif Thani criticised the theory of Wahdat al-wujud put forth by Ibn Arabi yet they never denied his rank among the *Awliya*.
31. Muhammad Abd al-Ali Bahr al-ulum, Sharah Mathnavi Mawlvi Rum and such commentaries by many others.
32. Shah Muhammad Wahajud-Din, *Sharah al-Kahaf wal Raqim*, by Syed Abdul Karim al-Jili, Al-Kitab, Gunj Bakhsh Road, Lahore, 1977
33. See Dr. Burhanud-Din Farooqi's thesis and Abdul Haq Ansari's book (Sufism and Sharia) on the topic.
34. Ali Abbas Jalal puri, *Punjabi Shairi men Wahdat al-Wujud*, Lahore.
35. Dr. Schimmel, Dimensions, op. cit, p.259
36. Mawlana Jalalud-Din Muhammad Balkhi, Kulliyat-i-Shams Tabrizi, ed. Firozanfar, ghazals, 132, 566
37. J.S.Trimingham, op. cit, p.58
38. Ibid. p.95
39. "The *Ulama* say that they are the waves of the ocean and the *Fuqara* say that they are the reality of ocean.....so the *Ulama* and *Fuqara* both are correct in their views. In the beginning stand the *Ulama* and at the end pose the *Fuqara*. Without knowledge none can reach God." AB, p.135

40. There is a controversy about the real person Mir Qutub Shah the great ancestor of Awans, whose sons settled in Soon Valley and the area around it. Mawlavi Nurud-Din holds the view that his actual name was Awn bin Yalaa and he was a relative of Hadrat Shaikh Abd al-Qadir Jilani. From this point of view it seems natural that his descendants adhered to Qadiriya Orders. (see Tarikh Bab al-Awan, ed. Hakim Muzaffar Hussain, Lahore, 1923, p.142) Malik Sher Muhammad of Tarikh al-Awan has a different theory to offer about Mir Qutub Shah's lineage.
41. "Mehboob Subhani" is the title of Hadrat Shaikh Abd al-Qadir Jilani.
42. Dr. Schimmel, Dimensions, op. cit. P.120
43. *Ahwal-o-Maqamat-i-Hadrat Sultan Bahu*, by the present writer, Hadrat Ghulam Dastgir Academy, Darbar Hadrat Sultan Bahu, Jhang, p.213

● Life

1. The descendants of the sons of Hadrat Ali, other than Hasan and Hussain.
2. The descendants of Hasan and Hussain, sons of Hadrat Ali and Hadrat Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).
3. This is the version of Malik Sher Muhammad, author of *Tarikh al-Awan*, Ishaat Manzil, Lahore,
4. See Ahmad Ghazali, *Wadi-e-Soon Sakesar*, Feroze Sons, Lahore, 1993.
5. Anga is considered to be the oldest village in Soon Valley. Even one of the ancestors of Sadaat-e-Hamadani, Hadrat

Shah Bilawal Hamadani resided here for some time. It is, therefore, often called Anga Shah Bilawal.

6. Sultan Hamid, *Manaqib*, op. cit. P.18
7. Ibid. p.5
8. "Lawh-i-Mahfooz" the guarded tablet (Quran, 85:22) where every thing has been recorded since eternity.
9. Kamalud-Din Waiz Kashif Harvi, *Tafseer-i-Hussaini*, Matba-i-Darus-Salam, vol.1, p.157
10. Sultan Hamid, *Manaqib*, op. cit, p.39
11. *Talqin*: "Giving (secret) instructions" (Trimingham). We think it means an advice given to an individual privately.
12. Sultan Hamid, *Manaqib*, op. cit, p.19
13. Hadrat Shah Waliullah considers the whole *Tariqa Qadiriya* as *Awaisi*. (see Urdu tr. *Hamaat*).
14. Prof. Dr. Annemarie Schimmel is a Sufi scholar but then she began her career as an author on the pattern of contemporary orientalist who do not want to understand the difference between the two types of studies in Sufism as viewed by Idries Shah and the Sufi teachers. Perhaps it is why she advises "a serious student of Sufism" to avoid Idries Shah.
15. Dr. Schimmel, Dimensions, op. cit, p.247
16. J.S.Trimingham, *Sufi Orders*, op. cit, p.41
17. Shah Waliullah, *Hamaat*, Urdu tr. Prof. M. Sarwar, Sind Sagar Academy, Lahore, 1946. p.178
18. See *Tafsheemaat* by Shah Waliullah.
19. See the book "*Shan-e-Ghauth al-Azam, Hadrat Sultan Bahu ki nazam men*" by the present writer, Hadrat Ghulam Dastgir Academy, Darbar Hadrat sultan Bahu, Pakistan.
20. J.S.Trimingham, *Sufi Orders*, op. cit, p.271
21. *Risala*, Mawlavi Muhammad Din Gujrati, p.11

22. Sultan Hamid, *Manaqib*, op. cit, p.43
23. Ibid., p.15
24. Ibid., p.17
25. Of the Spirit, foreword by Dr. Schimmel, Hadrat Ghulam Dastgir Academy (Pakistan) Darbar Hadrat Sultan Bahu, Jhang, p.1
26. Sultan Hamid, op. cit, p.25
27. Magazine "Dastgir", Hadrat Ghulam Dastgir Academy (Pakistan) Darbar Hadrat Sultan Bahu, Jhang, March 1991, p.207
28. Ibid. p.199
29. *Risala Ruhi khurd* and *Sultan al-Wahem* have recently been discovered and published.
30. Frithjof Schuon, *Veil and Quintessence*, Suhail Academy, Lahore, p.91
31. Dr. Annemarie Schimmel, *The life and Work of Rumi*, Shambhala, 1992, p.29
32. "Dastgir" special edition (about Hadrat Sultan Bahu), Hadrat Ghulam Dastgir Academy (Pakistan) Darbar Hadrat Sultan Bahu, Jhang, March 1991, op. cit. pp. 199-215
33. *Divan-i-Bahu*, Hadrat Ghulam Dastgir Academy (Pakistan) Darbar Hadrat Sultan Bahu, Jhang, 1998
34. See the article "Sufi's poetics" in *The Role of Sufis*, by the present writer, Hadrat Sultan Bahu Research Institute, Lahore, 2001, p.97
35. See the list in "*Hu de bait*" compiled by Mumtaz Baluch, Lahore, 1998, pp.40-45
36. Dr. Syed Nazir Ahmad took the degree of Pb.D. in Zoology and he was a Professor of the same subject in Government College, Lahore. He retired as a Principal of the College.
37. Mumtaz Baluch, *Hu de bait*, Lahore, 1998

38. Dr. Annemarie Schimmel, in the preface of "Of the Spirit" called him "the great Punjabi Sufi singer". If by the singer she means a poet (actually the poetry is to sing) then she is right: otherwise, it must be understood that he was not a minstrel, he was a great Sufi *Murshid*.

● Faqr

1. J.S. Trimmingham, *Sufi Orders*.op.cit.,p.264: "The distinction between sufi and darwish (or faqir) is the difference between theory and practice.The sufi follows a mystical theory or doctrine, the darwish practises the Mystical way.Of course,one is a darwish and a sufi at the same time and there is no essential distinction in theory. The sufi is darwish and the darwish is sufi....."
2. It is said that Hashim of *Kufa* of the second century A.H. was the first ascetic who was called *sufi* and since then *sufi* became the title for all who were more inclined towards worship, prayers and abstinence from wealth and riches.
3. J.S.Trimingham remarks: Membership embraced two main grades: the 'professed' and lay affiliated. The first were dervishes, commonly called *fugara*, who formed only a small section of fraternity. The term darwish was used more especially for the classical dervish of the Arab Near East, Persia, central Asia, and Turkey: *Faqir* was used everywhere in Arab regions and elsewhere, but was imprecise in meaning" (*Sufi Orders in Islam*, p.175)
4. According to Hadrat Shaik Shahab al-Din Suhrawardy "The term *Qalandariya* is applied to people so possessed by the intoxication of 'tranquility of hearts' that they respect no

- custom or usage and reject the regular observance of society and natural relationship". (*Awarif al-Muarif*)
5. Dr. Javed Nurbakhsh, *Spiritual Poverty in Sufism*, Khaniqahi-Nimatullahi publications, London, 1984.
 6. Hadrat Sultan Bahu often quotes a Sufi saying: "The *faqr* has no need of God or other than Him."
(Of the Spirit __ R. p.103)
 7. R.A.Nicholson, tr. Devani Shamsi Tabriz, *ghazal* 8.
 8. Kulliyat, op.cit *ghazal* 890.
 9. Al. Hujwiri. op.cit., p.28.
 10. Hadrat Amir Kabir Syed Ali Hamdani , *Rasail Hadrat Shah-i-Hamadan*, tr. Ghulam Hasan Hasnoo, Oriental Publisher, Lahore, 1996, *Darwishiya*, p.63
 11. Willam Stoddart, Sufim, Sohail Academy Lahore, p.19
 12. *Syed*: descendant of the Holly Prophet (peace be upon him) Quraishite: One who belongs to the tribe of the Prophet(peace be upon him) called Quraish.
 13. Willam Soddart, op.cit., p.54.
 14. Rumi, Mathnavi, vol I:
"Shams Tabrizi kih Noor-i-Mutlaq ast".
 15. Kulliyat, op,cit.,: "man nadidum hamchu ou andar jahan"
 16. *Kaaba*: The first house of God upon the earth in Makkah.
 17. *Risala Ruhi*, translated into English by the present writer and published by Hadrat Ghulam Dastgir Academy, Darbar, Jhang, 1996.
 18. *Hadith qudsi*: the Divine saying other than the Quran.
 19. Syed Hussain Nasr, Knowledge and the Sacred, Sohail Academy, Lahore, 1988, p.199.
 20. William Stoddart, op.cit., p.199
 21. Sir Ahmad Hussain, The Philosophy of Faqirs, Lahore, 1940, p.31

22. Khalifa Abdul Hakim in "The Methaphsics of Rumi: He (Rumi) tells us that what he means by Love is indescribable and the attempt to define it as baffling as to define life itself". P.43
23. Ibid., p.43
24. "And remember Isa, who said to the children of Israel: 'I am sent forth to you by Allah to confirm the Torah already revealed and to give news of an apostle that will come after me whose name is Ahmad.'" (Quran, 61:6)
25. S.Ikbal Ali Shah in *Islamic Mysticism*, p.130
26. Dr.Annemarie Schimmel, *As through a Veil*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1995, p.132
27. Sachiko Murata and Willam C. Chittick, *The Vision of Islam*, IB Taurus Publisher, New York, 1995, p.132
28. Ibid. p.186
29. Khalifa Abdul Hakim, *Hikmate Rumi*, Institute of Islamic Culture, Lahore, p.24
30. Cf. Hadrat Ibn Arabi: "There is no being except Man which is "identical with God". (*Insha-ud-Dawani*, trans. S.A.Q.Hussaini, p.105.)
31. Rumi: "Their everlasting soul neither grew nor was created."
32. Hadrat Fatima is called the lady of Resurrection because according to a tradition an announcer will announce on the day of Resurrection: "All of you who have assembled, close your eyes so that Fatima, daughter of Muhammad (peace be upon him), may pass."
33. Hadrat Fatima, (d.11. AH)
Khawaja Hasan Basri (d.728 AD)
Shaikh Abd al-Qadir Jilani (d.1166)
Shaikh Abd al-Razzaq (d.603)

Hadrat Sultan Bahu (d.1691)

34. Lloyd Ridgeon, Aziz Nasafi, Curzon Press, Surrey, 1998, p.41
35. Titus Burckhardt, An Introduction to Sufi Doctrine, tr. D.M.Matheson, Ashraf Brothers, Lahore, 1959, p.87.
36. Dr.Schimmel, "As through a veil", op.cit., p.185
37. "Allah is the light of the Heavens and the earth."
(Quran 23:35)
38. Quoted by Dr.Schimmel in "As through a veil" op.cit., pp191,205.
39. *Furqan* is another name for Quran: *Ya-sin* and *Taha* are the titles of its chapters. Iqbal means to say that the Book was personified in the form of Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).
40. "You have good example in Allah's Apostle for anyone who looks to Allah and the Last Day and remember Allah always." (Quran 33:21)
41. "All gods are dead: now we want the superman to live — let this be our last will one day at the great noon-tide." Thus spoke Zarathustra, tr.R.J Hollingdale, Penguin Books).
42. Kulliyat-i-Iqbal, Bal-i-Jibril, ghazal 33.
43. Henry Bayman, Sufi knowledge for all Humanity, First chapter on Nietzsche: "Nietzsche, God and Doomsday."
44. See R.A. Nicholson, Studies in Islamic Mysticism. In the 2nd chapter he explains the views of al-Jili regarding "The Perfect Man": pp.77-142
45. "We each have our appointed place. We are verily those who range themselves in ranks (to serve Him). And we are verily those who glorify Him." (Quran, 37:164)

46. "He it is Who made the Heavens and the earth in six days — And His throne was on water — that he might try you and see who of you excel in works." (Quran, 11:7)
47. J.S.Trimingham, Sufi Orders, op.cit., p.194
48. Dr.Iqbal, Bal-I-Jibril ghazal I.op.cit.
49. Quran, 2:20
50. Lloyd Ridgeon, Aziz Nasafi op.cit, p.176.

● Dhikr and Meditation

1. F.Schuon, Veil, op.cit, p.156
2. Ibid
3. Quran 2:152
4. L.Ridgeon op.cit. p.153
5. Quran 10:56
6. L.Ridgeon op.cit. p.49
7. Quran 33:56
8. At the night when Muhammad, the Prophet, (peace be upon him) ascended above the heavens, he reached the point where the distance between him and God was that of "just two bows' length or even closer."
9. Faqir Noor Muhammad, *Makhzan-i-Asrar*, Kulachi, Dera Ismail Khan.

● Half a Glance

1. Faqr (Poverty, here Spiritual Poverty): One is likely to consider Sufism and Faqr synonymous but it is not so. An approach to the meaning makes a lot of difference. The Sufism can take various forms in the character of Sufis at

the end according to their point of attainment, mystical stage, rank, station and function, etc, etc. So Hadrat Sultan Bahu very rarely uses the usual term *tasawwuf* (in English Sufism) in his books, he always speaks of the way of Faqr from beginning to the end. It means that even when he talks of the doctrine, he is at the same time pointing out the method and the importance of activity, too.

2. "The station of the Essence of Being": The final point of Union where according to a Sufi saint all the opposites are united.
3. Station (*maqam*):
 - (a) stage or degree on the Sufi Path;
 - (b) place of manifestation where a saint has revealed his occasional presence and at which he can be communicated with. J.S. Trimmingham.
4. The Throne: a symbol of God's power and majesty. "Your Lord is Allah, who in six days created the heavens and the earth and then established Himself on the Throne. He throws the veil of night over the day. Swiftly they follow one another. (Quran, 7 : 54)
The Pen: the first intellect, analogous to Supreme Pen Read! Your Lord is the Most Bountiful One, who taught by the Pen, taught man what he did not know." (Quran, 96 : 4)
The Chair:- "His throne (chair) is as vast as the heaven and the earth..." (Quran, 2.225)
Hadrat Sultan Bahu means to say that his whole concern has been with Union to the Supreme Essence and not the divine attributes only. He has been blessed with the goal ___ "the celestial realm".

5. *Hu* (He): "Hu is Allah's most perfect name, by which those who see nothing but Allah call upon Him." In Hadrat Sultan Bahu's Punjabi Abyat each line ends with Hu. In Punjab poetry it is peculiar only with Hadrat Sultan's verses. Its use and refrain enhances the melodious effect in singing.
6. *Kun* (Be): God's decree with reference to the Quranic Verse:

"When He decrees a thing He need only say:
'Be', and it is." (Quran, 36:82)
7. *Hatim*: An Arab bedouin chief of pre-Islamic period famous for his chivalry and generosity.
8. *Faqir*: A self realized Sufi, perfect as a man, teacher, and exemplar.
9. *Rabia Terri Harris* notes: knowledge (*ilm*) is a light from the lamp of prophecy in the heart of the servant through which he finds the path to God, to the work of God, and to the order of God. *Ilm* is the special characteristic of the human being; it refers neither to the understanding of the senses nor to reason. Intellect is that which discriminates the good and evil of this world belongs to the believers and unbelievers alike. The intellect, which distinguishes the good and evil of the next world, belongs only to the believers; *ilm* and true intellect are necessary to each other. The knowledge of certainty (*ayn al-yaqin*) is to see it yourself. But the reality of certainty (*haqq al-yaqin*) is to be fire." (Journey to the Lord of Power by Ibn Arabi, Glossary, p.109.)

"It is Allah who has created seven heavens, and earth as many. His commandment descends through them, so that you may know that Allah has power over all things, and that He has knowledge of all things." (Quran 65 : 12)

The Apostle of God was required to pray: "Lord, increase my knowledge" (Quran 20 : 114)

10. Gnostic (*arif*): "One who becomes acquainted with the Divine being" but he must possess the knowledge of sacred law to interpret and understand his spiritual experience accordingly.
11. *Faqr*. Here it means the practical aspect of Sufism.
12. Divine scholar (*aalam-i-Rabbani*): the gnostic who has contact with God.
13. Knowledge direct from God: They (Moses and his man) went back the way they came and found one of our servants to whom we had vouchsafed Our mercy and whom We had endowed with knowledge of Our own." (Quran, 18 : 65)
14. The faqirs are required to function in the human society according to the divine decrees. Hadrat Sultan Bahu himself had been "granted the exaltation by the eternal favour of the Truth of Truth and commanded by the most noble Prophet of effluent light (may peace be upon him) to show the right path to all the mortals whether they are Muslims or infidels, fortunate or unfortunate, alive or dead." (Of the Spirit, Hadrat Ghulam Dastgir Academy, Darbar Sultan Bahu, Jhang, 1996, p. 22)
15. Hadrat Ibn Arabi said: "How can reason know through observation and argument in as much as they are dependant on the sense or immediate evidence or on experience with God cannot be known through these principles on which reason depends for its inference How can a man of reason claim that he knows God through inference." (*Futuh* I. Trans. S.Q.A. Hussaini, the Pantheistic Monism of Ibn al-Arabi, Lahore, 1970).

Marifa (gnosis) is the supra-rational knowledge.

- According to Ibn Arabi, it is to "know God through God and know all the affairs through Him." Only then one will have "no ignorance, no suspense, no wavering, no doubt."
16. Mullahs: the literalists, the religious scholars with superficial knowledge who are incapable to go deep into the meanings of divine books.
 17. The Sufis often start learning *Faqr* after they have learned all about the sacred law.
 18. Spiritual Meetings of Muhammad: A kind of contemplation to imagine oneself in the presence of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). It can only be practised under the supervision of a *Murshid* (spiritual director).
 19. "The total disappearance of the bad attributes from man, annihilation; as implied in Koran 55:26-27: 'Every thing that is upon (the earth) vanishes; the face of Your Lord remains in majesty and honour.'" (op.cit. Rabia Terri Harris, p.10)
 20. See Quran, 8 : 61-82
 21. Innovation in the religion is heresy; Hadrat Sultan Bahu does not pay any attention to a Sufi who is irreligious and teaches or preaches innovations in religion.
 22. They are declassified and deconditioned. They are liberated of habits, customs and useless practices.
 23. It is a Sufi proverb. It means that it is better to act than to show off the spiritual gifts.
 24. They are in presence through remembrance of God. They "go through deep affliction" because they are always ready to accept challenges.
 25. The *arif* is humble because he knows and he has seen that finality rests with God.
 26. In the hierarchy of Saints the *Qutub* (pole, axis) is directly

- responsible for the welfare of the entire world. *Ghawth* (helper) is the senior-most Qutub.
27. By "handicraft" Sultan Bahu means the fair means of earning livelihood.
 28. The Sufis believe that the spiritual guidance of the saints continues even after their physical death.
 29. Allusion to Quranic verses:
 "He beheld him once again at the farthest lote-tree. (53 : 14)
 "The faithful spirit brought it down into your heart."
 (26:193)
 "It is the indubitable truth." (69 : 51)
 30. The observance and adherence to the values of *Faqr* like love, compassion, detachment from the mundane pursuits and performance of duties, etc., etc.
 31. Attainment to the ultimate experience. Elsewhere Hadrat Sultan Bahu remarks: "Whenever the Gnostic who has joined (Allah) opens his eyes, beholds nothing but His countenance, and removes away all the traces of other as well as his own self from himself so that he becomes absolute with the Absolute." (Of the Spirit, P.17.)
 32. The Faqir who is a perfect teacher can point out to the right direction with reference to every discipline of knowledge.
 33. It has been reminded by the Sufis time and again that secret does not mean the "secrecy." It only means the knowledge of deeper meaning of the divine commands and decrees.
 34. The man who was visited by Moses "Where the two seas met", has been called *khidar*. (Quran, 18 : 65)
 35. One must come to know of the right Path even in the first meeting with the *Murshid*.
 36. Descendants of Hadrat Ali and Fatima, daughter of the Prophet are called Syeds, highly respected by the faithful all

- over the Muslim World.
37. One belonging to any clan of the tribe Quraish. The Prophet himself belonged to Banu Hashim Clan.
 38. "The reality of search" means the real purpose of one's endeavors to travel the Sufi path.
 39. Quran: "Those that hoard up gold and silver and do not spend it in Allah's cause - proclaim to them a woeful punishment. On that day their treasures will be heated in the fire of Hell, and their foreheads, sides, and backs branded with them. They will be told: these are the riches which you hoarded. Taste then that which you were hoarding." (9 : 34)
 40. Retreat; One of the Sufi practices which may be followed only under the supervision and guidance of a competent spiritual director.
 41. According to the Tradition one should have to cross the bridge over the eternal fire in order to enter the paradise.
 42. "Lawful morsel" means lawful earning.
 43. *Shia & Sunni*: The two main sects in Islam. Their sectarian differences unfortunately turned to be the cause of many political and religious disturbances in the history of Islam.
 44. *Namaz*: the ritual prayer for five times in 24 hours.
 45. *Kaaba*: The sacred "House of God" in Makkah.
 46. *Binaris*: A city in India, famous for its Hindu temples and the sacred river that flows by it.
 47. Reference to the existence of idea of man in the mind of God. The other creation by the command of "Be" came into existence afterwards. The Sufis point out this metaphysical idea to show the superiority of man over the creation of universe.