THE MUSLIM MYSTIC MOVEMENTS IN BENGAL FROM
The Fourteenth to the Middle of the Sixteenth Century A. D.

Thesis Submitted for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN HISTORY

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The present thesis is an attempt at a systematic study of the various aspects — religious, social, cultural and political — of the activities of Muslim mystics of Bengal during the years from 1301 A.D. to 1550 A.D. Some work has been done on the cultural history of Bengal during the medieval period, but no systematic study has been made of the life and activities of the Sufi saints of Bengal. This thesis is an humble attempt to fill this gap in our studies.

The main difficulty that confronts a scholar in a study of activities of the Muslim saints of Bengal is the paucity of contemporary historical material for the period. Whatever meagre records of the mystic movement in Bengal are available in Persian and Bengali languages have been carefully used and an attempt has been made to present as authentic a picture of the mystic activities in Bengal as consistent with data available in the early political and non-political records.

For the first time, an extensive study is made of the works of Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam. It is not claimed that all the problems concerning the saints of Bengal have been solved in this thesis, nevertheless, no stone has been left
unturned to prepare as comprehensive an account of their activities as possible on the basis of authentic source material.

The present thesis has been covered up in seven chapters. I have tried to pick up the thread from the early Muslim contact with Bengal. The earliest relation of the Muslims with Bengal began with the arrival of the Arab merchants in the 9th century A.D. Small Muslim colonies of the Arabs grew up in the Arakan and Chittegong regions long before its conquest by the Turkish forces. These colonies played a significant role in the commercial as well as the cultural evolution of Bengal.

A new era in the political and cultural history of Bengal, however, started with the conquest and establishment of a small Muslim kingdom in the western parts of Bengal by Ikhtiyaruddin Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji in the beginning of the thirteenth century A.D. This small Muslim kingdom carved out by Bakhtiyar continued to flourish under his successors. By the middle of the fourteenth century the shadow of Muslim domination covered almost the whole region of Bengal. The Muslim rulers, governors or the independent Sultans evinced keen interest in the promotion of cultural institutions in Bengal. Mosques, madrasahs and khanqahs were built at their behest, and stipends were given to ulama, shaikhs and Sayfids for the promotion of Muslim culture.
Equally important contributions were made by the Muslim saints who came to Bengal during the ninth to the middle of the fourteenth century. Some of the distinguished saints of this period, like Baba Adam Shaheed, Shah Muhammad Sultan, Shah Sultan Mahiswar, Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrezi and Shaikh Jalaluddin Mujarrad, played an important role in the cultural life of Bengal.

The second and the third chapters have been devoted to the biographical studies of the saints of the Chishti, the Shattari, the Qadiri, the Qalandriya, and the Madari orders. The Chishti traditions which grew and developed in the North were introduced in Bengal by Shaikh Akhi Siraj, an outstanding disciple of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya. Mir Khurd's remark "that he illumined the whole region of Bengal with his spiritual radiance" casts aside the doubt about his popularity. The Chishti silsilah was further strengthened in that region by Shaikh Alaul Haq and his intelligent son Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam. Their spiritual eminence not only brought thousands of Bengalis to their Khanqah, but attracted also the attention of the saints like Syed Ashraf Jahangir Simnani and Shaikh Husamuddin Manikpuri. It was Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam who played a significant role in politics of Bengal, when Raja Kans usurped the power from the descendants of Ilyas Shah. He invited Ibrahim Sharqi to overthrow Raja Kans. After Shaikh
Nur Qutb Alam the Chishti silsilah continued in Bengal under his descendants. The saints of this silsilah like their predecessors in the North, interpreted religion in terms of the service to mankind and won popular support and approbation.

The fourth chapter deals the relations of the sufis with the state. Contact with the rulers which was looked down upon by the Chishti saints in the North was encouraged by the saints of Bengal and they meddled in the political affairs, contrary to the traditions of the Chishti saints of Ajodhan and Delhi.

In the fifth chapter attempt has been made to highlight the cultural impact of the sufis in Bengal. The Muslim saints here, as elsewhere, laid much emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge. Some of the important contribution of the Muslim saints and scholars of Bengal are, Nam-i-Maq, (on jurisprudence) Magamat (on mysticism). Arabic translation of a sanskrit work Amrit Kund (on yogic philosophy) Munis-ul-Fugara (on mysticism). Rasul-Viyay, Nabi Bangsha and Nasihat Namah were written by the Muslim Bengali scholars on Islamic history and traditions.

The sixth chapter contains discussion on the teachings and practices of the Muslim saints. Various aspects, like
concept of God, cosmic emotion, renunciation of the world, reliance in Allah, observance of the shariat laws, service of humanity and the mystic principles have been dealt with in this chapter.

The last chapter has been devoted to the factors which brought success to the sufis, and helped them in the development of syncretic trends and tendencies. The role of the Naths, the Panchpirs and the Satyapirs and the reactions of the Hindu teachers against the growing of Islamic culture in Bengal, has been examined in this chapter.
PREFACE

A systematic study of the mystic movement in Bengal is long over due. A few scholars who devoted themselves to the study of the social and cultural history of Bengal touched the problem on the peripheries, but no exhaustive study of the subject has so far been made.

The main difficulty in studying the socio-religious activities of the Muslim saints and scholars in Bengal is the paucity of contemporary source material. Barring the Munis-ul-Fugara, the Anis-ul-Ghuraba and the Maktubat of Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam, no other coeval work is available for the study of mystic history of this period. Almost all the political chronicals and the mystic literature compiled during the period, deal mainly with the rulers and saints of Delhi, Gujarat, Malwa, and Jaunpur and only incidentally refer to Bengal.

In this context some important contemporary sufi works such as Siyar-ul-Auliya, Fawa'id-ul-Fu'ad, Khair-ul-Majalis, Maktubat-i-Ashrafi, Lata'if-i-Asharfi, Maktubat-i-Muzaffar Shams Balkhi, Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, Gulzar-i-Abrar, Mir'at-ul-Asrar and Siyar-ul-Arifin assume great significance and supply fragmentary but reliable information regarding the life and activities of the sufis in Bengal.

Information about some of the early saints who lived in Bengal during the period of Muslim rule, is based on local
traditions and secondary sources, mostly quoted in some of the recent publications, namely Banga Sufi Prabhaya, and Tazkira-i Auliya-i Bengal. But these studies can hardly stand the test of historical scrutiny.

It is not claimed that all the difficulties have been overcome in this work, nevertheless, an attempt has been made to prepare as comprehensive an account of the Sufi movement in this region as possible with the help of authentic records of the period.

It is my profound duty to acknowledge my deep debt of gratitude to my revered supervisor, Professor K.A. Nizami, whose invaluable guidance has been a constant source of inspiration to me. I am deeply indebted to him for his generous permission in allowing me to consult some of his rare manuscripts without which the thesis would not have taken this form. Grateful acknowledgement is also due to Professor S. Nurul Hasan, former Head of the Department of History, Aligarh Muslim University, now Minister of Education, Government of India, who awarded me scholarship to carry on my research work. I take this opportunity to thank the Librarians of Maulana Azad Library, Aligarh, National Library, Calcutta, Khuda Bakhsh Library, Patna and Calcutta University Library, Calcutta and Mr. Saiyyid Manzar Husain owner of the Kutub Khana Shah Damariya Baba, Bhagalpur. I am also grateful to Mr. Ejaz Mohammad Khan, the Librarian, History Department Library, M.U. Aligarh for his assistance.

SK ABDUL LATIF
**TRANSLITERATION**

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# The Muslim Mystic Movements in Bengal

From

The Fourteenth to the Middle of the Sixteenth Century A.D.

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Map — Centres of Mystic Movements in Bengal
From 1301 - 1550 A.D.
INTRODUCTION

Commercial and cultural contact of the Arabs with the Western coast of India preceded the political conquest of Sind. Similar was the case with the eastern region of India. Cultural and religious activities of the Muslims had started in Bengal long before Ikhtiyaruddin Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji captured Nadia in 1203 A.D. and a new phase began in the history of Muslim relations with Bengal. The cultural fertilization of Bengal by the Muslim traders, merchants and *sufis* played a significant role in sustaining the Muslim political organization in the eastern region almost identical to its role in northern India.

Bengal, although captured by a lieutenant of the Delhi Sultan, remained loosely attached with Delhi. The soil of Bengal was fertile enough to support an independent ruler, and, barring a few intervals, Bengal continued to be independent of Delhi till the arrival of the Mughals in the middle of the 16th century A.D. There were other problems and opportunities to test the ambitions of the Delhi Sultans and keep them busy — the North West Frontier, the Doab region and

1. The Independent Muslim Kingdom of Bengal was established by Shamsuddin Ilyas Shah in the first half of the 14th century A.D. But before this, Bengal remained hardly under the control of Delhi Sultans. The Governors appointed by the Delhi Sultans usually rebelled and proclaimed their independence. It was only during the reign of Iltutmish, Ghiyasuddin Balban and Muhammad bin Tughluq when for sometime Bengal remained under the direct control of Delhi. For detail see Sarkar, *History of Bengal*, Vol. II, pp. 1-19.
the Deccan. Consequently, on the one hand, the Delhi Sultans were not in a position to exercise effective control over Bengal, and on the other, the independent governors or rulers of Bengal did not depend upon the Delhi Sultans for military support. They had learnt to draw support from the soil of Bengal. The records explicitly reveal that from the very initial stage they leaned heavily on the support of the local population — Hindus and Muslims alike, for their survival and maintenance of their power. In this context Babur's remark regarding the theory of kingship in Bengal is very significant. "It is the office that Bengalis regard with respect. Attached to each office is a body of obedient subordinate retainers and servants. If the royal heart demand that a person should be dismissed, and another be appointed to sit in his place, the whole body of the subordinates attached to that office become the (new) office holders. There

1. For instance, when Ikhtiyaruddin Uzbek (entitled Sultan Mughisuddin) was refused military assistance by the Delhi Sultan against the Rai of Jajnagar, he organized his army from the local population and depended on their support. Sarkar, *History of Bengal*, Vol. II, pp. 51-52.

2. The Muslim rulers of Bengal depended on the local talent to run the machinery of the government, and unlike Delhi Sultan did not depend on the imported personnel of the Iran and Central Asia. Besides appointing Muslims, they entrusted the Hindus with military and executive posts. Raja Kans who for sometime occupied the throne of Bengal was an important official of Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah. Alauddin Husain Shah equally patronized the Hindus and Muslims. Gopinath Basu (Wazir) Mukunda Das, Gaur Malik Rup and Sanatan were some of his important Hindu official. Sarkar, *History of Bengal*, Vol. II, 126, 151-152.
is indeed this peculiarity of the royal office itself that any person who kills the ruler (padshah) and seats himself, on the throne, becomes ruler himself amirs, wazirs, soldiers and peasants submit to him at once, obey him, and recognize him for the rightful ruler his predecessors in office had been." The obvious result of which was that there was more cultural fusion in Bengal than in any other region of northern India, and different patterns of synthetic culture were evolved here.

Another important point to be borne in mind is that the kingdom of Jaunpur acted as a buffer state and a shock-absorber for Bengal. As long as it intervened between Delhi and Bengal, the later followed its own course without any fear of attack from Delhi. But with the collapse of the Jaunpur kingdom, Bengal was exposed to the rush of Delhi forces, and was, ultimately, deprived of its independence.

The cultural consequences of Bengal's isolation from Delhi cannot be ignored. Obviously Bengal lost cultural contact with Delhi and the Islamic world beyond the northwest frontier. Sultan Ghiyasuddin Azam (son of Sultan Sikandar and grandson of Shamsuddin Ilyas Shah) sought to rectify this situation. He sent his personal servant Yaqut Anani with

huge amount to distribute among the people of Mecca in order
to establish schools and *sarrais* (inn) in the holy city. He
also wrote a letter and sent presents to Maulana Hasan bin
1 Ajlan Sharif of Mecca in a bid to establish close contact
with the Islamic world. Similar spirit was shown by Sultan
Jalaluddin Muhammad son of Raja Kans also. He sought and
received investiture from the Khalifa of Egypt.

The mystic stream/trickled down to Bengal during the
middle of the 14th century was never enforced after Shaikh
Akhi Siraj. Consequently no other important saint after him
entered and worked in Bengal. The Qadiri, the Suhrwardi,
the Shattari, the Firdausi and the Naqshbandi orders which
exercised tremendous influence in other parts of India could
not simultaneously extend the sphere of their activities to
Bengal. Only the Chishti silsilah was destined to play an
important role in the social and political life of Bengal,
and it produced saints like Alaul Haq and Nur Qutb Alam, who
planted and popularized mystic traditions in that region.

The Chishti silsilah was the only source of spiritual
nourishment for the masses of Bengal. The survival of mystic
values in this region is due to the activities and achievements

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of the three towering personalities - Akhi Siraj, Alaul Haq and Nur Qutb Alam. The last mentioned saint played some significant political role as well. He tried to restore Muslim rule in Bengal when Raja Kans had usurped the throne. Apart from this, Nur Qutb Alam exercised tremendous influence on the currents of contemporary mystic thought through his writings.

This thesis in this context, is an attempt to study, the various aspects of Muslim Mysticism in Bengal. I have tried to pick up the thread from the early contact of the Muslims with Bengal, and have brought it down up to the first half of the 16th century A.D. The second and the third chapters contain biographical accounts of the saints belonging to the Chishti and other orders. Their relations with the state have been discussed in the fourth chapter. The fifth chapter is devoted to educational development and literary contribution of the various sufis. The sixth chapter deals with the teachings and precepts of the Muslim saints of Bengal. The impact of the sufis on the religious thought of Bengal and the emergence of devotional cult formulated by Chaitanya has been studied in the last chapter.

**MAIN SOURCES:**

Writing a thesis on the Muslim Mystic Movement in Bengal is fraught with difficulties owing to lack of contemporary sources material. Although Bengal was under Muslim rule
since the beginning of the 13th century A.D., no chronicle appears to have been written there. Some of the Persian chronicles Tabagat-i Nasiri of Minhaj-i-Siraj, Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi of Barani, Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi of Afif, Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi of Yahya Sirhindi, Tabagat-i Akbari of Khwaja Nizamuddin Ahmad and Tarikh-i Ferishta of Abul Qasim Ferishta, written outside Bengal contain references to Bengal but they deal mainly with political events, and are almost tantalizing in the meagreness of date relating to cultural life and institutions in Bengal.

The hagiological literature — biographies, table-talks, and the letters of the Sufis — constitute our main source of study in the preparation of an account of the Sufi Movement in Bengal, and this literature has been used as exhaustively and carefully as possible.

1. Munis-ul Fugara of Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam is our first contemporary and local source of information about the development of mystic traditions in Bengal. The book was written

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1. A manuscript copy of Munis-ul Fugara in Shikast, is available in a private library, Kutub Khana Shah Damari-baba, Khalifa Bagh, Bhagalpur (in Bihar). It was transcribed by Muhammad Khalil bin Shaikh Muhammad Fazil Usmani (f.158) in 1132 A.H./1720 A.D. The book has twenty nine sections (faslas). The first fourteen of which deal with the rituals and the rest contain discussions on the essentials of mysticism. An incomplete copy of the same manuscript, having only six sections, is present in the Asiatic Society of Bengal, collection No.466. In comparison to this, the manuscript which I have utilized is complete and has an introduction by the author.
by the Shaikh for the guidance of his disciples. It contains valuable instructions for the beginners from the dawn prayers till the midnight prayers and about a number of appropriate rituals (Waṣāf). The value of this work, however, lies in the fact that it throws light on the attitude and ideology of the Chishti saints in Bengal. It deals with some of the important tenets of mysticism, such as, love of Allah, repudiation of the world, repentance, recollection (Zikr), poverty contentment the self and the significance of the shari'at laws.

Anis-ul-Ghuraba, by the same author, is another authentic work on the science of mysticism. Like Munis-ul-Fugara, it is also aimed at the cultivation of cosmic emotion to develop spiritual personality in accordance with the fundamental tenets of mystic discipline. The collection of his letters, entitled Maktubat-i Nur Cuth-i Alam, is also a very valuable source of information. These letters deal

1. Two manuscripts of this work are available in the Asiatic Society of Bengal (Collection Nos. 1212 and 1213). They are written in Shikast style. The contents of both these work, are similar. The first copy is said to have been transcribed in 1102 A.H./1693 A.D. and the second one in 1117 A.H./1708 A.D. I have utilized the second copy (MS. 1213) because of its fair writing.

2. A manuscript copy of this work in Shikast, consisting of thirteen letters, is available at the Indian Archives, New Delhi. Another copy is in the private possession of Janab Saiyyid Taqi Hagan Balkhi of Patna. The two copies have the same number of letters with only one exception that the copy at the Indian Archives, misses lines in the beginning of the first letter, which according to the latter was addressed to Qazi Asad. I have utilized the rotograph copy of the former manuscript, procured by the Department of History, A.M.U. Aligarh.
with subjects like cosmic emotion, worldly and material attractions, significance of Shariat for the sufis etc. One of these letters contains reference to the rise of religious Raja Kans, which helps to understand the political and social condition of the time.

The other sources of our information are Siyar-ul Auliya, Maktubat-i Ashrafi, Maktubat-i Muzaffar Shams Balkhi Akhbar-ul Akhvar, Siyar-ul Arifin, Gulzar-i Abrar and Mirtat-ul Asrar.

Siyar-ul Auliya of Saiyyid Muhammad bin Mubarak Kirmani, completed in the reign of Firoz Shah Tughluq (1351-1388 A.D.), contains reliable information about the religious and cultural life of the period. It is the only important source that gives some detailed account of the career and achievements of Shaikh Akhi Siraj and also contains references to the early life of Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrizi who had settled in Bengal in the last days of his life and had breathed his last there.

Maktubat-i Ashrafi of Saiyyid Ashraf Jahangir Simnani (ob. 1405 A.D.) is an important mystic work of the period. Some of the letters contained in this collection throw light on the spiritual and political condition of Bengal in the fourteenth century. It appears from these letters that Saiyyid Ashraf had persuaded Ibrahim Sharqi to attack and
Chastise Raja Kans of Bengal.

The Maktubat of Muzaffar Shams Balkhi, who flourished in Bihar and visited Bengal during the region of Sultan Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah (1389-1409 A.D.), throw light on the political and the social affairs of Bengal during this period.

Siyar-ul Arifin, completed by Hamid bin Fazlullah alias Darweish Jamali during the reign of Humayun, about the year 1536 A.D., contains notices of some important Chishti saints, besides an interesting note on Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrizi.

Akhbar-ul Akhyar, completed by Shaikh Abdul Haq in 1590 A.D., is a biographical account of the saints of various silsilahs. Its significance lies in the fact that it contains important information about some Chishti and Qadiri saints of Bengal. The author was a great scholar of the traditions of the Prophet and he has used his critical apparatus (usul-i isnad) in the preparation of this tazkira also.

Gulzar-i Abrar of Muhammad Ghausi bin Hasan bin Musa Shattari, completed about 1613 A.D., contains biographical account of many sufis of Bengal, especially of the Shattari

1. The numbers of his letters containing reference to Bengal are, 148-149, 151-154, 163, 167 and 179.
order, and is a valuable source of information for the history of the mystic movement in Bengal.

Mir'at-ul Asrar of Abdur Rahman Chishti, written in 1665/1654 A.D., is an encyclopædia of mystics, Indian and foreign. It contains the biographies of many sufis of Bengal and throws valuable light on their lives and activities.

Sekasubhodava a Sanskrit work, claimed to have been written by Halayudha Misra, a courtier of Laksmanasna, throws some light on the activities of Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrizi.

Apart from this literature, many other works — contemporary and later — which throw light on the life and activity of Muslim saints in Bengal have been utilised in the preparation of this thesis. Accretions of later writers found to be flying in the face of earlier accounts have been subjected to critical scrutiny and an attempt has been made to separate the chaff from the grain. In fact nowhere a critical evaluation of source material is more necessary than in mystic literature where the credulous and superstitious nature of people goes on adding integument after integument to the accounts of saints.

1. The authenticity and date of this work is disputed. For detail see S.K. Sen's Introduction to Sekasubhodava, Bib. Indica, Calcutta, 1963.
CHAPTER I

MUSLIM SETTLEMENT, GRADUAL EXPANSION AND CONSOLIDATION OF MUSLIM SOCIETY IN BENGAL

The Arab merchants were fully familiar with and had been visiting the ports of Bengal, known to them as Rahmi or Ruhmi, since the 9th century A.D., if not earlier. The process of Muslim settlement in Bengal had, in fact, started long before its conquest in 1203 A.D. by Ikhtiyaruddin Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji. On the basis of traditional account of the Arakanese King Radza Weng, it has been claimed that certain ship-wrecked Arabs had settled in Arakan during the reign of Maba-toing Tsan-da-ya (788-810 A.D.). Further


2. An Arab coin dated 172 A.H./788, found at Paharpur (Rajshahi district) and some Arab coins found at Mainamati (near Comilla) indicate that Arab merchants had been visiting these ports since the 9th century. The writings of the Arab geographers of the 9th and the 10th centuries and later, for instance, Sulaiman Tajir, Ibn Khurdadhbih, Masudi and Idrisi, also show that they were well acquainted with this region. See Elliot and Dowson - The History of India, Vol. I, 2, 5, 13-14, 25 and 90; and M.H. Nainar, Arab Geographer's Knowledge of Southern India, Madras University Islamic Series - No. 6, 1942, 42-43, 49 and 89-90. For reference to coins see, K.N. Dikshit, Memoirs of The Archaeological Survey of India, No. 55, Delhi - 1938, 87, and F.A. Khan's Recent Archaeological discoveries in East Pakistan, Karachi, II.

on the basis of circumstantial evidence it has been argued that many Arabs had settled in Chittagong in the ninth century A.D. Here grew up fairly influential Muslim colony, which later on exercised deep influence on the language and literature of Bengal. The Muslim pressure in the East Bengal continued to increase and had become so formidable even before its conquest by the Muslims that many Brahmins, it is said, had to migrate to West Bengal, lest they might be contaminated by the Muslims. Our information regarding the organization and activities of these Muslims is tantalizing in meagreness. It, however, appears that they did not acquire any political power and even their cultural influence remained confined to the area mentioned above.

With the conquest of West Bengal by Ikhtiyaruddin Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji started a new era in the history of Bengal. This daring general of Qutbuddin Aibak raided Nadia in 1203 A.D., and founded a Muslim Kingdom in Bengal.


2. Aziz, Early Turkish Empire of Delhi, III. The silence of the Tabaqat-i-Nisiri over the date in Bakhtiyar's career, caused much speculation. Modern historians on the basis of Taj-ul-Ma'asir and other accounts have concluded it differently; for example, Sarkar, History Of Bengal, Vol. II 32, puts the date as 1201-1203 A.D., Blochmann, Contribution to the Geography and History of Bengal, 3; makes it 1203;
with his capital at Lakhnauti (Malda Distt.), also known as Gaur. The Muslim principality, thus founded by Bakhtiyar, comprised the south eastern parts of Mithla, Varendra, the northern portions of Radha, the north-western tracts of Bagdi (i.e., portions of the modern districts of Malda, Dinajpur, Murshidabad and Birbhum); and the east and south east bounded by the Tista-Karetoya basin.

Later Malik Ikhtiyaruddin Uzbek (1252-1257), entitled Sultan Mughisuddin, occupied Madaran and Kamrup (Assam) and

(Continued from the previous page)

Habibullah - *Foundation of Muslim Rule in India*, 71 (1204-1205 A.D.). Hasan Nizami (Taj-ul Ma'athir (MS), 431 and 461-463), records that Bakhtiyar came to meet Qutbuddin after the latter's conquest of Kalinjar, in 599 A.H./1202 A.D. Minhaj (Tabagat-i Nasiri, Vol. II,426) writes that Bakhtiyar's invasion of Bengal took place next year after his return from Delhi. This shows that his Bengal campaign would have occurred in 1203 A.D.


2. Mithla - the country west of Mahananda, Varendra, the region to the north of the Padma between the Karatoya and Mahananda rivers, Radha - the territory west of the Hugli and south of the Ganges and Bagdi - the delta of the Ganges, for details see, Blochmann Contribution, 3.

3. For location of boundaries, see Habibullah - *Foundation of Muslim Rule in India*, 74.

annexed the whole of Radha. Sultan Ghiyasuddin Iwaz Khalji (1213-1227 A.D.) not only consolidated Muslim power but also advanced his southern boundary from the bank of Ajay river to that of the Damodar and frontiers of Vishnupur. Sultan Mughisuddin Tughril (1268-1281 A.D.) added to Muslim Kingdom the modern districts of Faridpur and Dacca and annexed the territories on both sides of the Padma as far as Loricot (Narkila). Besides these he also extended Muslim Power in the Radha tract.

Under Bughra Khan, entitled Sultan Nasiruddin Mahmud Shah (1282-1291 A.D.), and his successors the regions of Satgaon (arsa-i-Bangala), Sonargaon (iqlim-i-Bangala) and other areas of eastern Bengal including the modern district of Mymensingh and Sylhet (Assam) were reduced and added to the Muslim dominion with three well defined divisions, Lakhnauti,

2. Ibid., 22.
4. Ibid., 60.
5. He was the second son of Sultan Balban. Before coming to Bengal he held the fief of Sunam and Samanah. After suppressing the rebellion of Tughril, Sultan Balban assigned the principality of Lakhnauti to Bughra Khan sometime in 1382 A.D. Barani, Tarikh-i Firoz Shahi, 128, 141-143 and 160.
Satgaon and Sonargaon. Finally Chittagong was conquered and annexed by Fakhruddin Mubarak Shah (1338-1349).

Thus by the middle of the 14th century almost the whole of Bengal had passed under Muslim control.

Simultaneously with the expansion of political power there, Muslim cultural institutions also flourished. The Muslim rulers, whether governors or independent Sultans, evinced keen interest in the growth of cultural institutions in Bengal. Bakhtiyar Khalji as well as his officers constructed mosques, madrasahs, and Khanqahs in various parts of the area under their control. Sultan Husamuddin Iwaz Khalji (1213-1227 A.D.) a benevolent ruler showered his favours upon his subjects and granted stipends to Ulama, Shaikhs and Saiyyids. He built several big and small mosques and madrasahs. Malik Jalaluddin Masud Jani (1247-1251 A.D.)

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1. Sarkar, Vol.II, 99. He was silahdar of Bahram Khan (or Tatar Khan governor of Sonargaon under Sultan Muhammad Tughluq. Fakhruddin is alleged to have killed him in 1338 A.D. and occupied Sonargaon. He ruled as an independent Sultan from 1338-1349. When his son Ikhtiyaruddin Ghazi (1349-1352) succeeded him. See Ibid., for details, 99-105.

2. See - Minhaj, Vol. I,428, where besides erection of mosques, he refers to the Khutba also.

1. built a mosque at Gangarampur (near Devkot). An inscription found at Devkot (dated 697/1297 A.D.) commemorates the construction of a mosque during the reign of Sultan Ruknuddin Kaikaus (1291-1301 A.D.). Another inscription discovered at Tribeni, Satgaon, dated 698 shows that a madrasah was constructed there. During the time of Sultan Shamsuddin Firoz (1301-1322 A.D.) a madrasah, called Dar-ul-Khairat, was built by one of his feudatory, Shihabuddin Zafar Khan.

No less important was the contribution of the Muslim saints who came to Bengal during the period from the 9th century to the 1st half of the 14th century A.D. They came from different centres of Islamic culture and settled here. We have little authentic details about the arrival and missionary activities of the early saints. Certain traditions have, however, preserved the accounts of some of the early saints, which may not be wholly reliable.

Some of these traditions would have us believe that Baba Adam Shaheed came from Mecca, settled at Abdullahpur (Dacca Division). He is said to have come into conflict with the local raja, Ballalsena, and was killed in an engagement.

1. Sarkar, 51.
2. Ibid., 75-76.
3. Ibid., 77.
Another tradition says that Shah Muhammad Sultan of Rum, came to Bengal in 445/1053 A.D., and settled at Madanpur in the Netrakona sub-division of Mymensingh distt. He was known for his spiritual power and is said to have converted a Koch King to Islam. Shah Sultan Mahisawar - came to Bengal via Sandvip and finally settled at Mahastan in Bogra distt. There he fought against another Hindu raja Persuram who oppressed the Muslims. In the engagement the saint himself was killed.

Makhdum Shah Daulah also belongs to the same category, and is said to have come to Bengal with a large number of his followers and relatives. He settled at Shahzadpur in Pabna distt., started missionary activities and built a mosque there. The local Hindu raja got alarmed at his popularity and tried to check his activities. In a fight with the raja the saint suffered martyrdom and his sister drowned herself in a river to save her chastity. It is said that the head of the saint was taken to Bihar and buried there and the body was buried at Shahzadpur where stands his present mausoleum. People frequently visit Shahzadpur to pay their homage to the venerated saint.

A somewhat similar story is related about Makhdum Shah Mahmud Ghaznavi, popularly known as Rahapir, who came to Bengal in the early part of the 13th century and settled at
Mangalkot in Burdawan distt. He is said to have sought help from the Sultan of Delhi against the persecution of Muslims by the local Hindu ruler. Consequently the region was occupied by a Muslim force.

The account of these saints is mainly based on traditions, nevertheless it establishes the fact that some saints before the Muslim conquest had come to this region and might have indulged in missionary activities and hence invited the wrath of the local Hindu rulers.

The first important saint who came to Bengal after its conquest and whose reliable account is available was Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrizi. Born at Tabriz in Persia, Shaikh Jalaluddin received education in Bukhara. He first became the disciple of Shaikh Abu Said of Tabriz and later joined the circle of Shaikh Shihabuddin Suhrwardi's disciples in Baghdad. After an extensive tour of Arabia, Iraq, Bukhara and Nishapur he came to Hindustan. First he visited Multan where he met


2. Ibn Battuta who visited Bengal in the middle of the 14th century (probably in 1346 A.D.) met Shaikh Jalal of Sylhet and confounded him with Jalaluddin Tabrizi.
some of the eminent saints of the time and then arrived in Delhi during the reign of Sultan Shamsuddin Iltutmish (1210-1336 A.D.), the latter received him with great respect, but he could not remain in Delhi for long due to the evil machinations of the Shaikhul Islam.

Shaikh Najmuddin Sughra, the Shaikhul Islam of Delhi, became jealous of his influence and brought false charges of adultery against him. Although the saint was acquitted after investigation, he got disgusted with the political circles of Delhi and proceeded to Lakhnauti via Badaun and settled there.

Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrizi was very much venerated by the people in Bengal. He built a Khanqah and started langar (free kitchen). He purchased and endowed a piece of land and some gardens for the maintenance of the langar khana. Later he appears to have moved from Lakhnauti to Deotala and

1. For instance Shaikh Bahauddin Zakariya (1169-1266 A.D.) who was his fellow disciple. The other contemporaries were Shaikh Muinuddin Chishti, Shaikh Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki and Shaikh Fariduddin Gang-i-Shakr. See Amir Khurd, Sivar-ul-Auliya, 50-53 and 62-63, Amir Hasan Sijzi, Fawzid ul Fuad (edited by Muhammad Latif Malik) 185.
2. Fawa'id-ul Fu'ad, 228; Hamid-bin-Fazullah alias Jamali, Sivar-ul-Arifin (rotograph); f.130b. Gulzar-i-Abrar (rotograph), Vol.I.
3. This place is also mentioned as Deo Mahal in Sivar-ul-Arifin, f.131a and Ain-i Akbari, Vol.III, 406. I have followed Maktubat-i-Ashrafi (MS.) Letter No.46, f.98, which mentions the place as Deotala. Cunningham, Archaeological Survey of India, Vol.XV, 94 and A.A.Khan, Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua, 170-171, also identify the place as Deotala. For a detail discussion on the identity of the place. See M.A. Rahim, Social and Cultural History of Bengal, 96-97.
became very popular among the people. Here he built his takiya (resting place) on the site of a temple. The piety of the saint made him extremely popular and his missionary zeal won him many converts to Islam from the spiritually hungry masses of this region. He died probably in the middle of the 13th century A.D.

Shaikh Jalaluddin Mujarrad, a Khalifah of Sultan Saiyyid Ahmad Yasi, came to Bengal from Qumia (in Turkey), most probably towards the close of the 13th century A.D.

1. Siyar-ul-\'Arifin, ff. 130b, 131a.
2. The Shaikh is reported to have said:
   "He ardently believed that one who has attachment with woman, wealth and property never attains happiness."
   Fawaid-ul-Fuad, 172, see also Majari-ul-Wilayat (MS.) f. 225.
3. Siyar-ul-\'Arifin, ff. 130b, 131a.
4. The exact date and place of his death is not known to us. A marginal note in Siyar-ul-\'Arifin, f. 131a records that he died in 666 A.H./1266 A.D. at Dev-Mahal. See also Gulzar-i-Abrar, ff. 37b, 38a.

Mr. Ikram contradicts this view and says that he belongs to the Silsilah-i-Khwejgan of Turkey, which later came to be known as Naqshbandi silsilah, see JASP, 1957, Vol.II, 68.
After completing his spiritual training, he sought the permission of his preceptor, to carry the mystic mission to new regions. Thus with seven hundred fellow disciples he set out for India. He had to fight several successful battles on his way to India. Finally when he reached Bengal, he had only 313 followers with him. It appears that at this time the Sultan of Bengal had sent an expedition under Sikandar Khan to conquer Sylhet. The Shaikh also joined this army and Sylhet was conquered in 1303 A.D.

After the conquest of Sylhet he settled there and established a Khanqah. He is said to have converted many inhabitants of the place to Islam. The Shaikh led a very simple and pious life. It made him extremely popular in that region and people held him in high esteem. Certain miracles attributed to him by Ibn Battuta and a number of traditions current among the people about him reflect the extent of his impact on the people of the region. The Shaikh lived and died at


2. The Gulzar-i-Abrar, Vol.I, f.75b, attributes the conquest of Sylhet to the Shaikh; but according to Suhail-i-Yaman, the Shaikh was assisted by the armies of the Sultan of Bengal (Sarkar - History of Bengal, Vol.II,79), while the Tazkirah-Auliva-i-Bangalah, Vol.I, 117 says that Sikandar Ghazi had requested the Shaikh to join his army. An inscription found at the Dargah of the Shaikh in Sylhet, however, records the conquest of Sylhet by Sikandar Khan in 703 A.H./1303A.D., and also contains reference to the Shaikh See A.H.Dani, The Muslim Inscriptions of Bengal, appendix to JASP, Vol.II, 1957, 7.

3. He observed fast for about 40 years, during which period he broke it after every 10 days with the milk of a cow, he Contd....
Sylhet, where his grave is still visited by a large number of people of different faiths.

Maulana Ashrafuddin Tawwama, a renowned scholar and 2
sufi of Bukhara, is another very distinguished saint, who settled in Bengal during this period. He came to Delhi in or about 1260 A.D.

He was so well versed in the traditions of the Prophet and other branches of Islamic learning, that within a short period, he became very popular in literary circles of Delhi. His growing influence and popularity alarmed the Sultan of Delhi who directed him to go to Sonargaon.

Maulana Ashrafuddin obeyed the royal order and proceeded to Sonargaon. On the way he stayed for sometime at Maner, where

(Continued from the previous page)

had with him, and used to pray throughout the night. See 'The Rehla', Ibn Battuta, (English tr.) Mahdi Husain, Oriental Institute, Baroda, 1953, 239.

1. According to Ibn Battuta, who visited Bengal probably in 1346-1347; and had a meeting with the Shaikh, the latter died the same year (i.e., in 1347 A.D.) at the age of 150 years. An age of 150 years is an unusually long life, but if this statement is accepted, then the Shaikh would have born in 1197 A.D. See The Rehla, 238-240. Gulzar-i-Abrar, an authentic source about his biography, so far available does not mention his death.

2. See Nam-i-Haq, A.H.1332, 5-6 (cited by Karim, Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, ASP, Dacca, 73-74.

Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad, the famous saint of the Firdausi silsilah and his father Yahya Maneri welcomed him. From Maner Sharafuddin Ahmad also proceeded to Sonargaon with him, probably after 1282 A.D.

Maulana Ashrafuddin established a madrasah at Sonargaon which became an important centre of Islamic learning, and people thronged there in large numbers. He established a Khanqah also in Sonargaon. Thus he initiated a programme of brisk intellectual and spiritual activity there.

Maulana Ashrafuddin is said to have written a book, named *Mqamat*, on mysticism which became very popular in mystic circle. He is lying buried at Sonargaon.

Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Maneri (1262 - 1380 A.D.), a leading disciple of Maulana Ashrafuddin Tawwama and a distinguished saint of Firdausia silsilah of Bihar, was the son of

1. There is some difference of opinion regarding the time of his arrival in Sonargaon. Dr. Ishaq, on the authority of *Nuzhat-ul-Arwah*, holds that he went to Sonargaon in the time of Iltutmish, see 'Indias contribution to the Study of Hadith Literature', Dacca University, 1955, 53-54. Dr. Saghir says that he came to Sonargaon in Circle 668/1270 A.H. *Islamic Culture*, Vol.27 No.1,11.

   The *Maktubat-i>Sadi*, 339-340, records that at the time of his departure, Sonargaon was under the Imperial Control of Delhi; and this region is said to have been conquered after 1282 A.D. See, Sarkar, *History of Bengal*, Vol.II, p. 71. Thus he must have reached Sonargaon after 1282 A.D.

Shaikh Yahya Maneri. He came to Sonargaon with his Shaikh at the prime of his youth. Sharafuddin spent many years and acquired knowledge in all the branches of Muslim learning. He completed his education and spiritual training with great devotion. He was so much occupied in his studies that he could not spare time to read letters. Once it is said, he received the letter containing the news of his father's death which he could read after several days. During his stay at Sonargaon he fell ill, and was advised by the physicians to marry. He married his slave girl, who gave birth to a son. He then returned to Maner with his son and there committing him to the care of his mother, himself proceeded to Delhi to meet Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya whose fame as a spiritual teacher had reached far and wide. Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya did not admit him in the Chishti Silsilah perhaps because he thought that by aptitude and inclination he was more fitted for the discipline of the Firdausi. So he advised him to join the order of Shaikh Najibuddin Firdausi (also known as Najmuddin Sughra),

1. Maktubat-i-Sadi, 339 See also Khawan-i-Pur Ni'amat, 15; Islamic Culture, Vol.27, No.1, 10 and 11, Hasan Askari, Sufism in Medieval Bihar, 4.

2. Sirat-us-Sharf, 46, 52.


a celebrated saint of the Firdausi silsilah.

Shaikh Sharafuddin appears to have lived in Bengal for about a decade but no contemporary or semi-contemporary authority gives any detail of his work in Bengal. In fact his work as a mystic, properly speaking belongs to Bihar where he concentrated his energies to the spiritual and moral regeneration of the people.

It is evident from the foregoing account that by the middle of the 14th century Bengal had become a powerful centre of Muslim mysticism, and sufis of various orders had settled there and had established their silsilah. Shaikh Ashraf Jahangir Simnani (1285-1405 A.D.), an eminent disciple of Shaikh Alaul Haq of Pandua, was amazed at the growth and popularity of the sufi orders in Bengal. In a letter addressed to Sultan Ibrahim Sharqi (1401-1440 A.D.), he states that no less than eighty saints of the suharawardi order flourished in

1. The silsilah is said to be established by Najbuddin Kubra Firdausi, one of the prominent Khalifas of Shaikh Ziauddin Abu Najib Suharwardi. Shaikh Safiuddin Bakharzi of Bukhara, a distinguished saint of the silsilah, was the khalifa of Shaikh Najbuddin Kubra, (Akbar-ul-Akhyar, 124; Gulzar-i-Abrar, ff. 56b and 57a). Another version is that, Shaikh Safiuddin Bakharzi was the founder of the silsilah (Prof. Nizami - Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the 13th century A.D., 59).
Devgaon alone, besides several others in Mahisun. Many 
saints of the Jalalia order lived and died at Deotala, a 
number of companions of Shaikh Ahmad Damishqi lived at 
Narkot. There were saints like Shaikh Sharafuddin Abu


2. Ibid.

3. The Jalalia silsilah appears to have been named after 
Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrezi, who flourished at Deotala 
in the middle of the 13th century A.D. We could not 
find any detail about the silsilah.


5. Ibid.
Tawwama, one of the twelve of the Qadir Khani Order, who lies buried at Sonargaon. There was another distinguished saint Badr Alam known as Badr Alam Zahidi, who lived and worked in Bengal. A number of other silsilahs; such as, 'Alai, Khalidia, Nuri, and Husaini, which were the off-shoots of the latter developed silsilah, is said to have been popular in Bengal.

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1. The origin of the silsilah could not be traced.

2. These silsilahs seem to have started after the names of Shaikh Alaul Haq and his father Asad Khalidi. For the verification of Alai and Khalidia, see Abid Ali, *Memoirs*, 108-109.


4. This silsilah might have originated after the name of Shaikh Kur Qulb Alam.

5. Husaini silsila is probably known after the name of Shaikh Husain Dhukkarposh. He is claimed to be a Khalifah of Shaikh Alaul Haq. He lived and worked at Purnea in Bihar. See Professor Hasan Askari's articles in Bengal: *Past and Present*, 1948, 34-37.
Although a number of silsilahs had been established in Bengal but it was the Chishti Order which was destined to play the most significant part in the social and religious life of Bengal.

The Chishti silsilah was introduced in India by Shaikh Muinuddin Hasan Sijzi (1141-1236 A.D.) towards the close of the 12th century A.D. He was a native of Sijistan and owed spiritual allegiance to Khwaja Usman of Harvan (a qasbah in Nishapur). Before coming to India he had visited a number of important centres of Islamic learning and had acquired knowledge from some of the eminent scholars of his age. He came to India before its conquest by Shihabuddin Muhammad Ghauri

1. This important mystic order derives its name from Chisht, a village near Herat, where the founder of the order, Khwaja Abu Ishaq of Syria, had settled at the instance of his preceptor Khwaja Munsig Ali Dinwari. See Sirar-ul-Auliya, 39-40 and 234-35, Abdur Rahman Jami, Nafhat-ul-Ung, Naval Kishore, 1815, 296 and also Nizami, Tarikh-i-Mashaikh-i-Chisht, 137-138.

and settled at Ajmer, which in those days was the stronghold of the Chauhan ruler, Rai Pithaura, and was also a significant religious centres of the Hindus. The Shaikh devoted himself to the cause of the Chishti silsilah and popularized its teachings. His magnetic personality and cosmopolitan outlook endeared him to the Hindus also who are reported to have accepted Islam in large numbers at his hands. The following observations of the Shaikh quoted in Sivar-ul-Auliya give an idea of the breadth of his vision:

(a) Illustrating his views about the universe, the Shaikh said that when we transcended the externals and looked around, we found the lover, the beloved and the love (itself) to be one, i.e., in the sphere of Oneness all is one.

2. An idea about his personality can be had from the Risalah Ahwal Piran Chisht(M.S.) which says:

"If Shaikh Muinuddin happened to look on any infidel, he would instantly repent for his sins and would never get near sins again." (MS. in personal collection of Prof. K.A. Nizami). Sivar-ul-Arifen, f.10 contains:

"that many infidels of that place embraced Islam owing to his grace." See also Akhbar-ul-Akhvar, 30.

(b) Explaining the highest form of ta'at (devotion to God) he said that it consisted in helping the people in trouble, fulfilling their need and feeding the hungry.

(c) Inculcating wide human sympathies he advised his disciples to develop first river like generosity, secondly sunlike affection and thirdly earth like hospitality.

The conquest of northern India by the Turks and the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate provided wider scope for the expansion of the silsilah which spread rapidly in the following decades. Shaikh Muinuddin died in 633/1236 A.D. and was buried at Ajmer. Two of his Khalifahs Shaikh Hamiduddin Sufi (ob. 673/1276) and Khwaja Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki carried on the work of their preceptor and established important centres of the silsilah at Nagaur and Delhi respectively. Shaikh Hamiduddin was well versed in Hadith and used to teach it to his disciples. He led a very simple life and eked out

1. Drasasan dar norsman, jahidet bina bina n ramon wrrsaman rasbiradain

Sivar-ul-Auliya, 46.


Sivar-ul-Auliya, 46.

3. Sivar-ul-Auliya, 45, 48. Sivar-ul-Arifin, f.12b says that he died at the age of 97 years. See also Akhbar-ul-Akhvar, 29.

4. Surur-us-Sudur (MS.) f.73. Shaikh Farid bin Abdul Aziz, grandson of Shaikh Muinuddin became his Khalifah, and it was under him and his successors that the Chishti silsilah had spread to many regions in northern India and the Deccan. See Akhbar-ul-Akhvar, 80,111,188-189. Gulzar-i-Abrar, f.73a.
his meagre subsistence of cultivating a bigha of land.

Shaikh Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki was very popular among the people and was the most distinguished saint of Delhi during the time of Iltutmish. He was very fond of \textit{sama} (mystic song) and breathed his last while hearing mystic songs. Among his disciples Shaikh Badruddin Ghaznavi and Shaikh Fariduddin Masud Gani-i-Shakar attained great fame. The former lived and worked at Delhi, but does not appear to have contributed much to the expansion of the Chishti order. Shaikh Fariduddin lived and worked at Ajodhan for many decades for the popularization of the order. Under him the branches of the Chishti silsilah were established in many towns of India and his Khalifahs had reached far and wide. How people came to his Khanqah from distant places attracted by his spiritual fame, may be gauged from the following story recorded in \textit{Fawa'id-ul-Fu'ad}. One day Hamid, a servant of Tughril who was

5. For an elaborate discussion on his life and teaching, see Prof. K.A. Nizami; \textit{The Life and Time of Shaikh Fariduddin Gang-i-Shakar}.
later appointed as governor of Lakhnauti by Balban, stood before his master when he saw a figure (surat) addresses him thus: "Hamid! Why are you standing before the man?" So saying the figure disappeared. Hamid was perplexed at this. He heard the figure repeat the same question again and again. He replied: "Why should I not stand before him?" I am his servant. He is the master. He gives me my pay. Why should I not stand (before him)?" The figure replied: "You are a scholar; he is an ignorant man; you are a free man; he is a slave. You are a pious man; he is an ignorant man. You are a free man; he is a slave. You are a pious man; he is a sinner." The figure was in fact the conscience of Hamid which rebelled against serving Tughril and he relinquished his service and came to Ajodhan and settled at the Jama'at Khana of Shaikh Farid.

Among the disciples of Shaikh Fariduddin Ganj-i-Shakar it was Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya (636/1236 - 735/1325) who gave an all-India status to the Chishti silsilah and sent his disciples to the different provincial towns to set up Chishti mystic centres. These Khalifahs became central figures in

1. The Khanqah of the Chishti saints usually consisted of a big hall, known as Jama'at Khana, For its description, See Prof. K.A. Nizami, Religion and Politics in India, 205.
2. Fawaid-ul-Fu'ad, 204.
their respective regions. Abdullah Shattari is reported to have said that he had sent seven hundred well-trained disciples to different important cities of the country. Shaikh Qutbuddin Munawwar worked in Hansi, Shaikh Wajihuddin Yusuf was sent to Chanderi, Shah Wilayat settled and worked in Gujarat, Shaikh Husamuddin Multani was sent to Pattan, while Shaikh Kamaluddin was assigned Malwa, Shaikh Burhanuddin Ghairib later went to Deogir and Shaikh Muhammad settled in Manikpur. In Bengal the work of organizing the Chishti order was entrusted to Shaikh Sirajuddin Usman.

1. Gulzar-i-Abrar, f. 49.
4. Mir'at-i-Ahmadi, 93.
The cardinal principles of the Chishti saints may be summed up in two phrases: Devotion to God and social service. Devotion to God was the key and kernel of Islamic mysticism. It was not a new principle. It is emphatically and frequently emphasized in the Quran as the best motivation for man. It is reflected in the sayings and behaviour of the Prophet also.

1. Hazrat Abul Hasan Nuri's statement illustrate the point:

"The sufis are they whose spirits have been freed from the pollution of humanity, purified from carnal taint, and released from concupiscence, so that they have found rest with God in the first rank and the highest degree, and have fled from all save Him." See Ali Hujwiri, The Kashf-ul-Mahjub (Eng. tr.), Nicholson, London, 1936, 37. A similar passage regarding the outlook of the sufis occurs in Awarif ul-Ma'arif (Urdu trans.), 62. It says, "Our principles are for those who have purified their soul from the pollution of the world." Another statement of Nuri further clears this point:

"sufism is not composed of practices and sciences, but it is morals." Kashf-ul-Mahjub, 42.

2. The Quran says:

And there are some among men who take for themselves objects of worship besides Allah, whom they love as they love Allah and those who believe are stronger in love of Allah, see Eng. tr. of The Holy Quran. Maulvi Muhammad Ali, Lahore, 73-74.

3. The following traditions will further illustrate that sufism was not a new thing to Islam. The first hadith is about the Prophet himself in which he says:

Contd....
The sentiment of love towards Allah is manifested in the observance of Shari'a. Also, like their predecessors the Chishti

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Allah make Thy love dearer to me than my own life, my children and the cold water. The second is about Hazrat Harisa. Once when he was asked by the Prophet about the reality of faith he gave the following answer:

I have cut off and turned myself away from this world, so that its stones and its gold and its silver and its clay are equal in my sight. And I have passed my nights in wakefulness and my days in thirst until melancholy. I see the Throne of my Lord manifest, and the people of Paradise visiting one another and the people of Hell wrestling with one another (according to an alternative reading making sudden attack on one another). The Prophet when said: "Thou knowest, therefore, persevere", See Kashf-ul-Mahjub (Eng.tr.) 33-34.

1. The Qur'an emphatically lays down that those who claim to have love for Allah should follow the Prophet:

عَلَيْنَ سَمَّاهُ رَبِّي نَذَّارًا وَسَمَّاهُ رَبِّي عَفَّيْنَاء

If you love Allah, then follow me, Allah will love you and forgive you, your faults, and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. Muhammad Ali, (Eng.tr.) of the Holy Qur'an, 149.

Shaikh Ali Hujweri has stated about the importance of knowing the Qur'an and the Sunna. Kashful-Mahjub (Eng. tr.) 14-15. Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya was very emphatic about the observance of Shari'a and says:

Fawaid-ul-Fu'ad, 147.
saints adored Allah with deep love and devotion. To attain this sublime goal they turned away from worldly things which they believed distracted a man's pursuit of his moral and spiritual ideal. Lest the worldly occupation should turn them negligent towards Allah they adopted the Quranic principles of constantly remembering Allah, known as Zikr of which they had prescribed certain forms.

Most of the Chishti saints were great scholars of religious sciences and they adopted mysticism having completed

1. Almost all the Chishti saints had drunk deep at the fountain of love, which is manifested in the following verses:

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\text{خواب من بنيت ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات ونات وn

Sivar-ul-Auliya, 110.

2. Their rememberance of Allah is based on the Quran and the tradition:

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\text{بزرود الملاملأو وهمجحجم}
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Remember Allah standing and sitting and lying Muhammad Ali (Eng.tr.) *The Holy Quran*, 193 *Tradition of the Prophet*:

"Ehsan is to adore Allah as though thou didst see Him, and if thou does not see Him, He nonetheless see thee."


Contd.....
their education in the traditional branches of Islamic learning. They however avoided all contact with rulers of the day whom they did not consider as the true representative of Islam.

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4. Almost all the saints mentioned in Siyar-ul-Auliva, Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, Fawaid-ul-Fuad, Khairul-Malalis, Gulzar-i-Abrar, Mirat-ul-Asrar, were great theologians.

1. Of the mystic orders that entered India during the early middle ages - the saints of Chishti Order kept themselves out of state politics, government services and royal association. This is said to be based on some grounds: like (i) psychological (ii) legal and (iii) religious. The sufis were strict believer in the deep and unrestricted devotion to Allah. Any thing that may divert their attention was to be resisted. Hazrat Shibli's statement illustrate this point:

"The poor man does not rest content with anything except God." Kashf-ul-Mahjub (Eng.tr.) 25. Hazrat Junaid's statement may also be cited in this regard:

"Oiyey that are poor, ye are known through God, and are honoured for the sake of God, take heed how ye behave when you are alone with Him." Kashf-ul-Mahjub (Eng.tr.) 27. The second thing which prevented the mystics in having relation with the temporarl authority was most probably based on legal and religious considerations.

After the fall of the Khilafat-i-Rashida, a great change occured in the governmental organization. The income of the state was drawn from illegal sources and the religion and social ideals of Islam were relegated to the background. This determined the attitude and approch of the saints who abjured all relations with the state and decided to reject government service which is technically referred to in the literature of the medieval period as shugal. See, Imam Ghazali, Ihya-ul-Ulum, Chapter IV, (cited by Prof.K.A.Nizami, Religion and Politics in India during the 13th Century, 240-241).

The Chishti saints with their philosophy of life to live for the Lord alone' avoided contact with the ruling

Contd......
They neither accepted government jobs nor jagirs or endowments. In order to pursue their ideals of social and moral regeneration and reform they maintained an atmosphere of complete 

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class. Shaikh Farid-uddin Ganj-i-Shakr is said to have advised his disciples to remain aloof from the princes. He says:

"If you desire to attain the position of an outstanding mystic heed not to the princes." Siyar-ul-Auliva, 75.

Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya, Shaikh Fakhruddin Zarradi and Shaikh Nasruddin Mahmud kept themselves aloof from the company of their contemporary sultans. Shaikh Nizamuddin received threatening order from Mubarak Khalji and Ghiyasuddin Tughluq and the latter two earned ill-treatment from Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq, but they never turned hostile.


1. Saints of Chishti Silsilah looked down upon government services. Shaikh Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki did not accept the offer of Sultan Iltutmish for the post of Shaikh-ul-Islam, Siyar-ul-Arifin, 376. It is said that Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya took back the Khilafatnamah from Qazi Muinuddin Kashani the moment he found him inclined to accept a job under Sultan Alauddin. Siyar-ul-Auliva, 257. The saints of Chishti order not only abstained from the association of the Sultans but they did not accept presentation and jagir from them.

Shaikh Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki when offered a jagir by Sultan Iltutmish, he did not accept it. See Rahat-ul-Qulub (MS) f.35b (cited by Prof. K.A.Nizami, Religion and Politics in India during the 13th century A.D. 244). See also Siyar-ul-Auliva, 11-49. Shaikh Farid and Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya sharply reacted and refused to accept the royal grants. See Fawa'id-ul-Fuad, 170-171. Maulana Nur Turk is said to have refused a bag full of gold offered by Sultana Razia, Fawa'id-ul-Fuad, 334-335.
aloofness from the state in their khanqahs. The Chishti saints had an elaborate system of Khanqah wherein the disciples were trained under the strict supervision of the Shaikh. After successful training the disciples became the representatives of the Chishti mission and established Khanqahs.

1. The Khanqah was the central institution of the mystics. In the words of Jalaluddin the term Khanqah is said to have originated from the word 'Khwanqah' meaning dinning hall see Shaikh Mahmud Bin Ali Kashani, Misbah-ul-Hidayat, Iran, 154. Shaikh Nasiruddin Chiragh traced its origin in the words 'Khana' meaning house and 'gah' meaning worship, that is a place of worship. See Maulana Hamid Qalandar, Khair-ul-Majalis, 75. Having in view the role of Khanqahs during the early middle ages, the interpretation of Shaikh Nasiruddin seems correct. Probably a Khanqah was built for the following purposes: for imparting religious and spiritual training to seeker after God, providing food and shelter to starving and homeless people, and it served the purpose of a common meeting ground where people drawn from all sections of the society, having different views met and benefitted from the spiritual environment. Besides, there was also arrangement for educating the people in the Khanqahs.

For details see Prof. K.A.Nizami - Tarikh-i-Mashaikh-i-Chisht, 265-66.

2. The Shaikh acted as the head of the institution, and the entire organization was controlled by him. He assigned different job to different disciples and they all carried out his order. Besides rendering personal service, they had to look after their study, internal administration like coocking and distributing of food, brooming the Khanqah and arranging stay for the visitor.

For an elaborate discussion on the services of its inmates see, Prof. K.A.Nizami - Religion and Politics in India during the 13th century A.D., 205-214.
in other parts of India. Khilafat Namah were given to the worthy and capable disciples who decided to dedicate their lives to moral and spiritual work.

1. **SHAikh AKHI SIRAJUDDIN:**

Shaikh Sirajuddin Usman, popularly known as Akhi Siraj, was born probably in Lakhnauti. His father had earlier migrated from Awadh and settled at Lakhnauti. Nothing is known about his early life.

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1. For instance, Lakhnauti, Daulatabad, Gulbarga, Burhanpur, Mandu, Ahmadabad. These were great centres of the Chishti mission during the 14th century.

2. See Mir'at-ul-Asrar (MS.) f.251, which says:

Gulzar-i-Abrar, f. 61 mentions:


The matter does not end here. In some sources he is called a native of Badaun. See, for instance, Tazkirat-ul-Auliya-i-Hind, II, and E.Haq, Banga Sufi-Prabhava, 102 (cited by M.A.Rahim, Social and Cultural History of Bengal, 110).
It is difficult to say under what circumstances he came to Delhi and joined the discipline of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya. Perhaps it was the spiritual eminence and fame of the Shaikh which attracted him to Delhi. He was quite young at this time, and his beard had not grown. The Shaikh entrusted him to the care of some senior inmates of his Jamaat-Khanah. He spent several years in Delhi at the feet of his preceptor and always engaged himself in devotion in a corner of the Jamaat Khanah. Occasionally he visited his mother at Lakhnauti and then returned to Delhi. Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya was so pleased with him that he conferred upon him the title of A'ina-i-Hindustan (Mirror of Hindustan).

Sometime before the death of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya, his senior disciples like Saiyyid Husain, Shaikh Nasiruddin Mahmud, Maulana Fakhruddin Zarradi and the two personal attendants, Khwaja Mubashir and Khwaja Iqbal prepared a list of thirty two disciples for the grant of Khilafat. This list included the name of Akhi Siraj also. Amir Khusrau presented this list to the Shaikh for his approval. The Shaikh had some reservations in approving the list and so a second list was drawn up. The Shaikh approved the second list, but regarding

2. Sivar-ul-Auliya, 288; Akhbar-ul-Akhivar, 92.
Shaikh Akhi Siraj he remarked that formal education was essential for a Sufi which was lacking in the case of Shaikh Akhi Siraj. He, however, appreciated his talent but expressed his inability to confer Khilafat on him till he had acquired knowledge up to a minimum standard. Thereupon Maulana Fakhruddin Zarradi, a great scholar and a disciple of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya, sought the permission of the Shaikh to educate him and promised to make him a danishmand (an 'alim) within six months. The Shaikh permitted Maulana Fakhruddin Zarradi to undertake the work of educating Akhi Siraj.

Maulana Fakhruddin brought Akhi Siraj to his house at Ghiyaspur and made him commit to memory the fundamentals of

1. *Siyar-ul-Arifin*, f.107. Akhi Siraj had some elementary education. Because the author of *Siyar-ul-Auliya*, 288, has referred to him as a devotee of knowledge. Even before his name was presented for Khilafat, he had much liking for learning. Since the beginning, his only belongings at the Khanqah of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya were consisted mainly some books and papers.


3. The prescribed course for a danishmand included the study of etymology (sarf), Syntax (Nahv) and jurisprudence (fiqh). See M.M.Ahsan Gilani, *Hindustan Mein Musalmonon Ka Nizam-e-Talim-o-Tarbiyat*, Delhi, 1944, Vol.I, 136-139. The book gives a comprehensive account about the system of Muslim education in the Medieval period.

4. See *Siyar-ul-Auliya*, 289-90; *Akhbar-ul-Akhyar*, 93; *Mirat-ul-Asrar* (MS.) f.251. According to *Siyar-ul-Arifin* (rotograph, f.107a) the period of his education was four months, but it seems to be exaggeration.

Arabic grammar, Sarf and Nahv etymology and syntax. Akhi Siraj was very intelligent and receptive. Maulana Zarradi wrote for him a concised book on Arabic grammar and named it Sarf-i-'Usmani after the name of his favourite pupil.

It appears that later on Akhi Siraj took lessons from Maulana Ruknuddin Inderpati in Kafiah, Mufassal, Quduri and Majma-ul-Bahrain. Mir Khuri, the author of Sivar-ul-Auliya, also joined him in these lectures.

Though Akhi Siraj completed his education in a very short period, his knowledge was not in any way superficial.

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2. Maulana Ruknuddin Indarpati was an eminent scholar of Islamic law (fiqu). He is said to have learnt Tasrif Malik and Hidavath from Maulana Fakhruddin Zarradi, (Sivar-ul-Auliya, Urdu, 234-235).

3. This is a celebrated work on Arabic grammar, was written by Usman bin Umar Abu Umar Jamaluddin Ibn-ul-Hajib (1174-1249 A.D.). See Khairuddin Azzarkali, Al-aalam (١١٤٣-١٢١٠) Vol. IV, 374.

4. It is also an important book on Arabic grammar written by Mahmud bin Umar (1075-114 A.D.). See Ibid., Vol. 8, 55.

5. It is a book on Fiqh (jurisprudence) by Ahmad bin Muhammad Abul Husain al-Qudusi (973-1037 A.D.) See Ibid., Vol.I, 206.

6. It is also an important book on Islamic law (fiqu) written by Ahmad bin Ali bin Taglib, popularly known as Ibn-us-Saati (ob. 1295 A.D.) See Ibid., Vol.1, 130.
Through his application and devotion he acquired such knowledge of the subjects included in the syllabus of those days that hardly any of his friends who had devoted greater time to formal education could compete with him.

Having finished the prescribed course, he was presented before Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya who tested his knowledge by asking question on all the subjects taught to him. When Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya was satisfied with his knowledge, he granted him his Khirqah, along with Itazat and Khilafatnamah and directed him to proceed to Bengal. Before leaving Delhi for Bengal, Shaikh Akhi Siraj represented to the Shaikh that it would be difficult for him to work in Bengal as Shaikh

1. Sivar-ul-Arifin, f.107 says:

(He became so learned that there was no danishmand who could discuss with him).


3. Khirqah (a garment of the sufis) was given to those disciples who qualified for Khilafat.

4. A certificate granted after the completion of the course, which entitled the recipient to impart education on his own behalf. For an idea of the importance of Itazat Namah, See Sivar-ul-Auliya, 92-93.

5. It was a letter of authority from the preceptor to efficient and successful disciples, empowering them to enrol disciples issue Khilafatnamah and enforce religious law and mystic principles. For the mode and importance of Khilafat Namah, see Ibid., 202-204.
Alaul Haq, a great scholar was there. The Shaikh assured him not to be dejected on that account as that Alaul Haq would soon join the circle of his disciples.

Shaikh Akhi Siraj did not proceed to Bengal immediately after receiving the Khilafat, but he sent his Khilafatnamah with Shaikh Nasiruddin Mahmud to Awadh, and himself stayed at Delhi in the company of his spiritual mentor. During this period he devoted himself to study, and lived in a building constructed by Khwaja-i-Jahan. Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya breathed his last in Delhi in the meantime.

1. Akhbar-ul-Akhvary 149; Mir'at-ul-Asrar (MS.) f.251.
2. This exactly happened when he reached Bengal. See, Akhbar-ul-Akhvary, 149. Mir'at-ul-Asrar (MS.) f. 251.

The idea of sending the Khilafatnamah with Shaikh Nasiruddin to Awadh appears very peculiar. No reason is given as to why he sent it to Awadh. Possibly he thought it safe to keep this important document with Shaikh Nasiruddin Mahmud as he had extended his programme to stay at Delhi, with the intention to collect it enroute to Lakhnauti.

4. During this period he probably tried to complete the course of higher learning, i.e. Fazil.
Shaikh Akhi Siraj came to Bengal in or about 1328-1329, A.D. The immediate cause of his departure from Delhi might have been the policy of Sultan Muhammad Tughluq, who had embarked on his Deccan project in about 1328 A.D., and was forcing the people, particularly the Shaikhs and Ulama to proceed to Daulatabad. Consequently a large number of distinguished Shaikhs and Ulama left Delhi and settled at different places. Under these circumstances Shaikh Akhi Siraj, who seemed desirous of staying for sometime at Delhi, could not prolong his sojourn and was compelled by circumstances to proceed to Bengal.

He had been trained in the mystic discipline at the Khanqah of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya and had imbibed fully the Chishti ideology as enunciated by its great masters of the first cycle. He settled down in his native town Lakhnauti and established a Khanqah there, and started a huge langar (free Kitchen). Mir Khurd says that he won the golden opinion of the people of Bengal and "illumined the whole region with his spiritual radiance."


2. *Sirar-ul-Auliya*, 289. For a reference to his huge langar, see, *Ahkbar-ul-Akhbar*, 149. To establish a langar with a Khanqah was one of the most important features of the Chishti saints. For an elaborate discussion on this point see, Professor K.A.Nizami, *Religion and Politics in India*, 205-207.
Shaikh Akhi Siraj had brought to Lakhnauti some valuable books from the wakf library of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya. This small collection of books constituted the first library on Islamic mysticism in Bengal.

To organize the Chishti silsilah in Bengal it was necessary to gain first hand and intimate knowledge of men and manners, customs and institutions. He, therefore, made an extensive tour of Bengal and met all sorts of people whom he attracted to the mystic fold. It is said that even the ruler of the time became his disciple.

Perhaps he never visited Delhi after he had settled in Bengal, but he maintained close and cordial relation with the disciple of the Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya at Delhi and even sent money to his teacher, Maulana Ruknuddin. Inderpati, and his class mate Saiyyid Mir Khurd.

Shaikh Akhi Siraj lived and worked in Bengal without any financial difficulties to distract his attention. The atmosphere of his Khanqah was not one of starvation and penury.

as was the case with Shaikh Farid of Pakpattan and Shaikh
Nizamuddin Auliya in his early years. It was in Bengal
that he married. One of his daughter was married to his
disciple Shaikh Alaul Haq.

Sometime before his death Shaikh Akhi Siraj selected
a suitable place for his grave where he was buried along
with the Khirqah (robe) he had received from his spiritual
mentor. Most probably he died in 1357 A.D. Some of the
articles of his daily use such as the Quran, the tasbih
(rosary) and the rihl (wooden stand for the Quran) etc. were
also reported to be placed at the top of his grave.

Akhi Siraj's work in Bengal was continued by his
eminent disciple Shaikh Alaul Haq.

1. For their early lives, see Sivar-ul-Auliya, 48-49, 64-67,
112-116; and also, Prof. K. A. Nizami, Religion and Politics
in India, 199-204.
2. Gulzar-i-Abrar, f. 61.
3. Sivar-ul-Auliya, 289, Akhbar-ul-Akhvar, 93, Mirat-ul-
Asrar (MS.) f. 251-52.
4. Sivar-ul-Auliya and other sources are silent on the
date of his death. For his obituary, see Memoirs of
Gaur and Pandua, 91.
A. A. Khan, Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua, (90-92) states
that the tomb of Shaikh Akhi Siraj is locally referred
to as Purana Pir (the old saint) or Piran-i-Pir (the
saint of the saints). It is situated at the north west
corner of the nagar Dighi. The wsixds urj (death anniversary)
is celebrated at the Sagar-Dighi on the Idul-Fitr day.
His shrine has four inscriptions but the two of which
are very important, as they preserve the record of the
erection of the impressive gateway to his tomb. One ins-
cription dated 916/1510 A.D. is related to Sultan
Alauddin Husain Shah, the other dated 931/1524-25 A.D.
to Sultan Nusrat Shah.
SHAIKH ALAUL HAQ

Shaikh Alaul Haq was the most illustrious disciple and Khalifah of Shaikh Akhi Siraj. He was born in an aristocratic family of Pandua. He traced his genealogy to Khalid bin Walid. His father was a native of Lahore, but later on he migrated to Pandua. He held an important post under Sultan Sikandar Shah (758-795 A.H./1357-1392 A.D.) and was probably incharge of the royal treasury. The other members of his family were also employed at the court.

Son of an important noble as he was, he received his education from Maulana Nizamul Haq Washshara Wad-din Sarfi, one of the most learned men of his times. But Alaul Haq was

1. Waqri-ul-Widayat (MS.) f.323 and Mairat-ul-Asrar (MS.) f.292, tracing his descent to the Hashmi tribe of Mecca, record:

2. The suffix Lahori with the name of his father suggests that he originally belongs to Lahore. The date of his arrival in Bengal is not known. On the basis of Shaikh Alaul Haq's early life and fame, who had been known to the mystic circle at Delhi when Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya was still alive, it could be inferred that his father would have come to Bengal towards the close of the 13th century A.D.


4. Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, 149.

Contd......
inclined more towards mystic discipline. He started calling himself Ganj-i-Nabat and adopted mystic ways. About the use of this title Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya is reported to have expressed his displeasure and remarked: "My preceptor Shaikh Fariduddin is known as Ganj-i-Shakar (store of Sugar) and he has become Ganj-i-Nabat (store of fine sugar) and thus he has made himself superior to Shaikh Fariduddin."

Then Akhi Siraj came to Lakhnauti Alaul Haq joined the circle of his disciples and gave up the title of Ganj-i-Nabat. His devotion and attachment to his preceptor was so deep that he followed him barefooted whenever he travelled and carried an oven with a cauldron on his head to provide hot meals to his mentor. This made him bald headed.

Shaikh Akhi Siraj broke the arrogance of his mind in all possible ways and made him so indifferent to worldly glory and prestige that he could pass with all these things

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5. According to Munis-ul-Fugara (MS.) f.79, Maulana Nizamul Haq was the leading scholar of and had a madrasa at Lakhnauti. He was also the teacher of Maulana Nasiruddin Bahath.

1. See Akhbar-ul-Akhvar, 149, Mir'at-ul-Asrar (MS.) f.293 and also Matlub-ut-Talibin (MS.) f.196.

2. Akhbar-ul-Akhvar, 149; Mir'at-ul-Asrar, f.293.
on his head through the quarters where his relatives resided without any hesitation. His dedication and sincerity impressed his spiritual mentor who married his daughter to him and also conferred upon him his Khilafat.

After the death of Shaikh Akhi Siraj, Alaul Haq became the central figure of the Chishti Order in Bengal. He carried forward and popularized the teachings of the Chishti order throughout Bengal. People came to his Khanqah from far and near. Some foreigners also visited his hospice and found spiritual solace in his company. Alaul Haq maintained a langar in his Khanqah on the pattern of his spiritual preceptor. Huge expenditure on the langar aroused the suspicion of Sultan Sikandar Shah who thought that perhaps his father was financing the langar by diverting funds from the treasury. This suspicion was perhaps short lived because no further action on the part of the Sultan is reported in contemporary chronicles. Nevertheless, the Sultan ordered Shaikh Alaul Haq to leave Pandua. Accordingly he left the

1. Akhbar-ul-Akhvar, 149; Mir'at-ul-Asrar, f. 293.
capital and came to Sonargaon and remained there for about two years. At Sonargaon also he became popular with the people who thronged round him in large numbers. He is reported to have doubled the expenses of his langar, as was done by Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya when Sultan Qutbuddin Mubarak Khalji had put a check on the visit of nobles to his Khanqah. He often used to say that what he spent on his langar was not even one-tenth of the expenditure of his deceased mentor, Shaikh Akhi Siraj.

Shaikh Alaul Haq had two sons, Azam Khan and Nurul Haq. The former preferred the life at the court to saintly

1. Ibid., Mir'at-ul Asrar, f.294. How Shaikh Alaul Haq met these huge expenses is not known. He had inherited from his father two gardens, yielding an income of eight thousand jankas, but these two were in the adverse possession of some one else; and the Shaikh never tried to recover them.

2. It is said about Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya that when Sultan Mubarak Khalji (1316-1320 A.D.) turned hostile towards the Shaikh and instructed his officers not to offer money to the Shaikh, the latter instructed his attendant Khwaja Iqbal to double the expenses on the langar. Sirar-ul-Arifin, f. 95.

3. Akhbar-ul Akhyar, 149.
life; He became a minister at the court. Nurul Haq lived at the Khanqah with his father and adopted the life of a mystic. Shaikh Alaul Haq had a daughter also who was married to one Maulana Tajuddin. Shaikh Alaul Haq died in 800/1392 and was buried at Pandua.

Of the Khalifahs of Shaikh Alaul Haq, the names of Maulana Ali, Ashraf Jahangir Simnani, Shaikh Nasiruddin Manikpuri, Shaikh Husain Dhukkarposh and his own son Shaikh Nurul Haq, have come down to us.

Shaikh Nurul Haq, popularly known as Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam, succeeded to his sajjadah after his death. Like his father he was a great scholar. It is said that he and Chyasuddin Azam Shah (his contemporary ruler of Bengal, 1392-1410 A.D.) were educated under the same roof by a famous

1. Ibid.
3. Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, 149.
8. Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, 158.
scholar Shaikh Hamiduddin Kunj-i-Nashin of Nagaur. After obtaining the necessary knowledge in external sciences (ulum-i-zahir), he was initiated by his father into spiritual discipline. Hardly any saint had practised such a severe austerities during the period of mystic training as Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam did under the supervision of his father. He used to wash the clothes of the inmates of the Khanqah and arranged hot water for them. He had to render all personal service to the faqirs who visited the Khanqah and to the disciples of his father. Another work assigned to him by his father was to help the old women carry their water-filled pitchers, as there was mud and mire near the well, and women could not safely carry water. For four years Nurul Haq performed this service also. Besides on the occasion of uras he had to make arrangement for water. He brought fuel for the kitchen from the forests for about eight years. One day when he was coming back with a big load of fire-wood on his head, he met his brother Azam Khan, who did not like the miserable plight of his younger brother and advised him to renounce the mystic life and accept some

1. Rivaz-ur-Salatin III. (Eng.tr.) III. He should not be confounded with Shaikh Hamiduddin Nagauri of Rajasthan.


3. For a reference to this severe training see Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, 158; Mir'at-ul-Asrar, f. 337.
post in the court, but he rejected the offer.

Perhaps these duties of a menial type were assigned to him because the Shaikh wanted to inculcate in him a spirit of self-effacement, self-abnegation and humility. A son of distinguished saint was prove to develop superiority complex, but Shaikh Alaul Haq saw to it that his son did not behave as a saint, but as the Khadim of saints. This training had its effect on his thought and character. All traces of arrogance were obliterated from him and he became humble and accommodating in his relations with all.

SHAIKH NUR QUTB ALAM

Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam's elevation to the saijadah in 800 A.H./1398 A.D., synchronized with the period of political unrest in Bengal. Raja Kans (Ganesh), a notable landlord of Bhaturlah, who had served under the Ilyas Shahi rulers, gained substantial hold over the affairs of the

1. Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, 158.
2. Rivaz-us-Salatin (Eng. tr.) 112. Bhaturlah has been identified with a large district east of Maldah, bounded on the west by the Mahanadi and the Purnabhaba rivers, on the south by the left bank of the Ganges, on the east lay the Karatoya rivers, and on the north by Dinajpur and Ghoraghat. See Rennell's Atlas, 1788 (cited by Blochmann, Contribution to the Geography and History of Bengal, ASB, Calcutta, 1968, 58. For an elaborate discussion on the name and location of the place, See, N.K. Bhattasali, Coins and Chronology of the Early Independent Sultans of Bengal, Cambridge, 1922, 79-82.
state and ultimately seized the Kingdom. After usurping power he allegedly persecuted the Muslims including the religious classes and is reported to have killed several saints. Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam was deeply shocked at the


2. The information about the reign of Raja Kans and of his attitude towards the Muslims have been quoted by various authors with slightly different details. For instance Ashraf Jahangir Simnani (in his Maktubat No.46), describes him as an oppressor of the Muslims, Mir'at-ul-Asrar, f. 294 repeats the same story, the Riyaz, 113 says that he was a tyrant and persecutor of the Muslims. Blochmann, Contribution to the Geography and History of Bengal, 58-59; and Bhattasali, Coins and Chronology, 110-111, represent the views of the Riyaz. Tabagat-i-Akbari, 524 is silent on this point and merely states the fact of his usurpation. Ferishta (Vol.II.297) who has been followed by Stewart, History of Bengal, describes that Raja Kans was a great friend of the Muslims, so much so that many believed him to have been a convert and claimed for him a Muslim burial. But Ferishta's assertion that Raja Kans was friendly towards the Muslim can not be accepted because of the following facts; firstly, it was written after a long time of the actual events, and secondly its puts the death of Raja Kans in 794 A.H./1392 A.D., which is a defective chronology. Therefore, the story of his usurpation, which has been corroborated by the contemporary authority Ashraf Jahangir Simnani, seems to be correct.

3. Shaikh Badrul Islam, son of Shaikh Husain Dhukharposh and Shaikh Anwar son of Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam are reported to have been killed by Raja Kans. See Maktubat-i-Ashrafi, (letter No.47); Riyaz, 113,117. The persecution of the Shaikhs, the theologians, the devotees and the religious men were so indiscriminate and appallingly cruel that Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam became very much disgusted. He has expressed his sorrow about it in one of his letters addressed to some of his nearest relations. See his Maktubat (letter No.9), ff.67-68; and also, R.C.Majumdar, A Forgotten Episode in the Medieval History of Bengal (in Annals of the Bhadarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, Golden Jubilee Volume, 1968, 187-192).
state of affairs. He wrote a letter to Sultan Ibrahim Sharqi of Jaunpur, (804-844 A.H./1401-1440 A.D.). Seeking his assistance in the matter and also asked Saiyyid Ashraf Jahangir Simnani to persuade Ibrahim Sharqi to march against Raja Kans. Ibrahim received the letter with due humility and discussed the matter with Qazi Shihabuddin Daulatabadi, a great scholar of the age. He immediately responded to the call of the Shaikh and invaded Bengal with a large army. When he reached the frontiers of Bengal, he encamped at Firuzpur (Panduah). This news alarmed Raja Kans, who went to Shaikh Nur and implored to intercede on his behalf with the King of Jaunpur. The Shaikh refused to intercede till he had become a Muslim. Raja Kans was ready for conversion but on his wife's insistence he changed his mind and brought his son Jadu (Narayan), who was then merely a boy of twelve years, to the Shaikh for conversion; and promised his abdication in favour of his son.

Jadu was declared a Muslim after the recitation of the Kalima and was given the Islamic name Jalaluddin Muhammad Shah. After this Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam requested Ibrahim Sharqi to leave Bengal, much against his wishes. After his return Raja Kans again took the reigns of the government into his own hands, reconverted his son to old faith and started

persecuting the Muslims including the servants and relatives of the Shaikh. He also banished Shaikh Anwar and Shaikh Zahid, respectively the sons and grandson of Shaikh Nur, to sonargaon and tortured them. Shaikh Ahmad was later put to death. It is reported that Raja Kans himself died the very day Anwar was executed. Jalaluddin (Jadu) then succeeded to his father, reconverted to Islam and became a zealous Muslim. He is said to have converted many Hindus to Islam and brought Shaikh Zahid back to Pandua.

It is said that once Sultan Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah (1392-1410 A.D.) sent to him a tray full of food. The Shaikh accepted it in a way that Shaikh Husamuddin Manikpuri objected to it, and said, "What is the need of paying such respect to a worldly sovereign by a King of the religion." But the Shaikh defended his action by citing a hadith in which the prophet had advised the Musalmans to maintain good relations with a Sultan.

1. There are different opinions about his conversion to Islam. According to Tarikh-i Ferishta, Vol.II,297, after the death of his father he summoned all the important nobles of the court and expressed his desire to become a Muslim. He said that if they had any objection he would step down in favour of his younger brother; but the nobles agreed to accept him as their king without any prejudice to the religion he might choose to profess. Mir'at-ul Asrar, f.294, says that he embraced Islam out of his love for the Kingdom. Tabaqat-i Akbari, 524, repeats the same story.

2. Rivaz-us-Salatin, (Eng. tr.) 114-118.


4. It may, however, be pointed out that all traditions of the prophet in which reference is made to Sultan as a specific person exercising political authority are apocryphal as the word sultan was then used in the sense of argument (burhan) and not in the sense of a ruler. It was later on, with the rise of Sultanate that traditions, relating to the Sultan were fabricated and fondly circulated.
Notwithstanding all this, Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam's personal life was simple and pious. He was essentially a man of the masses and kept close contact with them. The author of Akhbar-ul-Akhyar says that when he travelled peoples followed him for miles with respect, and many of them prostrated before him and kissed his feet. He adhered closely to the Chishti mystic principle of behaving with forbearance and tolerance towards all sorts of people and won, when people misbehaved with him he showed kindness and courtesy to them. Once a faqir happened to visit his Jama'at Khanah, and started abusing and accusing the Shaikh, but he treated him with love and gave him money before he left the Khanqah.

Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam died at Pandua in 818 A.H./1415 A.D. He left two sons, Shaikh Rif'at ud'din and Shaikh Anwar.

Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam had a large number of disciples, some of them being, Shaikh Husamuddin of Manikpur, Saiyyid Akbar.

1. Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, 158-159.

2. Our sources differ on the date of his death. Mir'at-ul-Asrar, f.339; and a book in possession of the Khadim of the dargah, record the date of his death on the basis of a chronogram: 'محمير', which on conversion comes to 818 A.H./1415 A.D. This date, according to Karim is generally accepted to day. See Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, 107. For other versions see, Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, 160 puts his death in 813 A.H./1410 A.D. and A'in-i-Akbari, Vol.III (Eng.tr.), in 412 in 808 A.H./1405 A.D.


4. Ibid., 182.
Shamsuddin Tahir, Saiyyid Ali Akbar and Shaikh Ruknuddin who attained great fame and popularity in their respective areas of work.

Shaikh Rifatuddin, the eldest son of Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam, probably succeeded to the Sajjada of his father. Nothing is known about him except that he was very humble, led a simple life and was buried at Pandua near his father's grave. He was survived by his son Shaikh Zahid.

It appears from some of the letters of Shaikh Husamuddin Manikpuri that he guided Shaikh Zahid through

1. According to Akhbar-ul-Akhvar, Shamsuddin Tahir lived and worked at Ranthor; and died at the age of one hundred fifty years. See also, Gulzar-i-Abrar, f.64.


3. Maktubat-i-Nur Qutb Alam, f.15. He appears to have flourished in Bengal, and was closely associated with the Shaikh. But no detail about him is available.

4. Blochmann - Contribution to the Geography and History of Bengal, ASB, 56.

5. Akhbar-ul-Akhvar, (171-172) states on the authority of Shaikh Husamuddin that he was very humble and simple by nature, and that he used to compare himself to a street dog.


7. Gulzar-i-Abrar, f.63 says that Shaikh Shihabuddin Manikpuri, a learned Khalifah of Shaikh Husamuddin, had collected 121 letters of Shaikh Husamuddin addressed to his sons and Khalifahs. Some of these letters written to Shaikh Zahid reveal that he received spiritual guidance from Shaikh Husamuddin through letters.
his letters and equipped him with spiritual knowledge. Shaikh Zahid, as stated earlier, was also banished to Sonargaon with his uncle by Raja Kans; and he had to suffer at the hands of Raja Kans. After the murder of Shaikh Anwar, Kans tried to kill him also, but did not succeed in his designs.

When after the death of Raja Kans, Jalaluddin Muhammad ascended throne, he called back the Shaikh to Panduah. He had great respect for the Shaikh and served him with devotion.

Shaikh Zahid died in circa 860 A.H./1455 A.D., and was buried at Panduah besides the grave of his father. He left ten sons behind him: Shaikh Sufi, Shaikh Pir Mulla, Shaikh Ashraf, Shaikh Darvesh, Shaikh Qalandar, Shaikh Ahmad, Shaikh Ghaus, Shaikh Qutb, Shaikh Autad and Shaikh Abdal.

Shaikh Anwar, the younger son of Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam seems to have been trained and initiated in mystic discipline by his father. Like his father he also served the visitors and the inmates of the Khanqah. It is said that he used to

1. Rivaz-us-Salatin (Eng.tr.) 117-118.

2. A.A.Khan, Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua, 118, gives the chronogram of his death as: "" (i.e., he had no love for the world), which on conversion comes to be 860/1455.

3. For a reference to his sons, see Memoirs, 111.
keep sheeps and slaughter them for the guests of his father, but he himself did not like the meat.

Before he was thrown into prison by Raja Kans, he once sought explanation from his father as to why the Muslims were oppressed by Raja Kans, when a saint like him was there. The Shaikh who was then absorbed in meditation replied in anger that it would not stop till his (Shaikh Anwar's) blood was shed. After this incident it so happened that Shaikh Anwar with his nephew Shaikh Zahid was banished to Sonargaon, and was murdered by Raja Kans in circa 1418 A.H.

His body is said to have been brought from Sonargaon and buried at Pandua by the side of his father's grave. He left behind him two sons, Shaikh Ajmal and Shaikh Akmal.

SHAikh HUsAMUDDIN MANIKPURi

Shaikh Husamuddin Manikpuri, an outstanding scholar of his time, was the son of Maulana Khwaja and the grandson of

2. Riyaz-us-Salatin, (Eng. tr.) 117.
3. Memoirs, 118.
4. Ibid., 111.
5. For a brief life sketch, see, Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, 184; Mirt-ul-Asrar, f. 359; Gulzar-i-Abrar, f. 62.
of Maulana Jalaluddin Manikpuri, both being great scholar and men of piety. They traced their descent to the second caliph Hazrat Umar. Shaikh, Husamuddin is said to have learnt by heart some important books. So profound was his knowledge that he could explain and interpret the whole of Hidayah; a voluminous work on jurisprudence (fiqh). Being overtaken by the spiritual emotions he gave up his study against the wishes of his father. It is said that he was divinely directed to become the disciple of Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam, and set out for Pandua to meet Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam. He arrived at Pandua on Friday and was received by Shaikh

1. He was the disciple of Shaikh Muhammad, a Khalifah of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya. He was known for his learning and piety. To earn his livelihood, he used to transcribe the Holy Quran. It is said that Maulana Jalaluddin never used pen without ablution. For short notices on his life. See Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, 184; Mir'at-ul-Asrar, f. 359.


3. Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, 183; see also Mirat-ul-Asrar, f.359. We could not know the name of his teacher, he might have received education from his father, who was then a great scholar.


5. According to Abdur Rahman Chishti, he had two dreams, in one he was asked to offer tahlijud (prayer after mid-night), in the second Saiyyid Jalaluddin Bukhari invited him to join the circle of his disciples, but Shaikh Nur appeared from the east and drew him to his side. See Mir'at-ul-Asrar, ff. 359,360.
Rifatuddin, the eldest son of the Shaikh, who personally entertained him with bhat (rice). After that he was presented before Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam. The Shaikh gladly accepted him as his disciple and gave him an apple to eat as a token of admiration and affection of his moral and mental qualities.

Probably it had become the tradition of this branch of the Chishti order that a novice was first asked to do menial work like collecting firewood etc. Shaikh Husamuddin was similarly assigned the work of bringing firewood from the forest. Sometime he had to go to a distance of 5 kos to bring fuel for the Khanqah on his head in scorching heat. Some other disciples of the Shaikh, Maulana Fariduddin and Maulana Salar also accompanied him. He spent 14 months in the Khanqah of Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam in this way. Later Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam granted him his own garment and gave him the staff and prayer carpet and conferred his Khilafat on him on 18 Rabi 11, 804 A.H./1401 A.D., in the presence of many leading saints, Shaikh Shihabuddin Damghani, Shaikh Mahmud Adani, Shaikh Ali Yamani, Shaikh Mahmud Warraqi,

Saiyyid Rajah, Saiyyid Qawamuddin, Shaikhzada Ali, Maulana Mustafa and Sayyid Sadruddin Bihari.

After conferring the Khirga and the Khilafat-namah, Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam sent Shaikh Husamuddin to Manikpur, where he lived and worked for about fifty years and popularized the Chishti order in that region.

He died at Manikpur in 853 A.H./1449 A.D. Some of his sons, namely Shaikh Faizullah and Shaikh Ahmad, respectively popular as Qazi Shah and Shaikh Budh, were well educated and spiritually trained. Shaikh Faizullah succeeded to the sajjada of his father.

Shaikh Husamuddin is said to have one hundred twenty Khalifahs, some of them being: Shaikh Shihabuddin Manikpuri, Saiyyid Masud bin Saiyyid Zahiruddin Fathpuri, popularly

5. Ibid., f. 63.
6. Ibid., f. 63.
known as Shaikh Saidan, Saiyyid Hamid Shah bin Saiyyid Rajah Shah Manikpuri, Saiyyid Muhammad Amir Budh, entitled Saiyyid Sufi, Maulana Shahrullah Abul Qasim, Shaikh Nasiruddin, ....

SAIYYID ASHRAF JAHANGIR SIMNANI

Saiyyid Ashraf Jahangir Simnani (1285-1405 A.D.) a distinguished disciple of Shaikh Alaul Haq, was a leading saint of eastern U.P. He made notable contribution to the advancement of the Chishti silsilah. He belonged to a royal family of Simnan. He is reported to have memorized the whole Quran at the age of seven, and knew the seven traditional methods of reciting the Quran. When he succeeded to the throne after the death of his father, he carried the administration very efficiently, and became known for his justice.

2. For a reference to his family, see Lataif-i-Ashrafi, Vol. II, 90, which says that he was the son of Sultan Ibrahim of Simnan, and his mother, Khatija Begam was the daughter of a noted saint, Khwaja Ahmad Yasvi. She was a religious minded and pious lady.
Royal life with all its glories and luxuries could not quench the spiritual thirst of Saiyyid Ashraf Jahangir. There was great tension in his mind for sometime, but eventually he decided to abdicate the throne and lead the life of a mystic. He sought the advice of his mother who gladly allowed him to adopt the mystic path. When he left his country, thousands of soldiers accompanied to see him off. Travelling through Transoxiana, Samarqand and Bukhara he first arrived at Uchch, where he met Saiyyid Jalaluddin Bukhari, popularly known as Makhñun Jahānniyan-i-Jabangsht. He then came to Delhi and after spending sometime there, proceeded to Bihar. His arrival at Bihar coincided with the death of Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri. He led his funeral prayer and proceeded to Pandua. Shaikh Alaul Haq received him with great affection and admitted him in his

2. Saiyyid Jalaluddin Bukhari (707-735 A.H./1307-1383 A.D.) was a great scholar and an eminent suhrawardi saint of his time. Saiyyid Jalaluddin Surkh Bukhari was his grandfather. He is said to have received Khilafatnamah from both the Chishti and the Suhrawardi saints. For brief notices see, *Tarikh-i-Muhammadi*, part II, ff. 153-154; *Akhbar-ul-Akhbar*, 147-149, *Lataif-i-Ashrafi*, Vol.II, 94.

discipline. He spent 12 years at his Khanqah and eventually got a Khirqa and a Khilafatnamah from him. His preceptor also conferred upon him the title of Jahangir.

Afterwards Shaikh Alaul Haq asked him to settle in Jaunpur Saiyyid Ashraf who had deep attachment with his mentor, was reluctant to leave his company, but on persuasion he set out for Jaunpur. The people of Pandua, nobles as well as common folk, gave a hearty send off to him. Saiyyid Ashraf Jahangir left Pandua with a large number of camels and horses, including 'alama (standards) and nishans (banners). When he reached Maner with all this paraphernalia, a local mystic, Shaikh Soman Arwali, criticised him for his royal outfit. Saiyyid Ashraf replied that the animals were for temporary use and that he had no attachment with anything. "The pegs with which the horses are tied", he said, "are nailed in the soil and not in his heart." Later he came to Muhammadabad (a qasba in Azamgarh district) and held discussions on religion with the local scholars. He read to them a book he had written on the lives of the Pious Caliphs. Some of the Ulama criticised the book on the ground that it contained more details about Hazrat Ali compared to the other

1. Ibid., 88-99.
2. Ibid., 100.
three Caliphs. They called him to the mosque on Friday in order to explain his point of view. A local scholar, Saiyyid Khan, defended Saiyyid Ashraf by citing a tradition and said "the Ulama could have (with some justification) objected to his encomiums on Ali, if the work by a non-Saiyyid and not by a Saiyyid. Saiyyid Ashraf was himself a Saiyyid so he had every right to use exalting words about his ancestors." From Muhammadpur, Saiyyid Ashraf came to Zafarabad (near Jaunpur), and soon became very popular among the people. Shaikh Haji Chiragh-i-Hind, a local Suhravardi saint, did not like the idea of his settling at Zafarabad. It is said that a scholar of Sarharpur, Shaikh Kabir who had initially thought of becoming a disciple of Haji, joined the circle of Saiyyid Ashraf's disciples. This further annoyed Shaikh Haji, and

1. The people are the sons of the world, and they should not be reproached for showing love and praise for their parents. See Lataif-i-Ashrafi, Vol. I, 18-19.

2. Ibid. 101.

3. He was a scholar of Sarharpur. After completing his studies he developed liking for spiritual discipline and started his search for a spiritual guide. One night he saw a dream that a beautiful person of medium stature and red hair came and made him his disciple. After this he first came to Shaikh Haji but he was different from the saint he had seen in the dream, so he changed his idea and came to Saiyyid Ashraf who accepted him as his disciple. See Lataif-i-Ashrafi, Vol. II, 101-103.
he used all his means to disturb Saiyyid Ashraf and his disciples; but he did not succeed in his designs and he was struck by paralysis. After staying for sometime at Zafarabad, Saiyyid Ashraf came to Jaunpur, where he was well received by the Sharqi ruler, Sultan Ibrahim (1401-1400 A.D.). At that time Sultan Ibrahim had sent an expedition to the fort of Janadah and was much concerned about its outcome. He approached Saiyyid Ashraf for his blessings. The fort was captured within three days, and the Sultan and his sons developed great faith in the saint. Ibrahim expressed his desire to offer some gifts to him but he declined.

Qazi Shihabuddin Daulatabadi, the chief qazi of the Sultan, was impressed by the spiritual eminence of Saiyyid Ashraf and became his disciple. This considerably enhanced the prestige and position of Saiyyid Ashraf Jahangir in the eyes of the people as the Qazi was a distinguished scholar of his time and was held in high esteem by the people and the rulers alike. Saiyyid Ashraf conferred his khirga and Khilafat on him.

1. Ibid., 101-103.
3. Qazi Shihabuddin was a great scholar and had written many books. Sultan Ibrahim had deep respect for him. It is said that he had specially arranged for him a silver chair besides his throne. He died in 848 A.H./1444 A.D. and was buried at Jaunpur. For his short sketches, see. Lataif-i-Ashrafi, Vol.I, 410, Vol.II, 105,106; Akbar-ul-Akhbar, 186-187; Tarikh-i-Farishta, Vol. II, 306; Riyaz-us-Salatin, (Eng.tr.) 115.
Saiyyid Ashraf had considerable influence on Sultan Ibrahim Sharqi. It is said that when his fellow disciple Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam faced difficulties at the hand of Raja Kans (Ganesh) and sought his assistance, Saiyyid Ashraf wrote to Sultan Ibrahim about it and the latter responded to his request.

From Jaunpur Saiyyid Ashraf finally moved to Kichaucha where he settled and established his Khanqah. According to the author of *Lataif-i-Ashrafi*, at Kichaucha, a leader of the Yogis was so impressed by his mystic personality that he embraced Islam along with his many followers; and set all his religious books on fire. Saiyyid Ashraf died in 808 A.H./1405 A.D. at Kichaucha.

Saiyyid Ashraf had a large number of disciples. Some of his important Khalifahs were the following: Shaikh Kabir


3. It is situated in the district of Faizabad and is also known as Ruhabad. It is said that when Saiyyid Ashraf settled here, he planted a good garden and named it, Ruhabad. See *Lataif-i-Ashrafi*, Vol.II, 106, 108.


It will be seen from the foregoing survey of the activities of the Chishti saints in Bengal that the silsilah was introduced by Akhi Siraj and developed to its full stature by Saiyyid Ashraf Jahangir. They set up a number of Chishti mystic centres in Bengal, Bihar and the eastern Uttar Pradesh and popularized the teachings of the early saints. Though they adhered to the tradition of the Chishti saints in not accepting futuh from the rulers, but they could not eschew the company of rulers and government servants.


2. Ibid., Vol. II, 413.
CHAPTER III

THE SHATTARI AND OTHER MINOR SILSILAHS

The Shattari silsilah, originally known as silsilah-i Ithna'iah in Iran and as silsilah-i Bistamiah in Asia Minor, was established in Persia by Shaikh Abu Yazid Taifur, popularly known as Bayazid Bistami (d. 261/874 or 264/877-78). The first saint among the spiritual descendants of Shaikh Bayazid who came to be known as Shattari was Shah Abdullah, also known as Hazrati-i Aala. He was given the title Shattar by his preceptor Shaikh Muhammad Arif, after he had completed his spiritual training under his supervision.

According to Ghausi there are three categories of mystics — Abrar, Akhvar, Shattar. The Shattar are so called because they traverse the mystic path quickly.


2. A list of his ancestors has been given by Ghausi Shattari which shows that he was a son of Husamuddin and a descendant of Shaikh Shihabuddin Suhrawardi. Gulzar-i-Abrar, ff. 101 and 184.

3. The spiritual genealogy given by Ghausi shows that he was the seventh descendant of Shaikh Bayazid Bistami, Gulzar-i-Abrar, f. 101.

4. Muinuddin Abdullah, Mazari-ul-Wilayat (MS.) says

[Transcribed and translated text]

[End of transcription]
Shah Abdullah was a rich saint and possessed great qualities of head and heart. After receiving Khilafatnamah he toured many Muslim countries, e.g. Nishapur, Khurasan, Iraq and Azarbaijan. During his itinerary he met some eminent sufis and benefited from them. He then came to India and made an extensive tour of northern India. He marched like a monarch donned in a royal garment. His followers who carried banners and drums with them were dressed in military uniform.

Unlike the founders of the previous silsilahs Shaikh Abdullah did not first settle at a place. He spent several years moving from place to place. Wherever he went, he made a declaration: "Is there any one who wants to be shown the path of Allah; if any one has better understanding of

1. Akhbar-ul-Akhbar, 182 says:

2. Gulzar-i-Abraha, f. 101. During his travel Shah Abdullah met and benefitted by Shaikh Muzaffar at Nishapur and Shaikh Mowhid at Azarbaijan. Both of them were men of great learning and belonged to the Suhrawardi Silsilah. Probably owing to his meeting with these saint, the author of Lataif-i-Ashrafi, Vol. I, 389 remarks:

3. Ibid., f. 102a.

4. For instance the founders of the Chishti and Suhrawardi silsilah, who settled respectively at Ajmer and Multan and worked for the spread of the silsilah.
Kalima (formula of faith) than I have, he should come and teach me, otherwise he should learn it from me."

When Shaikh Abdullah reached Bengal he repeated this claim there also. Shaikh Muhammad Ala heard about this. He first ignored him but later himself visited his Khanqah and became his disciple.

Shah Abdullah Shattari died at Mandu in 890 A.H./1486 A.D. and was buried there.

The Shattari Silsilah continued in India for about two centuries and produced several saints and scholars of eminence. Shaikh Qazin, Shaikh Hafiz Jaunpuri, Shaikh Rizqullah, Shaikh Bahauddin and Saiyyid Muhammad Ghaus of Gwalior were some of the important saints of the Shattari order.

The Shattari mystics believed in the theory of Wahdat-ul-Wajud (unity of phenomena and noumena), and their spiritual discipline revolved round this basic concept. This also

2. Gulzar-i-Abrar, 102a & b.
provided to them an ideological meeting-ground with the Hindu mystic thought. The works of Saiyyid Muhammad Ghaus of Gwalior, Bahr-ul-Havat and Jawahir-i-Khamsa are based on this pantheistic approach to religion. The ideas about pantheistic monism and Sufi practices expressed in Jawahir-i-Khamsa explicitly show the extent to which Saiyyid Muhammad Ghaus was influenced by the Hindu mystics and their practices.

Through Bahr-ul-Havat, a Persian version of Amrit Kund (Sanskrit work on yogic system), Saiyyid Ghaus had tried to introduce and popularize the Hindu mystical ideas and their practices into Sufi discipline. Further to bring about a synthesis of the two thought, he established the identity of connotation in various terms used by the Yogis and the Sufis.

The main teachings of the Shattaris are based on the cultivation of cosmic emotions, and they laid great

1. See Jawahir-i-Khamsa (MS.) Habib Ganj Collection, Maulana Azad Library.


4. Saiyyid Ghaus had identified the following terms of the Yogis: the Hom, the Om, the Rahin, the Sarin and Tarin, the Barina and the Hans with that of Ya Rab-Ya Hafiz, Ya Qahir-Ya Qadir, Ya'Alim'o-Ya Khaligo, Ya Rahman - Ya Rahim, Ya'Azim'o - Ya Alim'o Ya Hakimo and Ya Haiyo of the Sufis. See Bahr-ul-Havat, 38-46.
emphasis on the purification of oneself than on mere adherence to formal aspects of religion.

The Shatūrāris emphasized the following principles as the basis of their spiritual effort:

1. Tauba (repentance), Zuhd (piety), Tawakkul (contentment), Qana'at (resignation), Uzlāt (seclusion), Tawāj-ih-ba-su-i-Haq (concentration towards God), Sābr (patience), Ṣuḥāh (submission to the Divine will), Zikr (remembrance of God), 2 Muragba (meditation).

But in practical life, the Shatūrāri saints did not respect these principles. Like the Suhrawardis they mixed with rulers and justified their action with the claim that their association with the rich was for the welfare of the people.

The Shatūrāri silsilah was organized in Bengal by Shaikh Muhammad Ala, a leading scholar of his time. It

2. Shaikh Bahauddin, Risalāh-i-Shattari (cited in Akhbar-ul-Akhvár, 204-205). See also Gulzar-i-Abrar f. 128, which on the authority of Shah Abdullah Shattari's Lataif-i-Ghaiblah, mentions the method of spiritual training.
is said that when Shah Abdullah Shattari visited Bengal in the beginning of the 15th century A.D., he invited Shaikh Qazin to have a discussion with him on the importance of *Kalima* (formula of faith), but Shaikh Qazin ignored his invitation and remarked "such an idle talker usually happened to come from Khurasan, Iraq, and Persia." Being obviously irritated at his remark, Abdullah commented: "Shaikh Qazin's success lies in this idle talker," and left Bengal for Mandu.

It is said that after this incident, Shaikh Qazin's spiritual development suddenly stopped. One night his father appeared to him in a dream and instructed him to go and seek guidance from Shaikh Abdullah Shattari. On this direction he set out for Mandu. On reaching there he waited for three days at the door of Shah Abdullah's Khanqah, but was not given an audience with the saint. Being disheartened, he made a representation to the Shah and explained to him his helplessness and also sought his forgiveness for the mistakes he had committed in the past. On the fourth day Shah Abdullah allowed him to enter his Khanqah. He was told to part with his family customs and traditions and adopt the custom and practices of the Shaṭṭari

1. Ibid., f. 102.
Order. He joined the circle of Shah Abdullah's disciples. After a short period of training at Māndū, he was granted 1 Khilafatnamah, and directed to return to Bengal.

Shaikh Qazin worked for a long time in Bengal, but the paucity of material makes it difficult to assess his contribution or to prepare a list of his Khalifahs. The Shattari Silsilah after him, was developed and spread by his two learned Khalifahs, Shaikh Haji Hamid Husur and his own son and successor Shaikh Abul Fath Hidayatullah Sarmast.

Shaikh Abul Fath Sarmast was not inclined towards mysticism in his early years, and for this reason perhaps he could not be initiated into spiritual training by his father. However, after his father's death Shaikh Zahur Haji Hamid Husur, a Khalifah of Shaikh Qazin Shattari, trained him in the Shattari spiritual discipline and handed over to him the Khirga and the Khilafat which his father had left for him. Shaikh Abul Fath thus took up the masnad 4 (seat) of his father.

1. Ibid., f. 102, 129.
2. Ibid., 139, Akhbar-ul-Akhvar, 258.
3. Ibid., 141 and 142.
Shaikh Abul Fath thus started looking after the Shattari mystic discipline in Bengal. When Humayun conquered Bengal in 946 A.H./1539 A.D.; he paid a visit to him. The Emperor seems to have been impressed by his spiritual questions. On the eve of his departure from Bengal, Humayun requested the Shaikh to accompany him to Agra. The Shaikh set out with him, but when the imperial forces were returning to the capital Sher Shah attacked them. The Shaikh could not proceed further and stayed at Hajipur (in Bihar). He was so fascinated by this place that he decided to settle there. He planted and popularized the Shattari order at Hajipur. Shaikh Daulat son of Shaikh Abdul Malik Maneri received much benefit from his company.

After his death the Shaikh was succeeded by his son Shaikh Ruknuddin who worked for the growth of the silsilah like his father.

Shaikh Ruknuddin's chief Khalifah was a native of Kalpi, Shaikh Kamaluddin Sulaiman Qureshi. But after

receiving Khilafat he went to Mandu and settled there. He was the teacher of Muhammad Ghausi Shattari, the author of *Gulzar-i-Abrar*. He died in 973 A.H./1566 A.D. and was buried at Mandu.

Shaikh Zahur Haji Hamid Husur (835-930 A.H./1431-1523 A.D.) was the son of Maulana Zahir Ghaznavi, who had migrated from Ghazni to India and had settled at Gwalior. After completing his formal education Shaikh Zahur felt much attracted towards mystic discipline, and left his home in search of a spiritual guide. Ultimately he reached Bengal, where he met Shaikh Qazin Shattari and became his disciple. Spending several years at the feet of his preceptor he received Khirga and Khilafat from him. After the death of he remained with Shaikh Abul Fath Hidayatullah and received Khilafat from him also.

Later he went on Haj pilgrimage and spent forty years at the mausoleum of the Prophet. On his return from Hejaz he went to Gwalior. Here Shaikh Bahlul and his younger brother Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus joined the circle of his

1. Shaikh Kamaluddin was a friend of the author's father, Hasan ibn Musa Shattari. When Ghausi attained the age of five years. He was entrusted to Shaikh Kamaluddin for learning the *Quran*. Ghausi remained with him for two years, see *Ibid.*, 197.

disciples. After a brief stay at Gwalior, Shaikh Zahur left for Bihar with Shaikh Bahlul and Shaikh Mohd. Ghaus. Shaikh Muhammad was left at Chunar (a hilly region in U.P.) to busy himself in spiritual exercises, but Bahlul accompanied the Shaikh up to Bihar and returned afterwards. Shaikh Haji Hamid Husur died in 930 A.H./1523 A.D. Among his disciples the names of Shaikh Bahlul and Shaikh Muhammad only are known to us. They became the chief exponent of the Shattari silsilah.

Shaikh Bahlul, also known as Fariduddin Ahmad, had the title of Jahangir. He was a distinguished Shattari saint. Maulana Jamaluddin and Maulana Muhammad Faragh Ali, were his noted disciples. He freely associated with Humayun and took interest in political matters also. Owing to his intervention in political affairs he was murdered in Agra at the instance of Mirza Hindal. His coffin was taken to Bayana where he was buried.

Shaikh Muhammad (906-970 A.H./1500-1663 A.D.) popularly known as Ghaus-ul-Auliya, was a great scholar and very prominent Shattari saint. The Shattari silsilah reached the

1. Ibid., ff. 140, 141.
2. Gulzar-i-Abrar, f. ff 149a & b.
highest water mark of its popularity under his inspiring leadership. It is said that "he nursed the Shâṭṭāri babe and brought it too manhood." He enhanced the prestige and scope of the silsilah by writing several books on the mystic thought and practices, e.g., Jawahir-i-Khamsa Kalid-i-Makhzan Kunz-ut-Tawhid and Bahr-ul-Hayat etc. His piety and scholarship brought to him a large number of disciples from various parts of Hindustan. Like his brother he was on good terms with the Mughal rulers, Babur and Humayun. After the defeat of Humayun by Sher Shah, he went to Gujarat and remained there for sometimes. When the Mughals re-established their authority he returned to Gwalior.

Some of his important disciples who flourished at various places are: Shaikh Mubarak (Bangar Mau), Shaikh Nuruddin (Agra), Shaikh Akmaluddin (Burhanpur) Shaikh Sadruddin (Baroda), Muhammad Ashiq (Sambhal), Maulana Abdul Fattah Nagori (Ajmer), Shaikh Muhammad Jamali (Sarhind) Shaikh Jalal Wasil (Kalpi), Shaikh Jeeo (Bidauli) Shaikh Shaamsuddin Shirazi (Bijapur) Shaikh Ahmad Mutwakkil (Ujjain) Shaikh Ali Sher Bengali (Ahmadabad) Shaikh Manjhan of Lakhnauti (Sarangpur).

2. Ibid., ff. 192-193.
4. see Gulzar-i-Abrar, 186 and 187.
Of these disciples, Shaikh Ali Sher Bengali and Shah Manjhan of Lakhnauti deserve mention here.

**Shaikh Ali Sher:**

Shaikh Ali Sher of Bengal was a descendant of Nurul Huda, a distinguished disciple of Shaikh Jalaluddin Mujarrad of Sylhet. He was one of the accomplished scholars of his time. Forced by an inner urge for mystic training he left his native land in search of a spiritual guide and wandered from place to place. During the course of his search he came across a large number of saints but none could attract him. Finally he came to Delhi, where he met Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus at Kilokhar and was captivated by his spiritual personality. He spent some years at the Khanqah of the Shaikh and joined the circle of his disciples. When, at the fall of Humayun Shaikh Mohammad Ghaus migrated to Gujarat. Shaikh Ali also followed him but at Bharoach he was directed by the Shaikh to go and settle at Ahmadabad. Apart from his devotion to the work of the silsilah, he contributed to the Shattari

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1. Nurul Huda is said to be a descendant of Abul Karamat, who was the Khalifah of Shaikh Jalaluddin Mujarrad. When Gaur Gobind, the Hindu raja of Sylhet was defeated Shaikh Jalaluddin entrusted Sylhet to the charge of Nurul Huda. *Gulzar-i-Abrar*, ff. 198 and 76.

2. For his account see supra 14-16.


4. The obvious reason for leaving Delhi by Saiyyid Muhammad Ghaus was the inimical attitude of Sher Shah. Badayuni writes that after ousting Humayun the Afghan ruler gave much trouble to Muhammad Ghaus. See *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarih*, Vol. III (Eng. tr.) 8.
mystic literature. He is said to have prepared an extract of Jawahir-i-Khamsa and wrote exhaustive commentary on the Nuzhat-ul-Arwah, the Jam-i-Jahan Numa, and a biography of Imam Ghazali. He died and was buried at Ahmadabad in 970/1562 A.D.

**SHAH MANJHAN:**

Shah Manjhan, an eminent scholar and a notable saint of the Shattari silsilah, was born at Lakhnauti in circa 921 A.H./1512 A.D. He was a son of Abdullah and grandson of Qazi Khairuddin. His great grandfather Qazi Tajuddin Nahvi had come from Balkh to India and settled at Lakhnauti. Qazi Samauddin Dehlavi, who is said to be a descendant of the Prophet, was his maternal grandfather. Shaikh Ahmadi, another renowned scholar of the time was his teacher.

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2. Ibid., f. 199.
3. According to Ghausi (*Gulzar-i-Abrar*, f.240), he died in 1001 A.H./1592 A.D. at the age of eighty, calculated on this basis he might have born in circa 1512 A.D.
4. Ibid., f. 239.
5. It is difficult to determine the date of his arrival at Lakhnauti, only this much is known from his account that he was a contemporary of Qazi Shihabuddin Daulatabadi and Qazi Fakhruddin. It might be inferred on this basis that he might have come to Bengal in the beginning of the 16th century.
6. Qazi Samauddin, entitled "Qutlugh Khan" was a reputed jurist of his time. See *Gulzar-i-Abrar*, f. 239.
Shah Manjhan was initiated into mystic discipline by Saiyyid Tajuddin Bukhari but later he joined the Khangah of Saiyyid Muhammad Ghaus and received khilafat from him. When Sher Shah Sur captured the fort of Raisin, then known as Islamabad, Shah Manjhan came to him and received the post of Shaikh-ul Islam. Later he went to and established a madrasah at Sarangpur (in Malwa) and spent the rest of his life giving instructions in religious sciences to people who thronged in large numbers in his khangah. He also wrote several books on different subjects. He died at Ashta in circa 1692 A.D.

SHAIKH YUSUF:

Shaikh Yusuf was a great scholar and was so fond of acquiring knowledge that he left his home town in search of scholars of repute and wandered from place to place. When he reached Gujarat, he met Shaikh Wajihuddin Alavi, a

1. Ibid., f. 239.
2. Ibid., f. 240. 
3. A town in Dewa state (M.P.), is situated on the east bank of the Kali Sind, in 23°34'N and 76°29'E, between Ujjain and Bhopal. Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol.XXII 95.
4. Gulzar-i-Abrar, f. 240. Ashta, headquarters of the Western distt. of Bhopal, is situated in 23°1'N and 76°46'E, on the east bank of Parbati between Indore and Bhopal. Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol.VI, 10-11. See also Survey of India, Sheet No. E.F. 43, Sajpur mountains.
Shattari saint and an eminent scholar of his day. He spent sometime at his feet and acquired knowledge in religious as well as secular sciences. Later on he settled at Burhanpur and married the daughter of a local physician, Shaikh Salim. He is said to have taught and trained a number of scholars of renown, one of them being Shaikh Pir Muhammad Halim. He was buried at Burhanpur.

SHA IKH FAZLU LLAH

Shaikh Fazlullah was a native of Bengal. He was a contemporary and companion of the famous Shattari saints Shaikh Bahlul. No details about his life or work in Bengal are available in contemporary or semi-contemporary records.

Q ADIR I Y A ORDER

The Qadiriya order is known after Shaikh Muhiuddin Abdul Qadir Jilani (1077-1166 A.D.), a very distinguished scholar.

2. Ibid., f. 232.
3. Muhammad Ghausi Shattari has cited a story on the authority of Shaikh Bahlul, which says "The two brothers and Shaikh Fazlullah had gone to the hilly regions of Chunar for spiritual training, where some local people told them about a dervesh who in side a cave was busy in devotion for the last two hundred years. They with great courage went into the cave and met that dervesh who became happy and gave them titles, Jahangir to Bahlul, Ghaus.

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figure in the history of Islamic mysticism. He had a very large number of disciples who established the silsilah in different regions, of Iraq, Persia and Afghanistan. The Shaikh's persuasive powers were tremendous and the magnetism of his personality was such that whoever came into contact with him, felt the impact of his personality. He was very strict in the matter of shari'at laws and his collection of sermons — Ghunyat-ut-Talibin and Futuh-ul-Ghaib — reveal him as a very sincere follower of the shari'at in letter and spirit.

It is not exactly known how and when the Qadiriya silsilah was brought to India. The earliest saint of this order in India was probably Shaikh Muhammad Al-Husaini Alachi, a descendant of Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani, who came and settled at Uchch during the 15th century. His son, Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (862-940/1457-1633 A.D.) continued the traditions of the Qadiriya silsilah at Uchch.

(Continued from the previous page)

to Shaikh Muhammad and Ablullah to Shaikh Fazlullah." See Gulzar-i-Abrar, ff. 149 and 150.


2. Ibid., pp. 208-209.
The Qadiriya silsilah was introduced in Bengal by Shah Allah Bakhsh. He was born at Uchch, but later his family shifted to and settled at Lahore. From Lahore he came to Bengal and settled there. But we have no information about his activities in Bengal. He died in 994 A.H./1585 A.D.

Shah Qumais son of Saiyyid Abil Hayat, was another well-known saint of the Qadiriya Order, who lived and worked in Bengal during the 16th century. He traced his spiritual descent from Saiyyid Abdur Razzaq, the famous Qadiriya saint of Uchch. From Bengal he went to Salorah (in Khizrrabad) where a large number of people joined his discipline. Shaikh Abdur Razzaq, popularly known as Shaikh Bahlol, was one of his eminent disciples. Shah Qumais later returned to Bengal where he breathed his last in 992 A.H./1584 A.D., but his coffin was carried to Salorah and buried there.

THE QALANDARIYA ORDER:

The origin of the Qalandariya Order is still a matter of speculation. Perhaps Shah Khizr was the first saint of

1. Ibid., p. 212.
3. Ibid., p. 214.
4. There is a difference of opinion about the place and time of its origin. Some hold that a Spanish Arab of

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this order who visited India in the time of Iltutmish (1210-1236 A.D.). He met Shaikh Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki and spent sometme with him. Later he visited Jaunpur and Sarharpur and enrolled disciples. After a brief stay and Sarharpur he left for Asia Minor, but the silsilah continued to flourish in India.

Shaikh Sharafuddin Bu Ali Qalandar and Maulana Hamid Qalandar were the other distinguished saints of the Qalandariya order. They lived and worked during the fourteenth century, the former at Panipat and the later in Delhi.

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Egypt, Yusuf or Mufti Jamaluddin of Persia were its earliest founders. Maqrizi is of the view that it was first organized in Damascus. Franz Babinger says that it first developed in Central Asia. For details see, Ency. of Islam, Vol. III, 676-677.

1. Akhbar-ul Akhvar, 56.

2. He was a good scholar of Persian and a contemporary of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya. He spent twenty years at Delhi, simultaneously discharging the duties of a teacher and mufti. Attracted by Divine grace he renounced all worldly concerns and became a qalandar. For biographical references, see, Akhbar-ul Akhvar, 135-136; Gulzar-i-Abrar, f. 59.

3. He was son of Tajuddin and a disciple of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya. Khair-ul Majalis, malfuz of Shaikh Nasiruddin Chiragh-i-Delhi, was compiled by him. When he was still a boy, Shaikh Nizamuddin had predicted that he would be a qalandar, and ultimately the saying of his mentor proved true. For his brief notices: See Khair-ul Majalis (ed. Prof. K.A. Nizami) A.M.U. Aligarh). Sivar-ul-Arifin, f. 107. Akhbar-ul Akhvar, 116-119.
Some of the characteristic features of the Qalandariya order which distinguish it from other orders may be mentioned here. The members of this order usually shaved their heads, eye-brows, beards and moustaches. They did not wear the traditional khirga, but used to wrap their body with blanket and put on a small loin cloth. Metal ring and armlet were also used by them. They did not settle at a place but wandered from place to place, usually with cats and monkeys. They lived a care free life, ignoring shari'at laws and even the norms of society. Unlike the mystics of other silsilahs the Qalandariya saints were aggressive in their dealings and believed in violence, whenever it suited their objectives. They were generally insolent and irregular in their behaviour.

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4. According to Akhbar-ul Akhyar, 135, when the moustache of Sharafuddin Bi Ali Qalandar had grown long and were found against the Sharie, Maulana Ziauddin Sunnami took a pair of scissors and cut his moustache.
5. Fawa'id-ul Faid, 5,48; Khair-ul Majalis, 130-131, Akhbar-ul Akhyar, 119, 149.
Whether any of the disciples of Shaikh Sharafuddin or Maulana Hamid Qalandar reached Bengal and popularized this order is not known. The mystic literature of the period makes no reference to the organization of the Qalandariya order in Bengal. Some stray references about them in the Persian chronicles, however, indicate that a considerable number of Qalandariya saints were present in Bengal during the 13th and the 14th centuries, and that they had close contact with the Sultans of the day. Under Tughril, the rebellious governor of Sultan Balban, the Qalandars became very influential at Lakhnauti. Some of them even held important posts. Tughril is said to have distributed large quantity of gold among the Qalandars. After defeating Tughril, Balban suppressed the Qalandars and killed many of them. But by the middle of the fourteenth century they appear to have reorganized themselves, because Sultan Firuz Shah is reported to have used the Bengali

galandars as his spies against Shamsuddin Ilyas Shah.

THE MADARI SILSILAH:

The Madari silsilah was established in India in the beginning of the 15th century A.D. by Shaikh Badiuddin, one of the disciples of Shaikh Muhammad Taifur of Syria.

The saints of the Madari order, who had firm faith in the theory of "Wahdat-ul-Wujud", generally discarded the formal aspects of religion. One of the basic principles of their spiritual training was that they laid emphasis on Tawakkul (contentment) and Tark-i Dunya (renunciation of the world).

1. During 1353-54 A.D. Sultan Firuz Shah Tughluq marched against Ilyas Shah of Lakhnauti and besieged the fort of Ekdala. The siege continued for a long time but Ilyas did not come out. For luring Ilyas Shah out of the fortress, Sultan Firuz retraced his steps towards Pandua and employed a number of qalandars to spread rumours in the Bengali camp, that the besieging army was in acute distress and marching away. Thus being assured by the qalandars, Ilyas Shah threw off all cautions and chased the imperial troops with his entire army. Sultan Firuz in anticipation of such an attack from the enemy was fully prepared, and inflicted crushing defeat on Ilyas Shah. Afif, Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi, (ed. Maulvi Wilayat Husain), 113-115. See also Sarkar, History of Bengal, Vol.II, 107-109. The Delhi Sultanate, Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan Series, 1960, 198-199.

2. See Gulzar-i-Abrar, f. 43.

3. Ibid., f. 43.
Shaikh Badiuddin (715-840 A.H./1315-1436 A.D.), popularly known as Shah Madar, was the son of Abu Ishaq of Syria, and traced his genealogy to the Prophet Moses and his brother Harun. He was a good scholar and is said to have received instruction in religious sciences. He committed to memory the Holy Bible (Injil) and studied other Divine scriptures also. Attracted by the mystic discipline he underwent severe austerities for twelve years and achieved the stage of Samadiyat. After completing his spiritual training he left Syria for Mecca and met there the Indian mystic Saiyyid Ashraf Jahangir Simnani, who advised him to proceed to India and work there. Thus Shaikh Badiuddin came to India and settled at Makanpur (in Kanpur District). Before reaching Makanpur he visited Ajmer, Kalpi, Jaunpur and Lucknow. It is said that during his sojourn at Jaunpur he became very popular among the nobles and the masses. People from far and near came to seek his guidance.

Shaikh Muiz Balkhi, a disciple of Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri, travelled all the way from Bihar to Jaunpur and

1. Mir'at-i Madari (MS.) ff. 3, 4, 38 and 41. According to Akhbar-ul Akhvar, 170, he was fifth or sixth descendant of the Prophet.


studied *Awarif-ul-Maarif* with him. Shaikh Badiuddin had several disciples from various parts of Hindustan. He died at Makanpur in 1436 A.D. and was buried there. His only disciple from Bengal, so far known to us, was Shah Aulia. He worked and died at Gaur.

Nevertheless, the association of Shah Madar's name with the places, Madaripur, Madarbari and Madarsa and certain customs like, the lifting of bamboo of Madar in memory of Shah Madar and naming fish after madari, bear testimony to the Madari influence in Bengal.

SAINTS WHO DID NOT BELONG TO ANY SILSILAH

RAUSHAN ARA:

She was probably the first woman saint who lived and worked in Bengal during the first half of the 14th century A.D.

5. A sub-division of the same name in Faridpur district of East Bengal.
6. These are situated in the district of Chittagong.
Unfortunately authentic details of her life are not available. According to some local traditions, she was born in a Saiyyid family at Mecca. She came to Delhi along with her brother and a notable saint Shaikh Shah Hasan during the reign of Ghiyasuddin Tugluq (1320-1325 A.D.). She stayed for sometime at Delhi and then proceeded to Bengal with her brother and settled at Tragunia. She died in 1342 A.D. at the age of 64 and was buried at Kalhulia a village in the Bashirahat sub-division of 24 Parganas in West Bengal.

SHAikh TAJ:

Shaikh Taj was a leading mystic of his time. He was born at Fathbad and was a contemporary of Sultan Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah (1389-1410 A.D.). Later he migrated to and settled at Mandu. Many saints of that time received guidance from Shaikh Taj.

1. For her life and work see M.A. Rahim, Social and Cultural History of Bengal, 126.

2. Fathbad has been identified with the modern town of Faridpur (in E. Bengal) see Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, Vol. I, 1953, 407-408.

him and revered him for his spiritual accomplishment. He laid stress on tawakkul (contentment) and/sacrifice) in his teaching.

SHAH ISMAIL GHAZI:

Shah Ismail Ghazi was another warrior saint of Bengal. He hailed from Arabia and was a descendant of the Prophet. He came to and settled at Gaur in the reign of Sultan Ruknuddin Barbak Shah (1459-1474 A.D.). The Sultan in those days was busy in constructing a dam across the river Jhatiya Bahitya. All the engineers and craftsmen who were engaged for seven years, could not complete the dam. When Ismail Ghazi came to know about this, he approached and suggested a scheme to the Sultan for this purpose, which proved successful. Barbak Shah was very much pleased with him and offered a respectable post in the army.

Ismail's first campaign was against Gajpati, the Raja of Orissa. He defeated the Raja and recovered from him the

3. Ibid., 226. Sarkar has written it 'Chutiaputia', it flows at some distance to the east of Gaur. See History of Bengal, Vol. II, 133.
fort of Madaran or Mandaran. His second expedition was against Kameswar, the Raja of Kamrup. The Raja was defeated and compelled to render his allegiance to the Sultan. Bhandasi Rai, an officer of the Sultan at Ghoraghat, became envious of the achievement and popularity of Ismail, and sent a fictitious report about his collusion with the Raja of Kamrup to the Sultan. Relying on the report of his Hindu officer, Barbak Shah immediately ordered for Ismail's execution. Ismail did not defend himself and was executed in 878 A.H./1474 A.D.

There are two tombs of Shah Ismail Ghazi, one at Kantadaur (in Rangpur) and the other at Mandaran (in Jahanabad, West of Hugli), where Hindus and Muslims offer their homage to him.

1. Ibid., 228-230. See also History of Bengal, Vol. II, 134,148.

2. In the beginning of his encounter with the Raja, Ismail was about to suffer a defeat, but by prayer and spiritual power he overcame the situation and inflicted a crushing defeat on him. Kameswar became so much impressed by his performance and saintly character that he embraced Islam. His devotion for Ismail ran to such an extent that he chewed a used pan (betel leaf) from his mouth. JASB, 1874, No.3, 230-234. See also Sarkar, History of Bengal, Vol. II, 134.


Shah Badruddin Badr-i-Álam Zahidi, popularly known as Pir Badr, was one of the eminent saints who worked at and enjoyed great reputation in Bengal. His ancestors are reported to have come from Arabia and settled at Meerut in U.P. Pir Badr received his education and spiritual training at the hands of his father Shaikh Fakhruddin II and the sufiRAWARDI saint Saiyyid Jalaluddin Bukhari. When he acquired perfection in the exoteric and esoteric sciences, his father asked him to work in Bengal and Bihar. Thus Pir Badr went to and established his Khangah at Chittagong and propagated the Muslim tenets there. His Khangah which is also known as his Dargah at Chittagong is considered as the palladium of the city and is visited by the people of all faiths. Later he toured some other parts of Bengal also to popularize the mystic discipline. It is said that during his itinerary in East Bengal he converted a large number of Hindu sailors


2. *Ibid.*, 68. The local traditions hold that when Pir Badr reached Chittagong it was infested with evil spirits, but he drove them out by his spiritual power. See, *East Bengal District Gazetteers*, Chittagong 1908, 58.

to Islam. The Bengalis, Muslim as well as the Hindus, hold him in great respect. The Hindu and Muslim sailors of Bengal, while putting to sea, utter the invocations, "Amra achi polupan, Gaji ache nikahman, sher Ganga darya, Panch Pir, Badr Badr" and "Allah, Nabi, Panch Pir Badr Badr."

The Shah was popular in West Bengal also. A mausoleum (dargah) situated at Kalna (in Bardawan District) is known as Badr Sahib's dargah, where Hindus and Muslims come alike and offer clay horses, fruits, sweets and flowers to seek his blessings.

From Bengal Pir Badr went to Bihar at the invitation of Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Muneri and finally settled there. He died and was buried in Bihar in 844/1440 A.D. His tomb in Bihar is popular as Choti Dargah.

Khan Jahan: Khan Jahan, popularly known as Khan Jahan Ali was one of the warrior saints of Bengal. He flourished towards

2. Ibid., 868, and East Bengal District Gazetteers, Chittagong 1908, 58.
5. He is also known as Khwaja Ali by the local people. See Distt. Gazetteers Khulna, Calcutta, 1908, 26.
the middle of the 15th century A.D. The victory of Jessore and Khulna is said to have been achieved by him. He played a very important role in the cultural life of the region. He settled at Bagerhat (in the Khulna district) and led an ascetic's life. He had large number of followers, the chief among them being Shaikh Muhammad Tahir, also known as Pir Ali.

Khan Jahan died in 863 A.H./1459 A.D. and was buried at Bagerhat. His mausoleum is still held in esteem by the people.

1. He was probably in the service of Nasiruddin Mahmud Shah (1442-1459 A.D.) and was holding the rank of governor. It appears that he took military campaign to the inaccessible regions of Jessore and Khulna at the instance of Mahmud Shah. See Sarkar, Vol. II, 131.

2. It is situated about 53 miles to the South east of Calcutta in E. Bengal.

3. It is lying on the same plane about 108 miles to the South east of Calcutta.

4. An inscription dated 1458-59 A.D. found at the grave of Khan Jahan, gives the following account about him. "The great Ulugh Khan Jahan (Peace and blessings be on him), a helpless slave who is needy of the mercy and blessings of (God) the nourisher of both the worlds, who is a lover of the descendants of the Prophet, who is sincere towards the pious scholars, who is enemy of the non-believers and who is helper of the Islam and the Muslims. See, Dani, *Muslim Inscription of Bengal*, JASB, Vol. 52, 1957, No. 28, 19.


6. He was originally a Brahmin and had embraced Islam at the hand of Khan Jahan. See, JASB, 1867, 118.

Maulana Shah Muazzam Danishmand:

Maulana Shah Muazzam Danishmand, popularly known as Maulana Shah Daulah, was an important spiritual figure of Bengal. According to a local tradition, he was a descendant of the Abbasid Caliph Harun al-Rashid. He came from Baghdad and settled at Bagha (in Rajshahi district, East Bengal) during the time of Nasiruddin Nusrat Shah (1519-1532 A.D.).

The king and the nobles had great respect for him. An inscription dated 930 A.H./1532-33 A.D. shows that Sultan Nusrat Shah had built a mosque in his honour. He died and was buried at Bagha. We do not know much about the contribution of Maulana Daulah. His son Maulana Hamid Danishmand and other


2. The king of Gaur had profound respect for him. He requested him to accept some jagir but Shah Daulah declined. It was then offered to his son, Hazrat Hamid Danishmand, who accepted it. See *Ibid.*, 110.

3. Allah Baksh Barkhurdar Lashkari, a local noble, was so impressed by his ancestral background and spiritual attainments that he gave his daughter in marriage to him. This social bond made him settle permanently at Bagha. His descendants are still traceable at this place. *Ibid.*, III.


5. The date and place of his death has not been given. His matrimonial relations and the accounts of his descendants who flourished at Bagha, however, suggests that he lies buried there.
descendants were good scholars and had established madrasahs for the promotion of learning.

SHAIKH BAHRAM SAQQA:

Shaikh Bahram Saqqa, a learned poet, was one of the disciples of Shaikh Haji Muhammad Khubashani of Nishapur. He gave himself to severer austerities and became a devoted sufī. He was of Turkish origin and belonged to the tribe of Bayat. Perhaps he first came to Agra during the reign of Akbar. He stayed there for sometime and earned reputation as a mystic as well as a poet. It is said that during his

1. Abdul Latif, a traveller, who visited Bengal in 1609 reports that he met a descendant of Maulana Shah Daulah who looked after a madrasah, where people came from far and near to acquire knowledge. See, Abdul Latif's account (Eng. tr.) by Sir J.N. Sarkar, Bengal Past and Present, 1928, Pt. II, 143-146.


The suffix saqqa to his name was probably due to his distributing of water to the people walking on the street.


6. Badayuni describes him as the author of several diwans (anthologies). He cites some of his verses which reflect his intellect and spiritual attainments.
sojourn at Agra, he could be seen distributing water to the people walking on the streets. He moved from Agra to Burdawan where he attained great fame and the people of Bardawan raised a mausoleum over his grave to preserve his memory.

**SHAIKH ABDAL:**

Shaikh Abdal was an Arab by origin. He came to Gaur during the reign of Husain Shah (899-975 A.H./1493-1519 A.D.), who was so impressed with his piety that he married his daughter to him. But, due to his wife's suspicion about his character, he became dejected and left Gaur for Ranthambor (in Malwa). According to Muhammad Ghousi Shattari there was a maid servant, Rehana, who had created deep impression on him by her sincerity and devotion. The princess could not


2. *Gulzar-i-Abrar*, f. 124. The Sultan, referred to in the text, has been identified with Alauddin Husain Shah. He was himself an Arab, and had come to Bengal at an early age with his father. The qazi of Chandpura (in Murshidabad district) was so impressed with his noble descent that he married his daughter to him. Husain possessed great wisdom and intelligence. He joined Muzaffar's government as a petty officer, but rose to the rank of minister. After the death of Muzaffar he became the King of Bengal. See, Sarkar, *History of Bengal*, Vol.II, 140-143 and also Stewart, *History of Bengal*, 108-110.
tolerate her husband's affection for Rehana and got her killed. Shocked by this incident he left Gaur and came to Ranthambor. He died at Rathanbhor.

SHAIKH CHANDAN:

Shaikh Chandan, a saint of the sixteenth century belonged to Lahore and was originally a soap dealer. Impelled by the mystic urge he gave up his business and migrated to Burdawan (in West Bengal) where he settled near the tomb of Shaikh Bahram Saqqa. He led a pious life and never asked for charity. It is said that when he was offered any gift by his admirers, he immediately distributed it among the poor.

SHAIKH RAJA BAYABANI:

Shaikh Raja Bayabani was one of the important sufis who flourished at Hazrat Pandua (Firozabad) in the 14th century A.D. Sultan Shamsuddin Ilyas Shah (734-758 A.H./1342-1357 A.D.) had great reverence for him. It is said that

2. For his brief biographical sketch, See, Gulzar-i-Abrar, f. 354.
when he died in 754/1353 A.D., Ilyas was besieged in the fort of Bkdalah by Sultan Firoz Shah (1351-1387 A.D.), of Delhi, but on hearing the news of his death, he came out of the fort in the guise of a mendicant and attended his funeral. The tomb of Bayabani is said to be situated at Balbari about four miles east of Pandua from Adina Mosque.

HAZRAT AKHUND SHERDIL:

Hazrat Akhund Sherdil was another Muslim saint who lived and worked at Hazrat Pandua. He was probably a contemporary of the famous Chishti saint, Shaikh Akhi Sirajuddin Usman. He died and was buried at Pandua in 763 A.H./1361 A.D.

MAULANA ATA:

Maulana Ata was one of the distinguished saints, who, flourished in Bengal during the 14th century A.D. Some inscriptions attached to his Shrine at Gangarampur (in Dinajpur

1. See, Riyaz-us-Salatin, 102, Sarkar, History of Bengal, Vol.II, 110; and also Blochmann, Contributions to the History and Geography of Bengal, A.S.B, 1968, 54.
4. Some of the important inscriptions that have been discovered from his Shrine may be put as follows:-

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District), refer to him as a great sufi and a man of profound learning. According to one of these inscriptions, which is dated 765 A.H./1363 A.D., it appears that Maulana Ata died sometime before 1363 A.D., in the reign of Sultan Sikandar Shah (1357 - 1389 A.D.). His tomb, situated at Gangarampur, was an object of great veneration.

**SHAH SULTAN ANSARI:**

Shah Sultan Ansari was another sufi of Arab origin who made Bengal the centre of his spiritual activities. He came to India towards the close of the 15th century A.D. During the course of his travels in India he stayed for some-time at Multan and Gujarat; but finally proceeded to and settled at Mangalkot, where he devoted himself to the service of Islam. He is lying buried at Mangalkot.

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First inscription, dated 765/1363 A.D., describes him "the pole of the saints, the unequalled among enquirers, the lamp of the truth, law and faith, Maulana Ata." See, JASB, 1872, 104-5; and also, Dani, Muslim Inscriptions of Bengal, JASB, Vol. II, 1957, III:- Second inscription dated 896/1491 A.D. calls him "the well known Makhdum, the pole of the holy men, Maulana Ata Wahid-al-Din." See JASB, 1872, 107 and also 1873, 290. The third inscription which is dated 918/1512, refers to him as "Shaikh of the Shaikhs, Shaikh Ata."

1. A village situated on the banks of the river Kunur in the Katua sub-division of Bardawan District. See, Bardawan District Gazetters, Calcutta, 1910, 200-201.

2. See E.Haq, Range Sufi Prabhaya, 134.
SHAH SAFIUDDIN:

Shah Safiuddin was one of the warrior saints of Bengal who flourished at Chota Pandua (in Hooghly District) in the 14th century A.D. According to local tradition he fought and won victory over the Hindu raja of Pandua; and worked there for the growth of Muslim discipline. He is said to have had a considerable influence in this region. His tomb at Pandua is a spot of big attraction. Both the Hindus and the Muslims visit his grave to seek his spiritual blessings.

MAKHDUM SHAH ABDULLAH GUJARATI:

Shah Abdullah, according to tradition, had come from Gujarat to Bengal in the reign of Sultan Nusrat Shah (1519-1532 A.D.). He settled at Mangalkot and worked there. His tomb is situated at Mangalkot.

SHAH MAHMUD:

Shah Mahmud was another sufi who flourished at Mangalkot. As traditions have it, he waged war with Bikarmajit, the raja


2. See, Banke Sufi Prabhava, 135.
of Mangalkot, and won victory over him. He was a good scholar of Arabic and is said to have worked for the dissemination of Islamic ethics. He lies buried at Arwal.

**MAKHDUM SATYVID SHAH ZAHEERUDDIN:**

Shah Zaheeruddin is said to have flourished in the 16th century A.D. He married in one of the royal families of Gaur and settled at Makhdum Nagar, where he devoted himself to the spread of Muslim discipline. One of the miracles attributed to him is that he knew the cure of all sorts of diseases. The People visit his tomb to seek relief from their ailments.

**PIR BAZARUDDIN:**

Pir Bazaruddin, a notable saint of his time, was a contemporary of Sultan Alauddin Husain Shah (1493-1519 A.D.). He worked as a preacher at Hemtabad in the district of Dinajpur. According to tradition, the local Hindu Raja Mahesh turned hostile towards him; but he sought help from the Sultan which was granted to him and the raja was defeated. His dargah at


2. See, Malley, District Gazetteers Birbhum, Calcutta, 1910, 121.
Hemtabad is venerated by the people.

**SHAH ALI BAGHDADI:**

Tradition connects him with Shah Jalal of Sylhet; but later investigation reveals that he had come to Bengal in 958 A.H./1577 A.D. His Shrine is said to be situated at Mirpur in Dacca.

**SHAIKH JAMAL BAYABANI:**

Probably he lived and worked at Aalapur (in Bengal) during the 16th century A.D. He was well educated and had deep spiritual knowledge.

**SHAH LANGAR:**

He was one of the important saints who had come from outside and worked in Bengal. The tradition says that he was a prince of Baghdad; but he renounced the royal life at the court and came out in search of spiritual knowledge.

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1. See District Gazetteers Dinajpur, 1912-20. Abdul Karim, Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, 115 and M.A. Rahim, Social and Cultural History of Bengal, 129 have misinterpreted him as Pir Badruddin, who was, according to them, a contemporary of Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri and had died in Bihar in 1440 A.H.
2. See Munshi Rahman Ali, Tarikh-i-Dacca, 172.
After wandering through many countries he finally reached and settled at Muazzampur in Dacca. His tomb is situated at Muazzampur Thana Rupganj.

**SHAH NIAMATULLAH:**

He was one of the notable saints, who made Dacca the centre of his spiritual activities. He is lying buried at a place known as Purana Paltan.

**SHAH GADA:**

The shrine of Shah Gada is said to be situated at Mughaltuli between Katra and Jamia-Masjid in the district of Malda. According to two inscriptions, dated 859 A.H./1456 AD and 911 A.H./1605 A.D., which was attached to his dargah, it appears that he might have flourished in the 15th century A.D.

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At Para Shah Mundai in the district of Malda, is situated the grave of Shah Chaitan Lankapati. No information could so far available to throw any light on his life and works.

The accounts of these saints, no doubt, are meagre; but from it can be assessed the extent and nature of the activities of the Muslims saints in Bengal.

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1. See Ibid., 153. The inclusion of Chaitan Lankapati in his name suggests that he might have been a hindu of Lanka (Ceylon); and had embraced Islam either before or after coming to Malda.
CHAPTER IV

SUFI AND THE STATE

When the concept of Islamic government, as outlined by the Prophet and his immediate successors, was relegated to the background and the Khilafat (Caliphate) was changed into melukiyat (monarchy), the religious minded Mussalmans, mystics as well as the scholars, regarded service at the court and association with the rulers as inconsistent with the piety and devotion to Allah.

The Muslim mystic who entered India in the last decade of

1. The Prophet Muhammad was the spiritual as well as the political head of the Muslim community. He discharged legal, religious, political and military functions - all at the same time. After him the Pious Caliphs performed the same functions in accordance with the Quran and the Traditions. The Umayyads, against the wishes of the Companions of the Prophet, changed the system into monarchy and introduced the principle of hereditary succession. Further they set aside the method of shura (consultation) and converted bait-ul-mal (public treasury) into their personal property. They allowed exaction of revenues other than sanctioned by Islam. See, Ibn Athir, Tarikh-i-Kamil (Urdu tr.) Vol. I, 70-76 and Vol. III, 85-86, Hyderabad, 1922, Tarikh-i-Tabri, (Urdu tr.), Vol. II, Pt. I, 75-88, 104-105, Khuda Bakhsh, Essays Indian and Islamic, 26-30, London, 1912 and also P.K. Hitti, History of the Arabs, 139, 182-184.

2. Regarding association with the rulers the Prophet is reported to have said that "whoever came to the door of a king fell into disgrace" and that "the closer a man to the King the remoter he is to God." Professor K.A. Nizami, Early Indo-Muslim Mystics and Their Attitude towards States, 9. (Islamic Culture, 1948-50). Imam Abu Hanifa, one of the leading scholars of Islamic jurisprudence, refused to accept the post of a Qazi at the Court of al-Mansur. Tarikh-i-Tabri, (Urdu tr.), Vol. VII,

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the 12th and the beginning of the 13th century brought these attitude with them. The earliest silsilahs which were organized in India were the Chishti and the Suhrawardi orders. The Firdausi, the Qadiri and the Shattari silsilahs came to India later.

The mystics of these silsilahs had identical views on many problems of religion and ethics, but they differed in their attitude towards the kings and the State.

The saints of the Suhrawardi silsilah in India cultivated a cordial relation with the kings and accepted government posts. They justified their attitude of having

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258-259, Nafis Academy, Karachi, 1968). Abu Said Usman bin Ismail al Hiri has said that "whoever prefers association with the rich to the company of the poor, Allah afflicts him with the death of his heart." Kashf-ul-Mahjub (Urdu tr.) 249, Lahore, 1962. Shaikh Abu Said Tabreizi’s aversion to the king and government officials was so strong that he ordered his servants to remove the earth from those parts of the khanaah where the haib (Chamberlain) of the king had placed his feet. Fawa'id-ul-Ewa’d, 304-305. For attitude of the Early Muslim mystics and scholars towards the authority. See also Goitein, Studies in Islamic History and Institution, 205-208, Leiden, 1966.

contact with the rulers on the ground that they could help the poor. They amassed wealth and claimed that it could not harm them as they knew its antidote.

The outlook of the Shattaris did not differ much from that of the Suhrawardis.

The Chishti saints maintained the tradition of the earliest sufis in their attitude towards the Sultans. They did not generally visit the court and did accept any post.

1. Shaikh Samauddin had defended the Suhrawardi attitude in these words "association with the rulers provided them with opportunities to help the poor." See Ahmad Yadgar, Tarikh-i-Shahi, 48. Another example is about Saiyyid Jalaluddin Bukhari, who explaining the purpose of his visit to the court, once said, that he had gone to the king not for his own sake but to procure money for the marriage of his teacher's daughter. See, Siraj-ul-Hidayah, f.95.

This attitude of the Suhrawardis may be defended by its chief exponent, but in the words of Hazrat Sufyan Suri, it was really a deception of the devil, because it landed many of them into troubles and conflict with the rulers. For his remark see Burhan, April, 1948.

2. Suhrawardi saints did not mind the accumulation of wealth. When Shaikh Bahauddin Zakariya was criticised for his huge wealth by Shaikh Hamiduddin he defended his stand and remarked: "Wealth is like a black dot on a beautiful face, which averts evil effects of glances." See Siraj-ul-'Arifin, ff. 12,13.

3. For details, see Supra.

4. For instance, Shaikh Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki, refused to accept the post of 'Shaikh-ul-Islam' offered by Sultan Iltutmish, See Siraj-ul-'Arifin, f.37. Shaikh Nizamuddin

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or jagirs from the rulers.

However, when some rulers tried to control and direct their activities conflict became inevitable. But generally the Chishti saints did not indulge in politics. From the time of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq, however, a change began to appear in the mystic attitude towards the state. The Sultan believed in "Religion and State being twins" and on that account fiercely combated the mystic concept of Mala'wati (spiritual territories). He forced the

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Auliya took away the Khilafatnama from Qazi Muhuuddin, when he expressed desire to accept the post of a Qazi under Sultan Alauddin Khalji. See, Siyar-ul-Auliya, 257.

1. Baba Farid declined to accept the offer of jagir by Sultan Balban. See Fawa'id-ul-Fu'ad, f.171 and Siyar-ul-Auliya, 79-80.

Similarly, Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya did not accept the offer of some villages and gardens by Alauddin Khalji, and advised his disciples to abstain from such things. See Fawa'id-ul-Fu'ad, 170-171.

2. For instance, the conflict between Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya and Sultan Mubarak Khalji occurred only when the latter compelled the Shaikh to attend the court. See Siyar-ul-Auliya (Urdu tr.) 133-134, Siyar-ul-Arifin, ff. 98a-100a, and Barani, 396. His differences with Sultan Ghiyasuddin Tughluq arose, when the latter asked him to reimburse the money which Khusrau Khan had given to him. See Siyar-ul-Arifin, f.108b and Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi, 96-97.
mystics of the Chishti order to take up government service and work in different regions of the country according to his instructions. This attitude dealt a death blow to the central organization of the Chishti silsilah and after Shaikh Nasiruddin Chiragh of Delhi the traditions of the early Chishti saints were relegated to the background. The saints who migrated from Delhi to the provincial towns joined hands with the founders of the provincial kingdoms in consolidating their power and in whipping up public opinion in their favour. Shaikh Akhi Siraj, the first important saint of the Chishti order in Bengal, established cordial relations with his contemporary sultan and the nobles and admitted them into his disciples.

His successor Shaikh Alaul Haq also had amicable relations with his contemporary rulers and the nobles. Many of them were among his disciples. Ilyas Shah is reported to have constructed a mosque in his honour. But his successors turned hostile toward him. It is said that because of the Shaikh's huge expenditure on langar (free kitchen) the Sultan

grew suspicious of him and asked him to leave the capital. Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam had aversion to state service, but had cordial relation with the ruler. It is said that when his elder brother Azam Khan saw him doing menial work and carrying firewood, he became aggrieved and advised him to accept a respectable post at the court, but he refused to do so.

His attitude towards the state is reflected in one incident recorded by his disciple, Shaikh Husamuddin Manikpuri: "Once Sultan Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah sent a tray full of various kinds of food to the Shaikh, which he received with his own hands. This attitude of respect shown by Shaikh Nur for the presentation of the Sultan astonished him. The Shaikh, however,

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1. Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, 149. Abdul Karim, Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, 129-130, holds the view that the conflict between the Shaikh and Sultan Sikandar was due to Shaikh Alaul Haque's interference in the state affairs. But this view point lacks proper evidence. Shaikh Alaul Haq's father, his son and other relatives were holding high executive posts under Sikandar Shah. His huge expenditure on the langar and feeding a large number of people mean that he was very popular among the people. The Sultan out of fear and suspicion might have thought that expulsion of Alaul Haq from Pandua would reduce his influence.

2. Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, 158.

felt the disliking of Shaikh Husamuddin and asked him the next day to bring Masabih, and read from it a tradition of the Prophet, saying "whosoever hates his chief hates me; and if one hates me, it means that he hates Allah. He quotes another hadith from Masharic-ul-Anwar in which the Prophet has said, "accept whatever comes to you unasked, eat out of it and give in charity." According to Hazrat Ali, the Shaikh said, "that the sultan has legal and illegal property, whatever he gives, accept, presuming that he gives out of the legal income." The Ulama, argued the Shaikh, hold similar view on acceptance of gifts, for instance, Imam Muhammad, a famous jurist of the 8th century A.D. is reported to have said, "accept the things which you don't know to be illegal." Imam Abu Hanifa (699-766 A.D.) has also expressed

1. It is a book on Traditions and Jurisprudence.


3. It is a famous collection of the sayings of the Prophet by Maulana Raziuddin Hasan Saghani, a great scholar of the 13th century A.D. See, Fawa'id-ul-Fu'ad, 178-181 and also, Professor K.A. Nizami, Religion and Politics in India, 152-154, 263, Masharic-ul-Anwar in Munis-ul-Fugara, f. 147 is wrongly quoted as Mushtaq-ul-Anwar, but it appears to be a mistake of transcription.


5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.
1. This book could not be identified. For reference see ibid., f. 149.
2. Ibid., ff. 149-150.
3. Ibid., f. 157.
5. Maktubat-i-Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam, (letter No. 9), f. 67. See Appendix 'A'.
that Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam entered the political arena and organized public opinion against the Raja. He sought military intervention of Sultan Ibrahim Sharqi, and removed Raja Kans in favour of his son Jadu. Jadu later on embraced Islam. After the accession of Jadu as Sultan Jalaluddin Muhammad, Shaikh Nur Qutbi Alam did not take any interest in the political affairs of the kingdom; though Sultan Jalaluddin had profound respect for and had even become his disciple.

The saints of the Firdausia silsilah could not flourish in Bengal; but two important saints of this order, Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri and Maulana Muzaffar Shams Balkhi, who lived in Bihar, had close contact with the Sultans of Bengal. Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya had spent several years in Bengal as a student of Maulana Sharafuddin Abu Tawwamah. Musaffar Shams Balkhi had spent two years, as a guest of Sultan Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah, while on his way to Haj pilgrimage.


2. He was a great scholar and one of the leading disciples of Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Manari. He lived and worked in Bihar and is said to have exerted considerable influence on his contemporary Sultan, Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah of Bengal (795-813 A.H./1392-1410 A.D.) Maulana Muzaffar had a great fad for travelling. He died probably when on tour, in Aden and was buried there. For his short biographical sketch see, *Maktubat-i-Bist-o-Hasht*, 36-41.

3. For detailed information see, supra.
The attitude of the Firdausi saints towards the kings, their state policies, government services, jagirs and gifts are revealed in the mystic literature produced by and the letters exchanged between the Firdausia saints and their contemporary sultans of Delhi and Bengal.

Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri and his disciple Muzaffar Shams Balkhi had correspondence and maintained amicable relations with their contemporary sultans Muhammad bin Tughluq, Firuz Shah Tughluq, Sikandar Shah and Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah. Some of the relevant extracts of the letters, written by these saints to the Sultans of Delhi and Bengal will be worth quoting here.

Relying to a letter of Muhammad bin Tughluq, in which he had requested Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri to pray for his well being, the Shaikh had thus expressed his feelings, ... "the dear brother, the friend of the faqirs and the indigent ones, Muhammad Shah, may God set a right all his affairs in this world and the next and enable him to become included among the thank givers of God." Shaikh

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4. When he arrived in Bengal the Sultan received him with honour and made arrangement of ships for him and his followers to go to Mecca. See letters No.152 and 153, Maktubat-i-Muzaffar Shams Balkhi (MS.)

1. Maktubat-i-Seh Sadi, letter No.207, Translation taken from Indian History Congress Proceedings, 19th Session, 1956, 211.
Sharafuddin's relation with Firoz Shah Tughluq was also of cordial nature, and the Shaikh had high opinion for the piety, religious approach and the sense of justice of the Sultan. On one occasion, it is said, when he received a complaint from Khwaja Zafar Abdi about the injustice of an officer of Firoz Shah Tughluq, he addressed the Sultan, "Praise be to God for to day on your exalted and benevolent self depends the protection and refuge of the oppressed and the distressed ones". Impressing upon him the importance of justice, he quoted the saying of the Prophet, "one hour spent in dispensation of justice is better than sixty years of prayers and penitences". Shaikh Sharafuddin had exchanged letters with Sultan Sikandar Shah also, but they are said to be lost.

Maulana Muzaffar Shams Balkhi's letters written to Sultan Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah of Bengal are of very significant nature. These letters threw light not only on their


2. The Shaikh had good relation with and had written to Sikandar Shah also; but unfortunately the letters exchanged between them were lost, and we have only reference about it in one of the letters, which Muzaffar Shams Balkhi had written to Sultan Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah. See *Maktubat-i-Muzaffar Shams Balkhi*, letter No. 163.
relation but also unfold the political condition of the time and the state policy of the Muslim rulers, especially on the point of appointing the Hindus on the executive posts. Expressing his disliking for Azam's policy of putting the non-Muslims on the key posts and explaining its insecurity, the Maulana wrote to him, "The Exalted God has said "Ye who believe! take not into your intimacy those outside your ranks" The long and short of the matter is that in commentaries and lexicons they have said that the faithful should not make the unbelievers and strangers their confidents and ministers. If they say that they do not make them their favourites and friends but for the sake of expediency, the reply is that God says that it is not expediency but the cause of trouble and sedition. He says "La Yalunakum Khabalan" (they will not fail to corrupt you) and "La Yaseruna fi fsad-i-Amere Kum" (they will not hesitate or spare themselves in creating troubles for you). Therefore, it is incumbent on us that we should listen to the divine command and cast aside our weak Judgement. God say "Wadduna Ma Anittum" (they may only desire your ruin). i.e. when you make them intimate with your self they will love to involve you in evil deeds. An infidel may be entrusted with some work but he should not be made 'Wali' (chief supervisor or Governor) so that
he may have control over and impose his authority on the Muslims. God says "let not the believers take for friends or helpers unbelievers and neglect God; if any one do that, in nothing will these be help from God except by way of precaution, that ye may guard yourselves from them. There are severe warnings in the Quran, the Hadith and historical works against those who have given authority to the unbelievers over the believers. God grants oppulence and provisions from unexpected sources and He gives deliverance from them." There is an authoritative promise of provisions, victory and prosperity. The vanquished unbelievers with heads hanging downward, exercise their power and authority and administer their lands which belongs to them. But they have also been appointed (executive) officers over the Muslims in the lands of Islam, and they impose their orders on them. Such thing should not happen."

The subsequent events in Bengal leading to the Hindu interregnum of Raja Kans, who after assuming power tried to destroy the Ulama and the Sufis, indicate that the danger

apprehended by Maulana Muzaffar in giving key posts to the non-Muslims, proved true.

Their attitude towards the acceptance of gifts jagir and government post was almost similar to that of the Chishti saints. It is said that when Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri was offered a Bulgarian prayer carpet and a village in Rajgir by Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq. He accepted the prayer carpet but returned the jagir. Maulana Muzaffar Shams Balkhi expressing his view on government service, is reported to have said, "I the poor man have nothing for the service of the king."

1. See Maktubat-i-Sadi, 342-43.
CHAPTER V

MYSTIC IMPACT ON CULTURAL LIFE OF BENGAL

The Muslim mystics of India, particularly those belonging to the early medieval period laid great emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge (ilm) by one entrusted with the duty of enlisting other in the mystic discipline. Ilm (knowledge), ishq (cosmic emotion) and iql (intelligence) were considered essential qualifications for one who looked after the spiritual culture of others. "An illiterate mystic falls prey to the machinations of the devil," Sh Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki told Baba Barid Ganj-i-Shakar. The mystics derived inspiration from the Quran and the traditions of the Prophet in their zeal for acquiring knowledge.

2. The Quran (Az-zumar : 9) says:

"Are those who have knowledge equal with those who have no knowledge."

The Prophet stressing on the need of education is reported to have said:

"To seek knowledge is obligatory on every Muslim man and woman."

Contd......
We have little information regarding the educational accomplishments of the saints who came to Bengal before or during the early phase of its conquest by Ikhtiyaruddin Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khalji. One of the most important scholars who made a very valuable contribution to the Indo-Muslim religions thought in Bengal was Qazi Ruknuddin Samarqandi. He visited Bengal during the time of Ali Mardan Khalji (1210-1213 A.D.). He was an eminent jurist and a renowned sufi. During his short stay in Bengal he learnt and translated Amrit Kund, (a Sanskrit work on Hindu mystic ideology) into Persian and Arabic. The mere fact that Amrit Kund attracted the attention of a Muslim jurist-mystic as early as the thirteenth century shows that the desire to find out common meeting-ground for Islam and Hinduism had become manifest almost simultaneously with the settlement of the Musalmans in Bengal.

(Continued from the previous page)

"Search for knowledge even if it is available in China."

See, Kashf-ul-Mahjub (Urdu), Lahore, 1962, 26-27.

Another distinguished scholar who contributed in the field of learning in Bengal was Maulana Tajuddin Arabi. He established a madrasah at Mahisun. The madrasah became a famous seat of Muslim learning. One of the known products of this institution was Shaikh Yahya, father of the celebrated Firdausi saint of Bihar, Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri.

The other academy was founded at Sonargaon by Shaikh Sharafuddin Abu Tawwamah, an eminent saint and scholar of Bhukara. His academy attracted students from Bengal as well as Bihar. He was the author of a book, *Maqamat*, on mysticism. This book seems to be quite popular in the literary circle of India. The next book which has been ascribed to him is *Nam-i-Haq* on jurisprudence (*fiqh*).

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2. For instance Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri came from Bihar and studied *tafsir* (an interpretation of the Quran), *hadith* (traditions of the Prophet), and *fiqh* (jurisprudence) at his feet in Sonargaon. See *Ibid.*, 539 and *Islamic Culture*, 1953, Vol. I, II, 12

3. An idea about the popularity and demands of *Maqamat* could be had from the letter of Ainuddin Ainul Mulk Abdullah bin Mahru which he had written to Nasiruddin, the Muqti of Lahore. The letter records:

> فلا غدا عبد الرحمن بن مصطفى بن عبد الله بن محروس بن سراج الدين بن نصر الدين بن مКО. فور أضل يبلي الا نانان بن نصر الدين بن مكونة. فور أضلاع يبلي الا نانان بن نصر الدين بن مكونة. فور أضلاع يبلي الا نانان بن نصر الدين بن مكونة. فور أضلاع يبلي الا نانان بن نصر الدين بن مكونة.

Zafar Khan Ghazi, a warrior-saint and contemporary of Sharafuddin Abu Tawamah also established a madrasah at Tribeni for the dissemination of education.

The saints of the Chishti silsilah, as noted above, were very particular about education. They took keen interest in the spread of learning. Almost all the khanqahs which they established had arrangement of education also. Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya's khanqah, where a large number of disciples were trained and sent to various parts of Hindustan, was not only a centre of spiritual training but an important centre of learning as well. Shaikh Akhi Siraj of Bengal, who was an outstanding khalifa of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya and initiator of the Chishti silsilah in Bengal, completed the course of danishmand (‘allim) at his khanqah.

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4. The authorship of this book is disputed. Dr. Saghir Hasan (Islamic Culture, Vol.27, 1963, II) suggested Sharafuddin Abu Tawamah as the author of this book. But a thorough investigation reveals that it was not his work, but was written at his instance by some of his disciples. See Nam-i-Haq, Kanpur edition, 5-6.


In Bengal Shaikh Akhi Siraj founded his khangah on the pattern of his preceptor and took keen interest in the spread of learning. He took with him some books from the library of the great Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya after his death and established what may be called the first library of Islamic mysticism in Bengal. Shaikh Alaul Haq his khalifah was also a great scholar of his age. His khangah at Pandua was a great seat of religious and intellectual life. People from far and wide attracted to his khangah to acquire knowledge in spiritual and Islamic sciences. Some of the best products of his khangah were Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam and Saiyyid Ashraf Jahangir Simnani.

Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam, son and successor of Shaikh Alaul Haq, was very fond of and had impressed upon his disciples the importance of learning. He was a versatile

1. For a reference to the establishment of library see A. Rashid, Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference, 1952, 209.

2. Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, 149.

3. Shaikh Husamuddin Manikpuri is one such example. He was so much attracted by the mystic discipline that against the wishes of his father, he gave up his study and joined the khangah of Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam. But when the Shaikh learnt about this, he advised him to continue his study as well as the spiritual training. Mir'at-ul-Asrar, f.360.
scholar of Persian and Arabic and took deep interest in literature and poetry. Besides he had a good taste of and composed Hindi _duhas_ also. The important contributions of Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam were his _maktubat_ (letters) and two works, _Munis-ul-Fuqara_ and _Anis-ul-Ghuraba_, on the science of mysticism. They provide valuable informations to understand the political, religious and cultural activities of the Musalmans. Nur Qutb Alam is also credited to have maintained a madrasah and a hospital at Pandua.

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1. For a reference to his _duhas_, see, _Maktubat-i-Nur Qutb Alam_, ff. 28 and 61.

2. _Maktubat-i-Nur Qutb Alam_, is a collection of 13 letters, addressed to different persons. They serve as an index to understand the mind and the mood of the Shaikh on various subjects, love of Allah, attitude towards the world, importance of _Shari'at_, observance of rituals and practices. One of these letters contains important political information about the rise of Raja Kans. (Reprint of this _Maktubat_ available in the Department of History, A.M.U. Aligarh).

3. _Munis-ul-Fuqara_ is an excellent treatise on mysticism. It was prepared by the Shaikh to serve as a hand book to his disciples, especially for Shaikh Husamuddin Manikpuri. It contains interesting information on the science and the method of mysticism. (MS. of this work is available in a private library, _Kutubkhana_, Shah Damaariababa, at Khalifa Bagh, Bhagalpur).

4. _Anis-ul-Ghuraba_ is another important work on mystic learning. It is, as appears from its contents, prepared on the pattern of _Munis-ul-Fuqara_. It has valuable instructions for a lover of mystic science. (This MS. is Contd......
Saiyyid Ashraf Jahangir Simnani was a learned Sufi and had deep knowledge of theology and Islamic mysticism. Like the earlier sufis he also laid great emphasis on the acquisition of learning. Highlighting the importance of education, he remarked that "the primary condition for a sufi is to have been an 'alim (learned), if ignorant he would not be aware of the evil." He had left behind a good number of letters (maktubat) and a valuable work on mysticism, *Lataif-i-Ashrafi*. He is also said to have

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available in the library of A.S.B., Calcutta.


2. *Maktubat Ashraf Jahangir Simnani*, as it is known was collected and arranged by Abdul Razzaq. It consisted of 75 letters addressed to different persons. Some of these letters, No. 45, 46, and 47 are very valuable. They contain references to the political and religious condition of the Muslims as well as the influence of the sufis on their contemporary rulers. (MS. of this *Maktubat* is available in the Department of History, A.M.U.).

3. It is a collection of his Malfuzat and was compiled by Haji Gharib Yamani. It contains important information about the Islamic mysticism and theology and deals with the mystic history of various orders, which are known in India. This book was published in 1298 A.H./1880 A.D. by Nusrat-ul-Matabe in Delhi. It is divided in two volumes each has 412 and 432 pages respectively.
compiled a book on the lives of the pious caliphs. The former two are very important, they throw light on the social, political and religious life of the Muslims during that period; and present a true picture of the Sufi movement in India.

Shaikh Husamuddin, a distinguished Khalifah of Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam was a good scholar of Arabic and Persian. His command over Arabic may be gauged from the fact that he could have explained *Hidayat* in the terms of Sufistic theosophy. He wrote *Anis-ul-Ashqain*, a good work on mysticism in Persian. This book is divided into four sections and deals with love, lover and the beloved in a spiritual sense. His *Malfuzat, Rafiq-ul-Arifin*, was another important contribution in the field of mystic literature. This book was compiled by one of his disciples, Farid bin Salar Muhammad bin Mahmud Iraqi. It brings to light the social life and religious approaches of the sufis and had

references to Sultan Sikandar (1357-1392 A.D.) and Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah of Bengal (1389-1409 A.D.), and to some sufis of Bengal, Bihar, Awadh and Dehli. The sons and grandson of Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam who continued the Chishti silsilah in Bengal were all educated, but we have no information about their literary activities.

Inspired by the spiritual activities and literary taste of the Muslim saints, some local Muslim scholars of the fifteenth and the sixteenth century of Bengal wrote religious books on various branches of Islamic learning in Bengali to educate the people and to regularize their lives in accordance with the principles and traditions of Islam. Since the converted Bengali Muslims could neither read nor understand the religious books then available in the Arabic and Persian languages; and were satisfied with the religious tales of their ancestors. They composed books on purely religious, religio-historical, religio-romantic and such other subjects relating to Islam and Muslim heroes. For instances, Shah Muhammad Saghir, a contemporary of Sultan Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah (1389-1409 A.D.) composed the Yusuf-

Zulekha, reflecting the love story of Hazrat Yusuf and Bibi

1. Ibid., 389-90.
2. Dr. E. Haq, Muslim Bengla Sahitya (Urdu Translation), Pakistan Publication, Karachi, 1957, 74, 168 and 179.
3. Ibid., 70-74.
Zulekha as revealed in the Holy Quran. Zainuddin, who flourished in the reign of Sultan Yusuf Shah (1474-1481 A.D.) compiled *Rasul-Vijaya* highlighting the war achievements of the Prophet. Although it has been written in a fanciful way and has little historical value, but it is a very fine piece of Bengali literature. Muzammil, who is said to be a disciple of Badruddin Badr Alam of Bihar, (ob. 1440 A.D.), was a renowned sufi poet of the middle of the fifteenth century. He wrote *Satat Namah* on the science of mysticism to democratize mystic discipline among the people. Afzal Ali was another scholar and sufi poet of the middle ages. He was a son of a Muslim saint, Bangu Faqir and a disciple of Shah Rustam. He composed *Nasihat namah* on Islamic theory in order to acquaint the people with the teachings of the Quran and the traditions of the Prophet. Saiyyid

1. *The Quran, Chapters, XII, XIII, Surah-1, Yusuf.*
2. *Muslim Bangla Sahitya* (Urdu Translation), 75-79
3. Ibid., 76.
4. Ibid., 80-83.
5. Ibid., 83.
6. Ibid., 122.
7. Ibid., 87.
Sultan (1550-1648 A.D.) is also one of the known Muslim scholars of Bengal who has written several books on the Islamic subjects. His most outstanding work is the Nabi-Bangsha. The author begins this work with the creation of the world and concludes it with the birth of the Prophet.

The main motive in preparing this work was to propagate the conception of one God and to popularize the image of the Prophet among the non-Muslims. Shaikh Faizullah, another noted scholar and poet who flourished in the sixteenth century, composed Ghazi-Vijaya to glorify the account of the warrior saint Shah Ismail Ghazi (ob. 1474 A.D.), a general of Sultan Ruknuddin Barbak Shah (1459-1474 A.D.).

His other work is Zainab-Chautis. It is an elegy of thirty-four verses, based on the tragedy of Karbala with special reference to the sorrows of Hazrat Zainab, sister of the martyred Imam Husain. Lastly the name of Daulat Wazir Bahram may be mentioned here. He was a good scholar and a respectable courtier of Sultan Husain Shah (1493-1619 A.D.) of Gaur. His known work is the love epic of

1. Ibid., 160-163, 165-168.
2. Ibid., p 167.
3. Ibid., 101-102.
4. Ibid.
Laile-Majnum. This is a fine piece of Bengali literature and is greatly enjoyed by the Muslims of Bengal.

These contributions by the Muslim scholars not only enriched the Bengali literature and substantially widened the horizon of its linguistic traditions by introducing new words, phrases and idioms of the advanced Arabic and Persian languages, but they also played a significant role in the development of Muslim religion and culture in Bengal. Their works popularized the subjects on Muslim learnings on the one hand and checked the incoming of unislamic ideas in the Muslim society on the other.

1. Ibid., 105.
2. Ibid., 119.
CHAPTER VI

TEACHINGS OF THE SAINTS OF BENGAL

The Muslim saints of India, particularly those belonging to early medieval period, laid great emphasis on the cultivation of cosmic emotion as a means to the development of spiritual personality. They rejected all worldly desires and material pursuits and severed all connections with the government of the day. They considered the shariat as a necessary adjunct for building a personality in consonance with the highest ideals of mystic discipline. Further,

1. For instance, emphasising the love of Allah, Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya is reported to have said, "the highest purpose and the supreme aim of creating mankind is the love of Allah." Siyar-ul-Auliva, 454-55. To define the love of Allah further he says, "that alone is life which is spent by a dervish in meditation of Allah." Fawa'id-ul-Fu'ad, Lahore, 1966, 31.

2. On rejection of the world, Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya, is reported to have remarked, "that one's heart should be free from the attachment of the world." Fawa'id-ul-Fu'ad, 144.

3. On avoiding contact with the state, Baba Farid is said to have advised Sayyidi Maula, "that don't mix with the kings and nobles. Take their visit to your house as calamities. Every dervesh who opens the door of associations to kings and nobles is doomed." Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi, (Sir Saiyyid Edition), 207.

4. Shaikh Nasiruddin Chiragh-i-Dehli, when asked by one of his disciples that some of the sufis are so deeply absorbed in the work of Allah that they do not even offer the prayer (Namaz), is reported to have said that Contd.....
they believed that the highest form of devotion (ta'at) was service of mankind. They interpreted religion in terms of human service and diverted all their energies to the spiritual and moral regeneration and reform of the masses. The main source of their inspiration was the Quran and the

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they should not be followed as an example. He stressed to emulate those who observe the Shariat laws. Khair-ul-Majalis, Edited by Professor K.A. Nizami, 25-26. Explaining the importance of the Shariat laws, Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri has said that the first step in the path of Allah is the observance of the Shariat. Shariat, according to him, is the way to the heart, the soul and the goal of the seeker. Maktubat-i-Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri, Nawal Kishore, Lucknow, 1898, 71-75.

1. Siyar-ul-Auliya, 46, where Shaikh Muinuddin Chishti is reported to have remarked that the highest form of ta'at is "to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and help those in distress." He exhorted his disciples to have "river like generosity, sun like affection and earth like hospitality." See also Fawa'id-ul-Fu'ad, 21, where Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya made a distinction between ta'at-i-lazmi and ta'at-i-mutaffidi.

2. On love of Allah, renunciation of the world and the Shariat, the Quran says:

(a) (Eng.tr.) "those who believe are stronger in love of Allah."

(b) (Eng.tr.) "Remember the name of your Lord and devote yourself with exclusive devotion."

(c) (Eng.tr.) "say thou : if ye are wont to love Allah, then follow me, and Allah shall love you." Quran, III Surat-ul-Imran, 31.
Sunnah (i.e. sayings and doings of the Prophet).

The Muslim mystics who happened to work in Bengal during the early phase continued their work on these fundamental principles.

CONCEPT OF GOD:

The saints of the Chishti silsilah in Bengal made the concept of Wahdat-ul-Wajud (i.e. Whatever, exists

1. The Prophet emphasizing on the love of Allah is reported to said:

(a) 

(Eng. tr.) "Allah make Thy love dearer to me than my own life, my children and cold water."

(b) 

(Eng. tr.) and that "Adore Allah as though thou sawest Him, for if thou dost not see Him, Yet He sees you". See Kashf-ul-Mahjub (Eng. tr.) 329-331.

2. To prepare an account of the teachings of the Muslim saints of Bengal, one has to depend on the work of Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam. He was probably the only saint of Bengal who had left some compositions, namely, (1) Munis-ul-Fugara (MS.), (11) Anis-ul-Ghurbaha (MS.) and letters, entitled Maktubat-i-Nur Qutb Alam (photograph).

objectively as well as subjectively, visible as well as invisible to human minds, the reality is One) the cornerstone of their teachings. They were firm believers in "that there is no God but God, Muhammad is the Prophet of God."

Belief in **Wahdat-ul-Wajud** was simply a mystical expression of God's presence in an all embracing personality, so that He could be pursued and realized by an uninterrupted devotion;

1. Maktubat-i-Nur Qutb Alam, f.56, Anis-ul-Churaba (MS.), ff, 14a, 19 and 19a; Fawaid-ul-Fu'ad, 162, 328 and **also** Maktubat-i-Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri, 5, 72-73 75.

2. For instance, Shaikh Abdulah Ansari, is reported to have said "Allah Thou alone art the Object that I wish" Maktubat-i-Nur Qutb Alam, f.19.

Baba Farid Ganji-i-Shakar, expressing the same feelings for Allah says, "In both, the world Thou alone art the Object that I cherish, I die for Thee and I live for Thee" Khair-ul-Majalis, 224.

Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam writes "there should be no desire and demand except God."

Maktubat-i-Nur Qutb Alam, f. 10.
that the distinction between I and not-I might disappear in the mystic absorption of the human soul in the Absolute.

**LOVE OF GOD:**

Love of Allah was the main theme of mystic sufi exhortation in Bengal. Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam defines the

1. On a mystic's absorption into the Absolute Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam remarks "Absorb yourself with His Being in such a way as Alif ( \( 1 \) ) is hidden within Bism ( \( بسم \) )." Actually Bism should be written as Baism ( \( باسم \) ), concealing the Alif ( \( ُ \) ).

Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri is said to have observed, "When thou lookest through a mirror, thou dost not see the mirror, for thou mergeth into the reflection of thy face, and thou canst say that the mirror has ceased to exist or that it has become that reflection or that the reflection has become the mirror. Such is the vision of Divine Energy in all beings without distinction. This state is called by the sufis, absorption in the Absolute."

Maktubat-i-Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri, 6.
nature, the requisites and the implication of the Divine Love, says that the supreme object of the worshippers should be only Allah. The true lover should not be negligent of Him, otherwise he would himself be neglected by Him. The heart is the Divine sanctuary, where none except Allah should be allowed to be present. The lover ought to be restless owing to separation from God and should long for union with the Beloved (Allah) which is supreme blessing for the lover. He should welcome and bear whatever comes to him from God, blessings or calamities, as gifts from the Beloved. The devotee, says the Shaikh, "should be like a moth who burns to ashes and is unable to utter what he suffered from." This type of love should be the object of a dervesh.


RENUNCIATION OF THE WORLD:

Shaikh Nur Qutb-i-Alam used to say again and again that involvement in material pursuits was detrimental to the development of one's spiritual personality. It was, therefore, necessary to disentangle one's heart from all things other than Allah. He corroborates his view with the Quran which explicitly says "that remember the name of your Lord and devote yourself to Him with exclusive devotion." The Prophet, Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam says, compared the world with a "dead goat" the poet calls it "an old conquette" and the sufis consider it to be a 'traitor' 'Knave', and an object of the "Divine Wrath." It is loved and sought by the fools.

1. Ibid., ff. 45-50, 62, and 71. Munis-ul-Fugara, ff. 103-105, Anis-ul-Ghuraba, ff. 11a, 29a, and 30a. See also, Khair-ul-Majalis, 25.

2. The Quran, Al-Muzammil, Sura 8. This verse of the Quran has been quoted several times by the Shaikh in his letters and books. For reference see, Maktubat- i-Nur Qutb Alam, ff. 1, 45 and 71. Anis-ul-Ghuraba, f. 14a.

3. There is a tradition that once the Prophet was going with some of His companions, he saw a dead goat and asked them, whether they would have it for one dirham (a coin of the time of the Prophet), they replied that they would not. After this the Prophet explained to them, that to Allah the world is even worse than this carrion. See, Maktubat, ff. 32-33.
It does not, however, mean developing ascetic tendencies and rejecting all worldly things. This is enjoined neither by the Qur'an nor by the Prophet. The Shaikh emphatically told his disciples that he did not want them to reject the world completely, rather he wishes that one should live in the world but should not get lost in material pursuits, because it weakens the love of Allah and ruins the piety.

(Continued from the previous page)

4. Ibid., f. 32.
5. Ibid., f. 18, Anis-ul-Ghuraba, ff. 17a, 36a.
6. Maktubat, f. 32.

1. Maktubat-l-Nur Qutb Mam, ff. 9, 41.
   Expressing similar view Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya is reported to have said "rejection of the world does not mean that one should strip himself of his clothes or wear a lion cloth and sit sluggish. Instead it means that one may put on clothes and take food. What comes to him he should accept but not hoard it. He should not entangle his heart in anything. This is what rejection of the world means." Fawaid-ul-Fu'ad, 13-14.

   For views of the earlier sufis on rejection of the world, see, Fawaid-ul-Fu'ad, 17, 94, 121-122, 358 and 379. Maktubat-i-Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri, Nawal Kishore, 1898, 195-216.
RELIANCE IN ALLAH:

Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam exhorted his disciples to develop complete reliance in Allah and used to say "that one should not indulge in formalities and inconveniences in matter of eating and clothing and should eat and wear whatever comes to him lawfully." He quotes a tradition of the Prophet which says "that livelihood should not be the concern of man. The matter of livelihood has been decided by Allah even before conception in the womb of the mother. Livelihood of the sufis, says the Shaikh, comes through their firm conviction in reliance on Allah.

OBSERVANCE OF THE SHARI'AT:

Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam laid great emphasis on the observance of the shari'at in letter as well as spirit. He strictly enjoined his disciples to observe the shari'at laws. He says that it is obligatory on the part of every Muslim to follow the Prophet and quotes the following verse from the Quran, thus "say O! Muhammad, if ye love Allah, 1

3. Ibid., 8, 81.
then follow me and Allah shall love you." This was emphasized in the Khilafat Namahs that he granted to his senior disciples. There was a definite pledge for every disciple which ran as follows: "I do pledge before the Shaikh (or Pir) that I shall withhold my hands, tongue and eyes from what is unlawful; and I shall not cause injury to any one with my hands and tongue and shall not do any work against the shara. And I shall offer prayer punctually and avoid the company of the evil."

SERVICE OF HUMANITY:

Muslim mystics looked upon social service as the supreme aim of their spiritual life and made every effort to create love and affection in the hearts of the people. Shaikh Akhi Siraj and Shaikh Alaul Haq, the immediate

1. Anis-ul-Ghuraba, ff. 14a, 19 and 19a. See also Khair-ul-Majalis, 27.


3. Ibid., f. 71.
predecessors of Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam taught and worked for the welfare of the common people. They had free kitchen (langar) where in they fed the hungry. Their Khangahs were always thronged by people who were in distress and needed their moral support. Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam inculcated the same spirit in the minds of his followers. He is said to have advised his disciples to develop, "sun like generosity, water like hospitality and earth like humility." Further he impressed upon them the need of living in society and bearing the brunt of the people. He also taught pacifism and non-violence to them. It is said that once a stranger came to his khangah and abused him but he patiently listened to him and did not allow any harm to be done to him.

Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam constantly emphasized the need of following meticulously these principles:

1. Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, 82, 149.
2. Munis-ul-Fugara, ff. 49.
3. Akhbar-ul-Akhyar, 159.
4. Ibid.
TAUBAH (Repentance):

According to mystics repentance is the first stage of the spiritual journey of a salik (seeker after God) on the mystic Path. Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam believed that it was necessary for all people whether following the path of shari'ah, tariqat or tariqat to start their mystic journey with the help of taubah, without it no one could make any advance on the mystic path.

He quotes the following verses of the Quran, "Turn to Allah all of You, 0 believers! so that you may be

1. Taubah, literally means repentance, vowing to sin no more. But it has much wider significance in the Holy Quran than its English equivalent repentance. According to the Quran (Sura : An-nisa, verses 17 and 18), repentance implies an actual change in the course of one's life, not the mere utterance of words. The Quran reflects, that repentance does away with the sins. When a man repents, the very course of his life is changed in respect of a particular sin, and the tendency to do that sin is uprooted. But those who continue their evil courses until death over takes them, can not obtain the benefit of repentance. Because there is no time left for to improve themselves. See Muhammad Ali, Eng. tr. and commentary on the Holy Quran, 207.


successful"......and "............O you who believe!  
1 turn to Allah a sincere turning"...... and the sayings  
of the Prophet about tauba" I repent hundred times a day." 
2
Explaining the significance and forms of tauba he  
refers to the practices of the Muslim jurists who generally  
start their works with Taharat (purity). From this the  
Shaikh derives that the above mentioned Taharat, while  
refers to the external purity, there should be internal  
purity as well. And this can be acquired by Tauba. One  
may break his vow but he must not be disheartened, because  
3 Allah is Ghaffar (very forgiving). If a repentant breaks  
his vow and repents again, and continues this practice  
even then he would be forgiven by Allah. One of the attri-  
butes of Allah is that He pardons again and again.  
4
According to Shaikh Abu Ali Daqqaq, there are three  
types of repentance, namely *Tauba, Anabat and Aubah. If

1. Ibid., f. 67.
2. Ibid., ff. 68, 71 and 107.
3. Ibid., f. 68.
4. Ibid., ff. 67-69.
5. His name was Hasan, but was famous as Ustad Abu Ali  
Daqqaq. Muhammad-ad-Daqqaq was his father. Abu Ali was  
one of the leading scholars of his time. He made exten-  
sive tours and met many of his contemporary mystics and  
scholars. Ustad Abul Qasim-al-Qushairi was his son-in-  
law. He died at Nishapur in 540 A.E./1150 A.D. See,  
one repents out of fear and punishment his repentance is called taube. If one returns with the hope of rewards from Allah his repentance is called Anabat, and if one repents out of regard for the command of Allah, it is Aabah.

REQUIREMENTS OF TAUBA:

According to the orthodox theologians, says the Shaikh, there are three important requisities of taube, namely Nadamat (remorse for disobedience), Tark-i-Zillat (abandohment of sin) and ‘Azm (determination not to sin again). For this some appropriate rituals have been recommended.

The advantage of tauba is that it removes the grossness of the heart and keeps it clean from the rust of sin. The Prophet says that sin first creates a black spot

1. Meaning, return penitently to Allah.
2. Meaning, return repentingly to Allah.
4. Ibid., ff. 72 and 73.
5. For instance, Two rakat Namaz (genuflexion), reciting of subhanallah, and Astagfirullah, one day fasting, sadaha (distributing of Alms) Itijad (belief in repentance) Qila-i-Gunah (drawing out from sin), Khauf-i-‘Itab (fear of punishment) and Haja-i-Maghfirat (hope of forgiveness). Ibid., ff. 72 and 73.
6. Ibid., ff. 67 and 71.
on the heart, and then if it is not removed by repentance, it blackens the whole heart.

Therefore, if one does not repent and continues to sin, he is gradually deprived of Divine favour and mercy.

THE MYSTIC PATH AND ITS REQUIREMENTS:

Emphasising on the requirements of the mystic path, says the Shaikh, a disciple should have the supervision of a learned and an experienced Shaikh, otherwise he might be led astray and ruined." One who has not a guide (preceptor), shaitan (devil) would be his guide," says Shaikh Fariduddin Attar.

1. Ibid., f. 71.

2. Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya says that there are seven stages: Irraz, Hijah, Tarazzul, Sulf, Mazid sulf, Qadim Tasalli and Adevat, of losing Divine favour. Fawaid-ul-Fu'ad, 26.

If a lover does an abominable act the Beloved (Allah) turns His face away from him, it is called Irraz. If one does not cease from abominable deeds and draws a curtain to bypass his fault, is called Hijah. If one does not refrain from committing sin and put a sheet in between him and Allah, is known as Tarazzul. If one does not cease even after this Allah deprives him of His grace, it is called Sulf, if one does not change himself at this stage, Allah deprives him of grace and stability, and it is called Mazid-sulf, if one does not repent even after this, he will turn sluggish in his prayers, it is called Qadim-Tasalli.

Contd........
Quoting the following verse from the Quran, "one should always fear Allah and search for wasila," Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam concludes that the word wasila refers to the guide. He also cites tradition of the Prophet and sayings of the eminent saints in support of his view. The Prophet is reported to have said; "if one wishes to have access to Allah, he should adopt the company of the fakirs." The Sufi attitude about this is, "Allah would not have been recognized, had there been no guide." Shaikh Bayazid says; "one should always remain in association with Allah, if it is not possible then he should live with those who live with Allah."

(Continued from the previous page)

finally Allah withdraws all His favours from him and regard him His enemy, it is known as Adavat. See Munis-ul-Fugara, f. 70.

3. Ibid., ff. 76 and 77.


1. Shaikh Hamiduddin is reported to have remarked that "if an ant likes to reach Kaba from Khorasan, it can only do so by sticking to a pigeon's leg, which is coming to and fro from Kaba." See, Ibid., f. 77.

2. Ibid., f. 77.

3. Ibid., f. 76.


5. Ibid., f. 77.
SELECTED OF PRECEPTOR:

Discussing the principles involved in the selection of a preceptor by the novices, the Shaikh recommends that before accepting one as his mentor, one should first ascertain that the mentor is well versed in the knowledge of *shari'at*, *Tariqat* and *Haqiqat*. If he could not do this himself he should seek the help of some responsible Alim who could testify to the knowledge of the mentor.

After selecting an accomplished guide, the disciple should throw himself completely at the will of his master. He should obey him unconditionally and follow his instruction, as if he is a dead body in the hands of a washer. He should venerate his guide more than he respects his teachers and parents, and that he should never criticise him. Further he says that the relation between the disciple and the preceptor should be like that of a patient to a physician. He should conceal nothing from his preceptor.


The practice of changing *sir* (preceptor) is generally condemned. Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya is reported to have advised that disciple should attach himself firmly with one preceptor only.

**SECLUSION:**

There is a difference of opinion regarding the mode of mystic life. Whether a sufi should retire into seclusion and live far away from the people or he should mix with the people. According to a number of sufis the latter mode is superior, while many sufis are in favour of the former. And both of them cite the *Quran* and traditions in support of their views.

The sufis generally hold, says the Shaikh that seclusion is essential for the beginner (*mubtadi*). On the

1. Ibid., f. 80.

2. The sufis who hold the view of having public life quote the following verses of the *Quran*; "Assist each other in goodness and piety."

   "A Muslim (faithful) is that who associates with others and tolerates their troubles."

   "A Muslim should always be kind to others; and there is no use of him, if he has no kindness for, and others for him."

Those who oppose to mix with the people cite this tradition.

Contd......
mystic path. A man's spiritual personality is integrated in the initial stages only through seclusion. There are two kinds of seclusion: Farizat and Fazilat. According to Awarif-ul-Ma'arif the former means seclusion from the vice and the visions, which is obligatory; the latter means to avoid impertinence and the impertinent fellow, it is an act of virtue. The Shaikh also points out the difference between Khilwat and Uzlat. The first refers to the seclusion from others while the Uzlat means to abandon the self and those things which distract from the devotion of Allah.

For attaining success through seclusion, the recluse must have sound knowledge of Shariat, so that he could cautiously discharge the religious obligations and protect himself against the temptations of the devil. The prescribed period for seclusion, as derived from the traditions of the Prophet, is one month or forty days. Shaikh Junaid, a

(Continued from the previous page)

"I reside with my Allah who gives me food and water." See, Ibid., ff. 82 and 83.

3. Ibid., f. 84.

1. Ibid., f. 84.

2. Ibid., f. 84.

3. Ibid., f. 84.

4. He was a renowned sufì and scholar of Baghdad. He died in circa 298 A.H./910 A.D. See, Ency. of Islam (New Edition), 600.
renowned sufi, says that the recluse should select a small
dark room for seclusion, so that he could repudiate all
thoughts of material attachments and exclusively devote
himself to the Zikr of Allah.

Seclusion helps, says the Shaikh as a necessary
adjunct to overcome the external desires and in awakening
the internal senses. By its proper utilization a stage
could be achieved when the recluse sees what his Beloved
(i.e. Allah) shows to him and he hears what He makes him
hear.

Z I K R: (REMEMBRANCE)

Zikr (constant remembrance and recitation of Allah's
name) has been adopted and prescribed by all the saints. It
is believed to be the structure of shari'at, the foundation
of Tariqat and one of the essential principles of Haqiqat,
source of strength and a good companion of the lover of
Allah. Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam always prescribed zikr to his

1. Ibid., ff. 36 and 86.
2. It was in this sense that Shaikh Junaid is claimed
to have been conversing with Allah for thirty years.
See, Ibid., f. 85.
3. Ibid., f. 97.
disciples and referred to the following verses of the 1

Quran and the Tradition of the Prophet to bring home
the disciples the importance of Zikr in the development
of a spiritual personality.

NAFL-I-KHWATIR:

Numerous thoughts enter into the mind of a salik in the way of God. Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam has given four categories of these Khatarat: the inspiration of Allah, Khatir-i-Haggani (which is some sort of knowledge directly communicated by Allah); inspiration of the angles, Khatir-i-Malak (where in the angles inspire sentiments of obedience and warn against the consequences of evil deeds); the sensual thoughts, Khatir-i-Nafs (which instigate sensual desires), and finally Khatir-i-Shaitan (the temptation of the Devil). It is, therefore, necessary says the Shaikh to differentiate among all these thoughts according to the shara, only those ideas are to be observed which are allowed

1. Emphasising on Zikr the Quran says, "Remembrance of Allah gives consolation to the heart" and "one should remember Allah, whether standing, sitting and sleeping." Ibid., f. 97.

2. According to the Prophet Zikr polishes the heart and Allah appreciates those who remember Him. Ibid., ff. 97 and 98.

3. Shaikh Bu Ali is reported to have remarked that Zikr is the Manshur-i-Wilayat, Ibid., f. 97.
by the shear, while others are to be banished. A salik may in the beginning be confronted with these thought, but with the progress in his spiritual effort he overcomes all the difficulties.

INQUISITIVENESS OF THE HEART:

Heart is the central organ of the body and the centre of the spiritual experience. If it is sound, the whole body functions well; if it is defective, the whole body becomes defective. Similarly in the spiritual context, if the heart is affected by the noble spirit, it functions well; but, if it falls prey to the self (nafs) the whole life is ruined. It is, therefore, extremely necessary to make constant enquiry into the changing condition of the heart, whether it is functioning in accordance with the commands of Allah or disobeying His orders. If the functions of the heart are not checked daily, rather every moment, it may ultimately bring humiliation and disgrace. The Prophet is reported to have warned, "examine or judge yourselves, before you are judged or examined." The heart reflects the light of Allah, hence it should be kept pure

1. For detail see Ibid., ff. 103-105.
and clean; and all shades of material objects should be removed.

DISTRESS OF THE HEART AND ITS CURE:

Nothing is more ruinous and injurious, points out, Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam, to the heart than the anxieties that distract and disturb the heart. Various objects dear to the heart, shatter concentration, consequently the heart is robbed of mental peace. The Shaikh has described the important causes which disturb the heart and has recommended its appropriate treatment. Mixing with the people, love of and honour, of family and of relations, fear of death are important factors which create harassment/the heart. For all these says the Shaikh, the treatment is that one should be free from all such thoughts which cause distraction and should depend upon Allah alone. He should constantly remember and surrender himself to the will of Allah, and be absorbed in Him.


2. See Ibid., ff. 112-115.
PROPERTY AND RESIGNATION:

According to Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam faqr means complete reliance in Allah and to rejection of all material propose and supports. A natural corollary of such resignation is contentment. This is the essence of poverty in the mystic terminology which has been appreciated by Allah, and adopted by His prophet.

The Shaikh further explains the meaning and significance of Ta'irid and Tafrid, the former means repudiation of the universe and the latter suggests the repudiation of the self; and seeking union with Allah. The goal of a sufi, therefore, should be to renounce everything other than Allah and cleanse the heart to reflect the glory of Allah.

1. Stressing on complete trust in Allah, Shaikh Abu Said is reported to have said "The mendicants feel contented with the hope in Allah", Ibid., f. 120.
2. Allah enjoins the Prophet to remain in the company of such people. "Have the company of those who remember Allah from morning till the night in the hope of His mercy, Don't try to adorn your world by turning your face from them. And do not follow those whom I have made negligent. Those who serve their own desire will suffer." Ibid., f. 117.
3. The Prophet is reported to have remarked, "Poverty is my pride", Ibid., f. 122.
4. It literally means: divesting of, separation and solitude.
5. The literal meanings of Tafrid are, retiring, leading a solitary life, and asceticism of the sufis.
CHAPTER VII

SUFIS AND THE BHAKTAS

Long before the Muslims arrived there, Buddhism had ceased to be a dominant religious force in Bengal. Brahmanism, with its strict emphasis on caste regulations and the law of Karma, was the dominant religion of Bengal. There were some cults, like Tantric, Sahajays, Natha and Dharma,


2. It was a cult of heterogenous nature, and was common to both Hinduism and Buddhism. It evolved an easier way to achieve salvation through sexo-yogic practice and animal and human sacrifices. It was popular in Bengal during the 12th century A.D. See Das Gupta, Obscure Religious Cults, 20, Sources of Indian Tradition, 330-332. Hinduism and Buddhism, Vol. I, XXXVI and Vol. II, 280, Cultural Heritage of India, Vol. III, 285.

3. It is one of the off shoots of the degraded form of the Tantric Buddhism in Bengal. It was against the formalities and orthodoxy of religion. See J.N. Farquhar, An Outline of the Religious Literature of India, 273. Sources of Indian Tradition, 199. Obscure Religious Cults, 89, Cultural Heritage of India, Vol. IV, 294.

4. It is another cult like Sahajaya. It stresses on sexo-yogic practices for emancipation from the chain of birth and death Cultural Heritage of India, Vol. IV, 280, 288-89.

5. This cult originated out of some relics of decaying Buddhism and popular Hindu practices. It simply stress on the animal sacrifice to win the blessings of the deity. See, Tara Chand, Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, 259.
which were very popular in that region. The question, whether the teachings and behaviour of the Chishti and various other saints exerted any influence on the life and religious thought of the non-Muslim population of Bengal and vice versa during the period under review, is difficult to answer due to the paucity of original material on the subject.

It is, however, clear from all available records that the sufis establish close contact with the masses, Muslims as well as non-Muslims. Very often they established their Khangah at such strategic places, where the people from the city and the villages could easily come. Their simple life and deep humanism attracted common people to their fold, irrespective of caste, colour or creed. This facilitated conversion of people to the Muslim faith.

Some of the contemporary writings reveal that certain sections of the Hindu community welcomed the sufis and even rejoiced at the downfall of the Brahmans. The following passage of Suniya Purana reflects the same trend. "In Jajpur and Maldah sixteen hundred families of Vedic Brahmans mustered strong. Being assembled in groups of ten or twelve

1. It is said to be the sacred book of the followers of Dharma. It was written by Ramai Pandit in the 11th century A.D. It is pointed out that some interpolations were made in this book after the Muslim conquest of Bengal. For details see, D.C. Sen, History of Bengali Language and Literature, Second Edition, University of Calcutta, 1954, 34-37, and also, E.Haq, Muslim Bangla Sahitya (Urdu tr.) 27-28.
they killed the sat Dharmis (Buddhist) who would not pay the religious fees, by uttering incantation and curses. They recited mantras from the Vedas and fire came out of their mouths as they did so. The followers of Sat Dharma trembled with fear at the sight thereof, and prayed to Dharma; for who else could help them in that crisis? The Brahmins began to destroy the creation in the above manner, and acts of great violence were perpetrated on earth. Dharma who resided in Baikuntha was grieved to see all this. He came to the world as a Muhammadan. On his head he wore a black cap, and in hand he held a cross-bow. He mounted a horse and was called Khoda. Niranjana incarnated himself in Bhest (heaven). All the gods being of one mind, were fronsers. Brahma incarnated himself as Muhammad, Visnu as Paigambar, and Siva became Adamfa (Adam). Ganesa came as Ghazi, Kartika as Kazi, Narada became a Sekha (Shaikh) and Indira a Moulana. The Rishis of heaven became Fakirs. The sun, the moon, and the other gods came in the capacity of foot soldiers and began to beat drums. The goddess Chandi incarnated herself as Haya Bibi and Padmavati became Bibi Nur." Though conched in superstitious language; it

throws considerable light on the prevailing attitudes. The following song established beyond doubt that a section of discontented Hindus were convinced that ultimately Islam would prevail: 'The caste distinction will slowly be broken, for behold there is a Muhammadan in a Hindu family.' "Thou art, O Khoda, I know, superior to all others. How I wish to hear the Quran from thy lips. Niranjana transmuted to Allah will confer blessings.

May the enemies of Amin fall under the wrath of Qutb".

Similarly the Bada Janani song has an invocation in the end: "May Pir Paygambara shower his blessings on our heads, and may our formidable enemies fall and die under the wrath of Qutb."

The use of Muslim terminology, Khoda, Sheikha, Maulana, Qazi and Qutb suggests that the Hindus had by now, got some idea of the main concepts of Islamic religion and theology. This communication of Muslim religious concepts to the Hindus of Bengal was made possible by the incessant activity of the Muslim saints.

The career of Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrez as depicted in Seka Subhodya (Shaikh Subhodaya) also confirms the view that the sufis were held in high esteem by the Hindus who ascribed a number of miracles to them. These miracles which relate to all types of people, but mainly lower class people, reveal the impact of Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrizi’s activity on the common man of Bengal. It is difficult to find out from this book the nature and extent of the influence of his mystic thought on contemporary Bengal.

Qazi Ruknuddin Samargandi, who visited Bengal during the rule of Ali Mardan Khalji (1210-1213 A.D.), is said to have converted to Islam, a learned Yogi, Bhojar Brahmin, after a long discussion. He also translated a Yogic work, Amritkund, presented to him by the Yogi.

1. It is a sanskrit work on the life of Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrizi. It is said to be composed in 1205 A.D. by Halayudha Misra, a courtier of Lakshmansena. But the nature of account which it contains about the life of the Shaikh, creates doubt about its authenticity. According to scholars the book is spurious, and was probably prepared to establish a right to the Bais Hazari estates during the preparation of Todar Mal’s rent roll in Akbars time. (See Abid Ali Khan, Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua, 105. Professor A.B.M. Habibullah (The Foundation of Muslim Rule in India, 20) has, however, relied upon this book as a contemporary source of information for the life and activities of Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrizi in Bengal.


Shaikh Jalaluddin Mujarrad who settled in Sylhet in the beginning of the 14th century, is reported to have converted a large number of Hindus to Islam.

Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam of the Chishti silsilah is reported to have converted to Islam. Jadu Sen, later Jalaluddin Muhammad, the son of Raja Kans. Shah Safiuddin (14th century), Shah Ismail Ghazi and Khan Jahan Ali of the fifteenth century worked in Bardawan, Satgaon, Jassore and Khulna and deeply influenced the life of the people in that region.

Krittivas, a poet and author of the fourteenth century is said to have observed, "the Muslim impact in East Bengal increased to such an extent that many Brahmans, including his ancestor, Nara Singh Ujha, who was a courtier of Rai Danuj (Dhanujmardhanadev) migrated to West Bengal and settled there.

2. See, Supra Chapter II
3. Supra Chapter III
4. He is said to be a zamindar of Sonargaon in the time of Sultan Balban. See, Tarikh-i-Firozshahi, Sir Saiyyid Edition, 87-88; and also, Sarkar, History of Bengal, Vol. II, 64-66.
The poet Vrindavandas (1506-1589) is reported to have said, "In the Hindu community, even the Brahmans came voluntarily accepted Islam." Barbosa, the Portuguese traveller, who visited Bengal in 1518 has said "The king is great and rich Lord over wide and thickly populated lands. The heathen of these parts daily become Moors to gain the favour of their rulers." The process of assimilation of Muslim manners was so thorough going that it had become difficult to distinguish a Hindu zamindar from his Muslim counterpart. They also studied Arabic and Persian literature, introduced by the Muslim rulers.

The Kayasthas made full use of the liberal attitude of the Muslim rulers and distinguished themselves as scholars, administrators, and zamindars. They even excelled the Brahmans in learning and intellectual attainments. Malaydhar Basu, Parameswar entitled Kavindra, Srikar Nandi, Yasoraj Khan and several others were known for their literary output and intellectual attainments. Under Sultan Husain Shah (1493-1519 A.D.), Gopinath Basu was minister, Gaur Malik was a notable general and Mukunda Das was the royal physician.

Some of the Muslim sufis married Hindu ladies also. Shah Sultan Mahisawar is said to have married a Brahmin girl. A tradition current among the Hindus, claims that Sultan Shamsuddin Ilyas Shah, married a Brahmin widow, named Phulmati Begam. The process of cultural give-and-take was largely due to the activities of the Muslim saints in Bengal.

Several cults with common belief and practices emerged as a result of the close social and intellectual contact between the Hindus and the Muslims. Certain Hindu rites and customs were continued by people newly converted to Islam. Their appreciation in Hindu mythology continued, and while they were considered to have been converted to Islam, they retained many Hindu customs and institutions. A Bengali-Muslim Poet, Saiyyid Sultan, who flourished in the latter half of the sixteenth century makes the point clear when he says "Bengalis are born in Bengal out of their misfortune. They do not understand Arabic language nor do they follow their own religion. They remained satisfied with their old religious beliefs."

2. N.K. Bhattalal, Coins and Chronology, 83.
3. Saiyyid Sultan, Kafat-i-Rasul, edited by Ali Ahmad, B.S., 1356/7; E. Haq, Muslim Bangla Sahitya, (Urdu tr.) 168 and 179, and also Dasgupta, Obscure Religious Cults, 369.
Kartabhaja sect is said to have been founded by Aul Chand, a contemporary of Chaitanya. It was later developed by Ram Samran Pal. They recruited followers from both Muslims and non-Muslims. An important doctrine of this cult was the concept of One God. They repeated the religious formulae five times a day and believed that in spiritual matters caste and birth were meaningless.

That the converted Muslims retained some of their earlier traditions and practices in social life is clearly discernable in the Nath Cult. The teachings of the Nath gurus have found their way in the writings of the Muslim scholars of the period, Shaikh Faizullah, a Muslim poet, is said to have composed Goraksha Vijaya (or Gorkha-Vijaya), highlighting the ideas of the important Nath teacher, Gorakshanath. There is a considerable Yoga literature in

1. Kennedy, The Chaitanya Movement, 213. Tara Chand, (Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, 219) traces the origin of this cult in the 17th century. D.C. Sen, (Chaitanya and His Age, 341-42) records the time of Aul Chand from 1687-1769, which suggests that the sect was founded in the early eighteenth century.

2. According to Tara Chand, Influence of Islam on Indian Culture (219) Samran Pal was the founder of this sect.

3. Ibid., 219-220.

4. It is one of the important poetical works by Shaikh Faizullah on the teachings and miraculous activities of the great Buddhist ascetic, Gorakshanath. It is considered a valuable piece of Bengali literature. See Enamul Haq, Muslim Bangla Sahitya, (Urdu tr.) Karachi, 1957, 99, 124 and also Obscure Religious Cults, 370-73.
the Bengali language produced by the Muslim scholars, e.g. 1

1. Jnana-Pradipa of Saiyyid Sultan and Yoga Calendar of Saiyyid Murtuza. They represent a popular mixture of the different kinds of the yava, the yoga of the Sahajiyas, the Naths and of the sufistic yogic system. It appears from a critical study of this literature that the Muslims were greatly influenced by the Yogic philosophy of the Nath gurus. The traditions which depict, Gorakshanath as the guardian-spirit of the cattle, and Manikpir as his disciple, is equally popular in both the Hindus and Muslims of North and East Bengal.

The cult of Satyanir reveals the same blending of 4
Hindu and Muslim ideas. The institution is called Satyanir (i.e. Haq the Pir) by the Muslims and Satyanarayan (i.e. 5
Haq the Narayana) by the Hindus. The growing impact of the

1. Jnana-Pradipa (the lamp of Life) is a mystical poem by Saiyyid Sultan (1550-1648 A.D.). It was composed by him to popularize the Yoga principles. The work contains valuable reference to Hindu and Muslim mysticism. See Muslim Bangla Sahitya, 176-177.

2. Yoga Calendar of Saiyyid Murtuza (1590-1662 A.D.) is another example of the impact of Hindu Yogic philosophy on the Muslim mysticism. The author in this book has very nicely dealt with the mystical contemplation of the Muslims and the Yogic philosophy of the Hindus. It could be compared well with the Majma-ul-Bahrain of Dara Shikuh. Among the Bengali literature it stands a high position. Muslim Bangla Sahitya (Urdu tr.), 214.


Contd......
spiritual power of the Muslim saints on the Hindu society, was probably one of the chief factors for the evolution of the Satyanir cult. For instance, we know from Seka-Subhodaya that Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrezi, who flourished in Bengal during the thirteenth century A.D. restored to life the dying husband of a woman, named Madhavi, and they turned to be his most ardent devotees. It is also said that once four men conspired to test the spiritual ability of the Shaikh. Feigning to be blind, they appeared before and asked him to cure their blindness. The Shaikh listened to and advised them to come next day, while coming out, to their great astonishment, they actually lost their sight. They immediately confessed their faults to the Shaikh and sought his forgiveness. The Shaikh became pleased and cured them. A similar incident is recorded by Bharat Chandra, a poet of the eighteenth century. He says that "A offering of Sweets) Brahmin was told by a faqir(mendicant) to offer shirini(i.e.,/  

(Continued from the previous page)

4. E.Haq, Muslim Bangla Sahitya (Urdu tr.) 127.

5. Ibid., 127 and also Dr. Sukumar Sen, History of Bengali Literature, Sahitya Akademy, New Delhi, 1960, 159.

to him. When the Brahmin failed to oblige him, he left and came again in the guise of a Hindu god, Hari. Thus being convinced that Hari and Muslim pir were in fact spiritually one and the same person. He adored and offered him shirini."

It is exactly not known that when Satyanarayana as a cult started in Bengal. The institution of Satyanarayana (or Satyanarayan) as revealed in the Bengali literature, appears to have become popular in Bengal since the sixteenth century. The earliest known work on Satyanarayana is of Shaikh Faizullah. He is said to have composed a poem on Satyanarayana in between 1546 and 1575 A.D. Devotion to Satyanarayana in Bengal continued and prospered in the latter period also. The known features of the cult is that "a wooden plank is used to denote the seat of the Satyanarayana, and offerings of edibles like sweetmeat, milk, sugar, betel leaf and betel nut are made.

1. Bharatchandra, Satyanarayan Vrata Kathe (cited by Bahim, Social and Cultural History of Bengal, 338)
2. E.Haq, Muslim Bengal Sahitya, (Urdu tr.) 126.
3. According to Dr. Sukumar Sen (History of Bengali Literature, 158) the new fangled deity Satyanarayana (or Satyanarayan) achieved high popularity in the eighteenth century. A huge literature centring round Satyanarayana grew up in this century.
4. Kardm, Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, 166.
Another product of the social contact between the Hindus and the Muslims was the cult of Panch Pir. In West Bengal the Panch Pir form one of the main object of adoration among the Muslims and the Hindus. The sailors of East Bengal Muslims as well as the Hindus, even now, invoke the blessings of Panch Pir for their safety. Every sailor while going to sea is said to have prayed "Amra achi polapan, Ghazi Ganga nigahban Sher Ganga dariya, Panch Pir, Badr Badr." (i.e., We are little children, Ghazi and Ganga are our protectors. We bow our heads to thee, Oh Ganges stream. Help us Oh Five Saints We invoke you in the name of Badr Badr).

The institution of Panch Pir, as the prayer reveals, appears to have originated as a result of the extreme reverence to the Pir (or guru) by both the Muslims and non-Muslims.

2. East Bengal District Gazetteers, Chittagong, Calcutta, 1908, 56.
3. According to W.Crooks, (Encyclopaedia of Religion & Ethics, Vol.IX, 600), the list of Panch Pir (or five saints) differs from place to place. How the nomenclature of five saints was coined in Bengal is difficult to answer. Abdul Karim, (Social History of the Muslim in Bengal, 169) seems right when he says "the conception of Panch Pir is purely conventional and there was no Panch Pir who constituted the list."
4. It is exactly not known that when the worship of Panch Pir started in Bengal. The following interpretation may, however, be made regarding the date and origin of the cult on the basis of the prayer used by the sailors:

Contd.......
Importance to the numeral five (Panch) by the Muslims was probably derived from the five fundamentals of Islam, Iman (belief), Namaz (Prayer), Roza (fasting), Haj (pilgrimage to Mecca) and Zakat (poor rate) or the shia conception of paniatan, i.e. Prophet Muhammad, Hazrat Ali, Hazrat Fatima, Hazrat Hasan and Hazrat Husain. The Hindu derived it from the five chaste women (Panchsati) Kausilya, Drupadi, Kunti, Tara and Mandudari or the five Pandava brothers or the Panchvati i.e. the jungles of five vatas where Ram and Sita were exiled. The Buddhists had the concept of the five Tathagatas, i.e. the five Dhyani Buddhas, and the followers of the Dharma cult of the five Panditag.

(Continued from the previous page)

First, the mention of Panch Pir with the name of Badruddin Badr Alam (ob.1440 in Bihar) who had lived and worked in Bengal and is known there by the names of Badr Alam, Badr Muqam, Badr Pir, Badr Auliya, Badr Shah and Pir Badr, reveals that the cult might have started as a whole system of belief or at least its conception round about the fifteenth century. Second, if Ghazi in the prayer refers to the Bengali warrior saint Shah Ismail Ghazi (ob.1474), the date of the cult may again be put to the fifteenth century. Third, the reference to Ghazi, if denotes to Salar Masud Ghazi (ob.1034) popularly known as Ghazi Miyan, whose tomb in Bahraich is venerated by both the Muslims and the Hindus, then the date of the cult would be the eleventh century. But for any consideration of the date of the cult the names of Badruddin Badr Alam and Shah Ismail Ghazi should be preferred to Salar Masud Ghazi because he had never visited Bengal. Any conclusion regarding the date and origin of the cult without authentic evidence would be a mere speculation.

1. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol.IX, 600. See also Karim, Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, 169.
2. Obscure Religious cults, 305.
3. Ibid., 305.
The worship of **Panch Pir** was popular at various places in Bengal, Midnapore, Burdawan and Sonargaon. A dargah of **Panch Pir** is said to have existed in Sonargaon, where the devotees of this cult, Muslims and Hindus, assembled alike. It is worshipped, even today, as a family deity, and is represented by a small mound, erected on a clay plinth in the north west corner of the house. On this is fixed a human hand, made of iron, each finger symbolizing one of the quintette, with a piece of yellow cloth bound where the wrist should be. EveryWednesday this mound is washed, incense is burnt and offering of flowers are made. On special occasion sacrifices of either goats or cocks are also made. Pir worship was so popular in Bengal that a large number of imaginary Pirs, like Manikpir, Ghorapir, Kumbhir Pir and Madari Pir received reverence from the credulous masses.

But the process of cultural and religious synthesis did not go unchallenged. The wave of conversion and

assimilation alarmed some of the orthodox (or Kulin) Brahmins who excommunicated many Kayasthas and Brahmins who had developed intimacy with the Muslims. Such excommunications sometimes resulted in the emergence of new (mixed) castes, such as Pirali, Sher Khani and Srimat Khani Brahmins.

Jayananda, a notable poet of the sixteenth century, thus laments this change in social patterns: "The Brahmin will live with a sudra woman. The daughter will be sold to one who is conversant with all the sastras. The Brahmin will keep beared and read Persian. He will wear socks in the feet and take cannon in hand. The Brahmin priest will adopt the profession of reciting Persian verses. The Melechoba (i.e., the Musalman) would become king and sudra will become the preceptor of the world (Jagatsguru). The young widow has become fond of fish and meat; and all the Brahmins are now greedy of fish and meat." At another place he observes: "There is age long conflict between the Brahmins and the Yavam (i.e., Musalman)." Nulu Panchanon, a

3. Ibid., 139. See also Muslim Bangla Sahitya (Urdu tr.) 56.
4. Ibid., 11.
reformer of the sixteenth century thus reacts to this trend: "In this age, there is a great agitation in Radh and Banga, many big families have become degenerated," Premdas, another orthodox Hindu, observes: "In the Kalikal (degenerated age) all people have become vicious, its main cause is the Yavana (i.e. Muslim) conquest." Some of the Brahmins in their bid to preserve the Hindu ideology remodelled and revived the Smriti Sastras. Among such revivalists Chaitanya stands pre-eminent.

Vishvambhara Misra, popularly known as Chaitanya, was born in 1486 A.D. His parents Jagannath Misra and Sachi belonged to a learned Brahman family, who had come from sylhet and had settled at Nadia. Jagannath gave education to Chaitanya with much hesitation because his eldest son, Vishvarupa had turned an ascetic after completing his education at the age of sixteen. Chaitanya turned out

to be an intelligent student and within a short period acquired great proficiency in Sanskrit. His father died when he had not yet completed his education. On completing his studies, he became a teacher in a tol (school) at Nadia founded by one of his pupils.

Chaitanya first married, Lakshmi, the beautiful daughter of one Vallavacharya of Nadia. After her death he took another wife named Vishnupirya, also of Nadia. After sometime he visited the temple of Vishnu at Gaya in order to perform the Sradha or Pinda ceremony of his deceased father. There he met the great Vaishnava teacher, Isvara Puri, who initiated him in the cult of Krishna. After that he lost all interests in material pursuits, and when he returned home, he gave up his teaching profession and assumed the life of a mendicant; and devoted himself to

4. It is a ceremonial offering which is done to please the spirit of the departed soul. See Kennedy, *The Chaitanya Movement*, 18.
5. Ibid., 18, and *Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol.IV, 186.
prayers and penitences, particularly the praise of Krishna Bhakti. Later in 1510 A.D. he met with another Vaishnavite savant, Keshav Bharti, who initiated him into Sannyasin and conferred on him the title of Krishna Chaitanya. Thereafter he made an extensive tour of the south to propagate his mission. On his return from the South he visited Brindaban and Kashi, and finally settled at Puri, where he died in 1533 A.D.

Chaitanya was a devotee of the Radha Krishna cult. To him Krishna is the Highest God, the Perfect Being, the source of all incarnations, the chief of all causes. He is the source of eternal heaven, the eternal incarnation, the eternal universe. His body is composed of sat Chit and ananda. He was against the Advaita (i.e., non-duality)

2. Chaitanya's Life and Teachings, 10.
3. Ibid., 10-11, Chaitanya and His Age, 234 and also, History of Bengali Language and Literature, 380.
4. It was a form Vaishnava movement and is said to have been originated with Madhavendra Puri, whose disciples Ishvarepuri and Keshav Bharti transmitted it to Chaitanya. Chaitanya modified its devotional aspect and raised it to a high spiritual plane by making it free from all the ceremonies and orthodoxy of Brahmanical ritual. See, Cultural Heritage of India, Vol.IV, 59,188; Chaitanya and His Age, 42; The Chaitanya Movement, 94; Theism in Medieval India, 448, Indian Theism; from Vedic to the Muhammadan Period, 29; The Delhi Sultanate, Bhartiya Vidyabhaban Series, 174.
5. Chaitanya's Life and Teachings, 94.
philosophy of Sankara (788-850), and stressed that there is difference between created and creature. When the human soul in extreme devotion forgets its oneself, it sees nothing but Him, but it cannot thereby become omnipotent.

The ideal mode of worship and devotion according to Chaitanya is to adore and love Krishna as did Radha. Chaitanya developed peculiar mode of worships, sankirtan, which was probably not known before him. It consisted in the loud recitation of the name of Krishna in congregation, accompanied by music, song and dancing. It was an attractive type of worship for the emotional expression of love by the devotees of Krishna. He also stressed on the constant remembrance of the name of Krishna in order to strengthen the bond of love and mental concentration. The important characteristic

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1. For his short biography and conception of monoism, see, Farquhar, An Outline of the Religious Literature of India, 171-172.
2. Chaitanya and His Age, 322-23.
3. Indian Theism, 131, Chaitanya's Life and Teachings, 188.
4. E. Haq, Muslim Bangla Sahitva, (Urdu tr.) 64 and also Cultural Heritage of India, Vol. IV, 522. Krishna Das a Kaviraja in Chaitanya Charitamrita, Adi 17th refers to the opposition and complaint by the Hindus to the Muslim Qazi about this mode of worship. (Text quoted and translated by A. Karim, Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, 199-200, fn.2.
5. Indian Theism, 131.
of the form of worship was that people of all castes and creed would participate in it without any restriction.

He laid great emphasis on following the directions, of the spiritual mentor (guru), if one wished to awaken the religious spirit. To embrace the disciple and thus transmit spiritual knowledge to him was also an interesting practice of Chaitanya.

TEACHINGS AND IDEOLOGY:

As a humanist, Chaitanya laid great emphasis as the quintessence of religious devotion. He himself did menial service in the beginning of his spiritual career and washed the clothes of the old and infirm people and carried the burden of the old people on his shoulders. He pleaded for compassion, truth, charity and humility. He exhorted

1. The Chaitanya Movement, 58.
2. Chaitanya and His Age, 321.
3. Balabhadra Bhattacharya and Vallabha Bhatta, the founder of Vaishnavism in North India were among the persons who received spiritual efficacies from Chaitanya through embrazing. See, Chaitanya's Life and and Teachings, 216, 238.
4. Chaitanya and His Age, 140 and 276.
his disciples not to speak ill of others. To long for honour and position was to debase oneself. His advice to his pupils was to refrain from self-aggrandizement and jealousy.

Chaitanya laid the foundation of Vaishnava school solely on love, i.e., Bhakti (devotion) to Krishna. He rejected actions and knowledge as means for the attainment of salvation. Truth, he used to say, could be realized only through sincere love and devotion to Krishna. The Krishna Bhakti as developed by him was open to all without any discrimination of caste, sect or social status. According to him there were five stages of Bhakti (I) Santi (Calm meditation on Krishna) (ii) Dasya (Servitude, where the relation of a devotee to his Lord should be like that of a servant and master), (iii) Sakhyya (friendship), (iv) Vatsalya (fondness for the Lord like a child), Madhurya (the love like a devoted wife to her husband).

ENCOUNTER WITH THE MUSLIMS:

Conversion of some Muslims to his cult has been ascribed to Chaitanya. It is noted that when he was returning

2. For detail see, Chaitanya and His Age, 266-76.
from Brindaban, he came across a group of ten Pathans under the leadership of Bijli Khan. One of them, known as Pir, who wore a black garment, entered in a theological discussion with Chaitanya. He propounded monotheism and one common God, on the basis of his holy book (Quran). But the master refuted all his propositions by arguments based on the Muslim scripture, till the man was silenced. The master continued, "your scripture establishes one common God (in the beginning) and refuting that theory sets up in the end a particular God, who is full of all powers, dark of hue, the embodiment of sat, chid (chit) and ananda, the perfect Spirit, the soul of all, all pervading, eternal, the self of everything, the source of creation, life and destruction the refuge of all universes whether gross of fine, the most excellent, adorable by all, the first cause of everything. Men are saved by faith in Him, and freed from the bondage of the world only by serving Him. Delight in Him is the supreme human attainment, while salvation can give only a particle of that bliss. The highest beatitude comes only from serving His feet. After first insisting on work, knowledge and mental abstraction, these are then set aside and the service of God is laid down as the final duty. Your theologians have no knowledge of their own scriptures; they forget that where there are two injunctions, the
latter is stronger. Decide after studying your own holy books, and see what is laid down as the final conclusion."

Impressed by this discussion, the Muslim Pir joined the discipline of Chaitanya. His other companions also followed him. Further, it is claimed that Haridas, who was a distinguished disciple of Chaitanya, was a Muslim and had accepted Vaishnava faith at the hands of Chaitanya.

The revival of the Krishna cult by Chaitanya seems to have been inspired by a desire to arrest the tide of Islam by making necessary changes in the caste structure of the Hindu society. Chaitanya made an organized attempt to safeguard the interest of the Hindu religion and society by encouraging and reviving the Vaishnava movement. He gave the concept of one God, by asking his disciples to have direct link with Krishna through love and devotion. He rejected all formalities in religion and disregarded distinction of caste.

3. According to later Vaishnava writers he was originally of Brahmin extraction and was brought up by a Muslim. But the earlier authorities claim that he was a Muslim by birth. For this controversy and full account of his life, see, D.C.Sen, *Chaitanya and His Companions*, 64-71.
4. *Indian Theism*, 132-133.
and colour. He made Krishna worship accessible to all and popularized it by the introduction of Sankirtan.

The most notable feature of Chaitanya's movement which distinguishes him from Kabir and Nanak was that while the two were respected by both Muslims and Hindus, and attracted disciples from both the communities without conversion, he accepted Muslim disciples after conversion. In fact Chaitanya movement was an attempt to revive Hinduism and return to the worship of Vishnu in the form of Krishna Bhakti. The importance of the movement, however, lies in the fact that he made it simple and attractive, eliminated rituals from and opened it to all without any discrimination.

1. Although Chaitanya was opposed to caste system, but there are clear indications in his treatment with some of his converted disciples like Haridas and Sanatan, that he had no objection to the duties of the caste system; and allowed the traditional ideas and its authority in the society. See, The Chaitanya Movement, 118-119. E.W. Hopkins, The Religions of India, 503-504. and also History of Bengali Language and Literature, 382.


3. Aziz, Studies in Islamic Culture, 150.

4. For instance the conversion of Bijli Khan and his companions to the Vaishnava faith. See Chaitanya's Life and Teachings, 232-34, and also R.C. Dutt, Cultural Heritage of Bengal, 53.
CONCLUSION

As commercial and cultural contact of the Muslims in the Western coastal region preceded the Muslim conquest, so also was the case with the Eastern region. The Arab merchants, who had been visiting the ports of Bengal long before its conquests by the Turkish forces, settled in Arakan and Chittagong. Here grew some small colonies of the Muslims which gradually expanded and brought the surrounding regions within its cultural orbit. Some of the Brahmans reportedly apprehended the danger of being contaminated by the growing Muslim community and migrated to the western region of Bengal.

The political activities started with the conquest of Nadia by Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji in the beginning of the 13th century A.D. The small kingdom carved out by Bakhtiyar continued to expand under the governors and the independent rulers of Bengal. By 1350 A.D. almost the whole region of Bengal was brought under Muslim domination.

1. The political history of the Muslim rule in Bengal right from the beginning of its foundation down the arrival of the British, falls into five periods viz. (1) Under the Governors of the Delhi Sultanate (1203-1342 A.D.), (2) Under the independent Sultans of Bengal (1342-1539), (3) Bengal under the Afghans (1539-1576). (4) Bengal Contd. ......
The independent rulers of Lakhnauti depended upon the local support and drew strength from its soil, with the result that some sort of cultural amalgamation between the two communities became inevitable. The Turkish governors and the independent rulers of Bengal maintained the traditions of their ancestors and constructed innumerable mosques, madarsas and khangahs.

Sufi activities in this region, according to the local traditions, started long before the establishment of Muslim rule in Bengal. Some of the important saints of the period like Baba Adam Shaheed of Abdullahpur in Dacca, Shah Mohammad Sultan of Madanpur in Mymensingh, and Shah Sultan Mahisawar of Mahastan in Bogra settled before the Muslim conquest of this area. Thus the already established Muslim communities and the activities of the saints provided the necessary cultural and ideological support to the newly established Muslim kingdoms of Bengal. The sultans of Bengal leaned heavily on the local people for consolidation of their power and it was through the help they received from the sufis that they struck roots in the confidence of the people and established their authority.

(Continued from the previous page)

under the Mughals (1576-1713) and (5) The independent period of Nizamat introduced by Murshid Quli Khan in 1713 and continued till 1757.
After the Muslim conquest a fresh wave of Muslim saints and scholars reached Bengal. Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrezl, a suhrawardi saint, became very popular among the masses of Bengal and won many converts. Similarly Shaikh Jalaluddin Mujarrad became famous in Sylhet. Maulana Taqiuddin Arabi founded a madrasa at Mahisun where such eminent persons as Shaikh Yahya, the father of Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri, came for education. Maulana Ashrafuddin Tawwama established an academy of Islamic science in Sonargaon. He taught and trained a large number of disciples including the renowned saint of the Firdausi order Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri.

By 1350 A.D. Bengal had become a strong centre of Sufism, a large number of sufis of various silsilahs had entered Bengal and had established Khangahs Zawiyah and Jamaat Khanahs in the region. But it was the chishti silsila which was destined to play the most significant role in the socio-religious life of Bengal.

The Chishti traditions which grew and developed in the North were brought to Bengal by Shaikh Akhi Siraj from the Jamaat Khanah of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya. He established his Khangah at Lakhnauti and started free kitchen (langar). Mir Khurd's remark about Akhi Siraj that he "illumined the whole region of Bengal with his spiritual radiance," is not
exaggerated. His successor, Shaikh Alaul Haq further broadened the scope of the activities of the silsila and made it a powerful factor in the religious life of the people. Like his preceptor, he too maintained a huge langar at Pandua, where thousands of people gathered for spiritual solace and benedictions. Saiyyid Ashraf Jahangir Simnani of Kichaucha (in Faizabad district), came from Simnan and became his disciple. Shaikh Alaul Haq's popularity excited the suspicion of Sultan Sikandar Shah, who charged him of embezzlement of the state money and banished him to Sonargaon. The langar of the Shaikh, however, continued in Pandua.

Shaikh Alaul Haq's son Nur Qutb Alam played a conspicuous role in the spiritual as well as political life of Bengal. His knowledge of religious sciences combined with deep piety and great concern for the welfare of the people considerably enhanced his prestige. It was he, who invited Sultan Ibrahim Sharqi to overthrow Raja Kans. The success of the coup d'etat further increased his hold on the rulers and the bureaucracy.

Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam had several disciples in and outside Bengal, but the man who carried successfully his mission further was Shaikh Husamuddin Manikpuri. After Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam, the Chishti silsila flourished in Bengal
under his descendants. But no significant change took place in the ideology and institutions of the chishti saints in Bengal. Like their predecessors of North India, they continued to emphasise the development of cosmic emotion as a sine qua non for spiritual progress. Great emphasis was laid on the building up of a morally autonomous personality. In one respect, however, the Chishti saints of Bengal departed from the well-established tradition of the early Chishti saints. Government service and contact with the rulers which was looked down upon as something below the dignity of a saint came to be cherished by them and they began to meddle in political affairs of the realms.

The Muslim saints of Bengal, as elsewhere in the country, laid great stress on learning. Wherever they went they established madrasas and encouraged the study of Islamic science. The contribution of Bengal to mystic literature includes works like Nam-i-Haq, Macamat, Munis-ul-Fugara, Anis-ul-Guraba, Maktubat-i-Nur Qutb Alam and the translation into Arabic and Persian of the famous Sanskrit work Amritkund. They encouraged vernaculars also and the literary output of the period in the local dialects was largely due to their efforts. Works like Yusuf-Zulekha of Shah Muhammad Saghir, Rasool-Vilay of Zainuddin, Sa'i at Namah of Muzammil, Nabi-Bangsha of Saiyyid Sultan and Nasihatnamah of Afzal Ali
greatly enriched the Bengali language and literature.

Besides the Chishti saints, a number of other saints who belonged to various silsila, rose in Bengal, but our early records throw very little light on their lives and activities. Later generations have mixed facts with fictions and these stories have been floating down the stream of time for centuries.

The Shattari silsila was introduced in Bengal by its founder Shah Abdullah Shattari. His famous disciple in Bengal was Shaikh Muhammad Ala Qazin Shaṭṭari. He worked for a very long time in Bengal but this silsila could not strike roots in the soil of Bengal. Some important saints of this silsila, like Shaikh Ali Sher, Shah Manjhan and Shaikh Yusuf, were Bengalis but they worked outside their homeland.

The religious climate of Bengal on the arrival of the Muslims was not much different from that of northern India at the advent of the Turks. The Brahmans were the custodians of religion, and the people of the lover castes were not allowed any introduction to religious sciences. Socially also their position was far from satisfactory. The Muslim concept of an egalitarian society as demonstrated by the sufis in their Khanqahs attracted people of lower castes to their fold.
Alarmed at the progress of the Islamic faith and culture in Bengal, the Hindu teachers concentrated their efforts on reconditioning their religious ideology to suit the changed situation. Foremost among such reformers was Chaitanya. His main emphasis was on the revival of Vaishnavism in order to preserve the Hindu religion and faith. He advocated extreme devotion to Krishna as a supreme being and introduced the system of Kirtana (mass worship) and removed caste restrictions from admitting people to his faith.

The emergence of some syncretic cults like Nath, Panchpir and Satyapir, which bear Muslim and Hindu elements, seem to be the outcome of the impact of Islam on Hinduism and vice versa. Some newly converted Muslims, due to lack of proper knowledge of Islam, continued to retain some of their long inherited customs and practices which in course of time resulted in the evolution of such cults.

Politically Bengal was never subdued by the Delhi Sultans. The governors appointed by the Sultans of Delhi remained virtually independent and those who were powerful enough to declare their independence, did not acknowledge the authority of the Delhi rulers. There were several reasons for this isolation. First, because the Delhi Sultans could not effectively control the far off region as the means of
communication could not annihilate time and distance. Secondly, Bengal was rich in economic resources and could support its govt. and people. Consequently the rulers of Bengal never depended on central support. Thirdly, the Sultans of Delhi were involved in many other pressing problems, like the Mongol invasions etc. and could not afford to get entangled in the complicated political situation of the Eastern region. Lastly the kingdom of Jaunpur intervened between Bengal and the Sultanate of Delhi. The Jaunpur kingdom was not powerful enough to absorb Bengal or Delhi, but it played a significant role as a buffer state between Delhi and Bengal. Its geopolitical role was also of great importance. Further Bengal remained culturally isolated from Delhi. It could not draw cultural strength from Delhi. The pattern of culture which developed here was to a great extent different from that of Delhi. The main reason was that Delhi was constantly acting and reacting to developments in the outside world of Islam. It was Delhi which gave shelter to refugees from Central Asia and Persia. Amongst these refugees were scholars, sufis, poets, statismen and artisans. All of them were absorbed by Delhi, and when it fell and split up into provincial kingdoms, Ahmadabad, Mandu and the Deccan inherited the rich cultural
traditions of Delhi and absorbed the scholars, the sufis, the statesman and etc. who had come to India in the earlier centuries.

The mystic stream that trickled down into Bengal during the middle of the fourteenth century was never so strong as the Muslim mystic movement in other parts of the countries. After Shaikh Akhi Siraj no important saint entered and worked in Bengal. The saints of the Subrawardi, the Qadiri, the Firdausi, the shattari and the Nagshbandi orders who played a conspicuous role in spiritual, political and cultural life in various parts of India did not touch the soil of Bengal. Only the Chishti silsilah flourished there and exercised its influence on the social and political life of Bengal. The influence of Shaikh Alaul Haq and Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam crossed the frontiers of Bengal and inspired Saiyyid Ashraf Jahangir Simhani and Shaikh Husamuddin Manikpuri, whose silsilahs continued and flourished for a long time.
APPENDIX A

The following letter (Maktubat-i-Nur Qutb Alam, letter No. 9, pp. 67-69) was written by Shaikh Nur Qutb Alam to some one very close to him. It furnishes an important inkling to understand the political and religious conditions of the Muslims of Bengal after the ascendency of Raja Kans in the state.

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قضه خود کروگان خلی فیکت - گیاه قی کم بدنام از گفت
به ظلم حظور دنیایی رضایت و اوایل ونیزی ایمان بهصرف کافری رسانیده
و ارثگیر صعب حسیب بر خوش آورد عنوان اسلام پدست مشترکان کباده
گردیدند و اسلام را یکن در مرکز را کرد تا فوائد (قواعد) دین جندهم گفت و علم
کریب‌آسان سیرآرید و بخوابی ایمان جلی داشت و موهون مسات از
گفت بطبع مبتدی "لا افز" درخوری و شادی سوسر و ازگرخدای خود

پر خرماک سبکان الیه در شان ایشنگت "اوکه کا لباسام بل هم
اضلی سبیل" در صحبت اسرا ازنا مهین جای رنگارئه و دردشکلات دفاع
حكتم البی بحال فنک نه ودرد مسفر را رگی کیفیت سکوت میرچه وجیه
باشد میرم عزم کراست بهجل مریم مسکن و دواز ماست تعلیم الیه که کافر
بیه را یی سبیب تنگ ایمان بهخشید و به تخت حکمت بردوستان خود
نشاند کفرستیلا باند ولایت اسلام پای خوابی ببوست یه

کسی جه داند چه حکمت می رود * هرچه راجه قسمت می رود

نی عبات عبانفان دستگیر ایشان شد ونی کفرکفران پاشگیر ایشان گفت
نی از اعبات و طاعت سودی نه از کفر کافری نایی بحیرت مقدی ببوست یه
ملکه صدای را راگ سود و نزیان دارد * گر حفظ قرانی با عابد ایام
آه هزاره درد هزاری درلد بیک کرمه ونی نباید جنای سخت و جگه پوخت
خون درده ها رخت یه

مالی نگمه نبهر عقل ودن زیادت * جنای ازن کرمه که راه مین دشت
هیلهای هیلهای آتات اسلام کسوف گونت و ماهما شرع خوسف بیوشید بحكم

\[\text{続き}}\]
Professor S.H. Askari (in *Bengal, Past and Present*, Vol. LXVII, 1948) has translated the letter into English. It reads as:

"This poor, helpless, Nuri, covered with dust, afflicted with the misfortunes of the times, full of care for the world but tormented by religious calamities, restless and distracted because of the pain of his very being and existence, suspended from the service and worship of God, hanging his head down because of the inability to serve the spiritual Lords offers his blessings......Oh soul of thy father, how strange is the affair and astonishing the time that the river
of God, the unapproachable and Unmovable, has become ruffled and thousands of Doctors of religion and learned men and ascetics and devotees had fallen under the command of an infidel, a zamindar of 400 years (standing), and benefits of true significance have gone .......... He has allowed the commands and prohibitions to go under the control of an infidel .......... The reins of Islam have gone into the hands of those who associate others with God. He had caused Islam to be replaced by infidelity with the results that the benefits of religion have been destroyed and the standard of unbelief has risen to the sky. He has allowed the ruin of faith .......... How exalted is God, He has bestowed, without apparent reason, the robe of faith on the lad of an infidel and installed him on the throne of the kingdom over his friends. Kufry (infidelity) has gained predominance and the kingdom of Islam has been spoiled. Who knows what divine wisdom ordains and what is fated for what individual existence? .......... Alas, Alas, oh, how painful, with one gesture and freak of independence He caused the consumption of so many souls, the destruction of so many lives, and shedding of so much of bitter tears. Alas, woe to me, the sun of Islam has become obscured and the moon of religion has become eclipsed. But according to
the command of God the most holy "Help the cause of piety and righteousness" and "oh votaries of God, help the cause of God and give aid to the religion of God." It is obligatory on every Musalman to render assistance to and champion the cause of the faith of God. Although so far as the apparent signs are concerned there is no possibility of assistance reaching us, yet at the inside of things and returning to God one should make earnest supplication and sincerely pray and lament throughout the night and solicit the aid from God who listens to and grants request and sees what comes out of the very dark night and distressing circumstances."
APPENDIX B

BRIEF NOTES ON THE CENTRES OF MYSTIC ACTIVITY AS SHOWN IN THE MAP

Burdwan, the town and the district of the same name in West Bengal, stands on the north bank of the Banka river, some two miles from Damodar, in latitude 23°14' N. and longitude 87°51'E. The name, Burdwan, is said to have been derived from the Sanskrit word: "Vardhamana" meaning prosperous. It was an ancient town and capital of the Sadgop dynasty. Later on it became an important town of Bengal under the Mughals.

Bagherhat, headquarters of the sub-division of the same name in Khulna district, East Bengal, is situated on the Bhaireb river, 22 miles south east of Khulna in latitude 22°40' N. and longitude 89°47'E. About the origin of the name, it is said, that it is corruption of 'Bankerhat' (the market) or from bagh (tiger) of its surrounding jungle.

Here stands the mausoleum of a Muslim saint and a large prayer hall, known as "Saat gumbaz." An annual fair is held here on the supposed anniversary of the saint.

Chittagong, is situated on the bank of Karnaphuli river about 12 miles distance from its mouth in latitude $22^\circ 21'\text{N}$ and longitude $91^\circ 50'\text{E}$. There are various versions about the origin of the name of Chittagong.

Deotala or (Devasthala) is situated 15 miles north of Pandua (in Malda district), in latitude $25^\circ 16'\text{N}$ and longitude $88^\circ 14'\text{E}$. Literally Devasthala means 'Deva's abode', which suggests that it was an old religious place of the Hindus. Here stands the shrine of Shaikh Jalal-ud-din Tabrezi, who flourished about the middle of the 13th century A.D. Among the important remains of Deotala is a Jama Masjid, which according to an inscription dated 868 A.H./1463 A.D. was built during the reign of Barbak Shah.

2. For a detailed discussion over the different versions about the origin of the name of Chittagong, see Eastern Bengal District Gazetteers, Chittagong, ed. Malley, Calcutta 1908, pp. 1-2.
Hemtabad, in district Dinajpur is situated in latitude 25°38'N and longitude 88°12'E.

Kalna, town and headquarters of the sub-division of the same name, stands on the right bank of the Bhagirathi river in latitude 23°13'N and longitude 88°22'N. It was a place of great cultural importance during the Muslim rule.

Lakhnauti, also known as Gaur, a ruined city in the Malda district of West Bengal, is situated in latitude 24°54'N and longitude 88°8'13'E. The date and the origin of the city is not known, but the local traditions connect its name with the name of Ballal Sen and Lakshman Sen. It was named Lakhnauti, probably after the name of Lakshman Sen. Its ascertained history, however, begins from the time of its conquest by the Muslim forces in the beginning of the 13th century A.D. Gaur remained for more than three centuries the seat of Muslim power in Bengal. During the

3. Imperial Gazetteers of India, 1908, Vol.XII, 186.
reign of Emperor Humayun, it was given the name of Jannatabad.

Mahasthan is situated in latitude $24^\circ 57'N$ and longitude $80^\circ 21'E$ on the western bank of the river Karatoya, about 7 miles to the north of Bogra town in East Bengal. Literally Mahasthan means "great place" or capital. According to local traditions it was the capital of a Hindu king named Prasurama. Here stands the shrine of a Muslim sufi of great sanctity.

Makhdumnagar, a village in Mayureswar of the Rampurhat sub-division of Birbhum District (W. Bengal) is situated in latitude $24^\circ 3'N$ and longitude $37^\circ 38'E$. The place is famous for the mausoleum of a Muslim saint who flourished here in the sixteenth century and had miraculous power of curing all sort of diseases.

Mandran, an old town is situated in latitude 22°52'N and longitude 37°41'5", in Hooghly district of West Bengal.

Mangalkot, a village situated in latitude 23°33'N and longitude 87°54'5" on the bank of the Kumur river in Katwa sub-division of Burdawan district. It has several ruined mosques in and around the village. It is also known for the Hindu remains of the early period.

Pandua or (Parua), now a deserted town in Malda district in latitude 25°8'N and longitude 88°10'E. It is situated at a distance of about 20 miles from Gaur in north easternly direction. It is called Hazrat Pandua, to distinguish it from another place of the same name in Hooghly district. It was also known by the name of Firozabad. It contains some remarkable specimens of early

1. Bengal District Gazetteers, Hoogly, Identified with the Quarter inch sheet, 73 M. Burdwan.
Muslim architecture, for instance 'Sona Masjid', 'Ek Lakhi Tomb' and the great 'Adina Masjid.'

Pandua, a small town and railway station of the same name in Hugli District, is situated in latitude 23° 4' 35"N and longitude 88°19' 25"E. It is properly known as Chota Pandua. Like the Pandua in Malda District, it is also a place of great antiquity. In ancient times it is said to be the capital of a Hindu Raja, Pandu. At present, it is famous for the mausoleum of Shah Safiuddin. Among the important remains of Pandua is the 125 feet high tower and a large long mosque.

Shahzadpur is situated in latitude 24°5'N and longitude 39°36'N, in Pabna district of East Bengal.

Sonargaon or Subarnagram, an ancient capital of Eastern Bengal, is situated in latitude 23°4'N and longitude 90°36'E near the bank of Meghna river, 15 miles to the east of Dacca city. It was the metropolis of a Hindu principality anterior to its capture by the Muslim forces in the beginning of the 14th century A.D. Later it flourished under the

3. The name 'Pandu' of the Raja suggests that the town was named after him.
Muslims and remained the seat of Muslim governors of Bengal from 1351-1608 A.D. The capital of the province was transferred to Dacca at the instance of Islam Khan, the Mughal governor under Emperor Jahangir. Islam Khan is said to have named the city as Jahangirabad. Among the remaining traces of its former grandeur are some ruins in and near the insignificant village of Painam, about 6 miles east of Narayanagand. Sonargaon, according to Ralph Fitch, who visited the place about 1586, was famous for its cloths and muslims.

Sylhet or (Srihat), originally a petty kingdom by the name of 'Gor' is situated on the right bank of Sumra river in latitude 24°53'N and longitude 91°52'E in North Eastern Bengal. It had been the capital of a Hindu Raja, named Gaur Gobind. He was defeated in the beginning of the 14th century by the Muslim forces, supported by Shaikh Jalaluddin Mujarrad.

2. William Foster, Early Travel of India, Oxford,1921,p.38.
3. Imperial Gazetteers of India, Vol.XXIII,202;Blochmann, Contribution to the Geography and History of Bengal, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta,1968, pp.73-75.
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20. **Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference**.
Tom of Shanakh But Aqib Alem

PLATE. II

Reproduced from Reveleshaw's "Gaut - The Ruins and Inscriptions"
Memories of Cairo and Fendua

Thevrez (Reproduced from A.A. Khan's

The Khan of Shazikh Jerrudd-in
Architectural in Bengal

Reproduced from A.H. Dent's Muslim

Tomb of Zareer Khan Ghazi

PLATE VI
PLATE VII

Tomb Of Khan-i-Jahan,
(Reproduced from A.H. Dani's,
Muslim Architecture in Bengal)
PLATE IX  Tomb of Shah Safiuddin,  (Reproduced from A.H.Dani's,  Muslim Architecture in Bengal)