



# **A SUFI MESSAGE OF SPIRITUAL LIBERTY**

**INAYAT KHAN**

Global Grey ebooks

**A  
SUFI MESSAGE  
OF SPIRITUAL LIBERTY**

**BY  
INAYAT KHAN**

**SUFISM IS THE RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY OF LOVE, HARMONY AND  
BEAUTY.**

1914

A Sufi Message of Spiritual Liberty by Inayat Khan.

This edition was created and published by Global Grey

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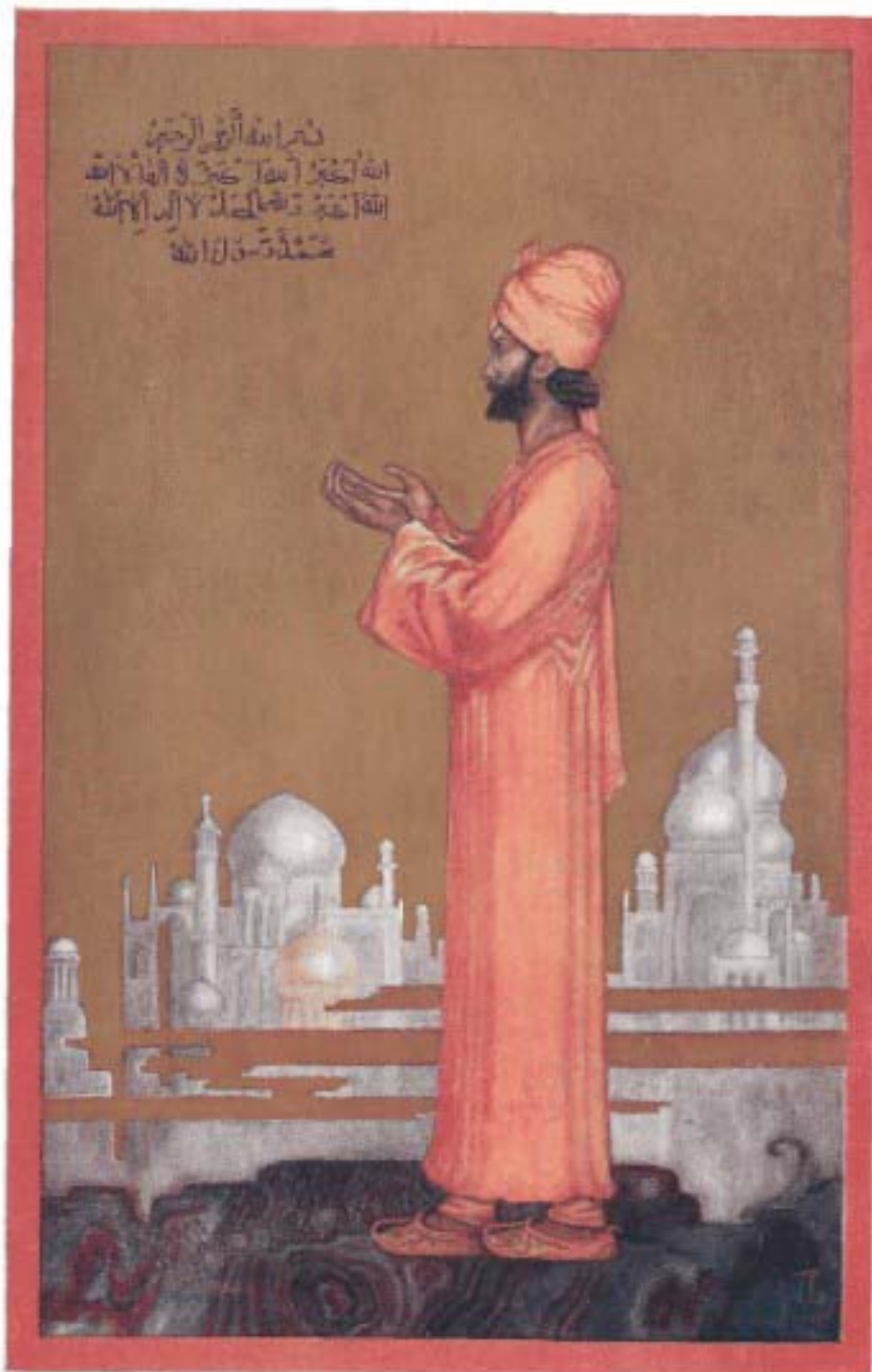
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M. H. Thurburn.

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## PREFACE

Sufism is a Religious Philosophy of Love, Harmony and Beauty, which is as old as the beginning of human creation. The word “Sufi” has come from Sufa, meaning pure (pure from differences and distinctions). There is no special work—written by an authorised initiate of Sufism— on the subject in the English language. Although of late, some translations of Sufi poems have been published, in these, the inner philosophical meaning, as well as the delicacy of their poetical form, has been lost in the difficulty of translation.

By the request of many European and American friends interested in the Divine knowledge, I have written these few pages as an introduction to Sufism. I hope this may help in establishing goodwill among mankind and friendly understanding between nations, since Sufism combines the Eastern qualities of faith and devotion with reason and logic, the characteristics of the West.

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## BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR

Professor Inayat Khan was born in 1882 at Baroda, India. He comes of the Mashayakh (Saints) family of Punjab, where one of his ancestors, Jumasha, was canonized. Many still go to visit his tomb. Inayat's grandfather, Moula Bux, a very holy man and the greatest musician of his age, invented the notation system for Hindu music. He inspired Inayat with his own wonderful knowledge, as it were—from soul to soul.

*Childhood.*—He was extremely clever and sociable for his age; and being of an inquisitive nature, troubled his parents much in questioning them about the nature of things. He would ask, “Where does God live? How old is God? Why should we pray to Him? and why should we fear Him? Why should people die? And where do they go after death? If God has created all, who was the Creator of God?” His father, being a very wise man, would answer the questions in the most simple way possible, but Inayat would prolong his arguments until his father\* tired of his questions, told him to be quiet. He would then be silent for hours, turning the subject over in his mind.

*Boyhood.*—Inayat grew to be affectionate and devoted to his parents. He was sent to school when quite young, and would rather be punished than pay attention to the subjects in which he had no interest. He wished only to study poetry, religion, morality, music and logic. He took music as a special subject at the Baroda Academy of Music, where he repeatedly won the first prize. He had so much curiosity for strangers, fortune-tellers, fakirs, dervishes, spiritualists and mystics, that he would very often run away from home in search of them.

His delight in poetry, music and philosophy seemed to increase every day. Instead of playing with boys of his age, he spent the time in the company of his grandfather. The lad would observe all his movements and listen to the performance of music or discussions and lectures *on philosophy*.

*He was deeply interested in the knowledge of the Rasa Shastra (the science of human nature and emotions) and asked Moula Bux to tell him something regarding it, but he refused, saying, “You are too young for this subtle*

subject.” Inayat had not the patience to wait until he was grown, so he found his grandfather’s manuscripts on papyrus and studied them to such good purpose that he composed a number of songs expressing the nature of men and women under various emotions in the different stages of life. He went before Moula Bux and sang them, to the amazement of all present. From that day his grandfather thought it was useless to try to control his hunger for knowledge, and sent him to study poetry under Kavi Ratnakar, the great Hindustani poet: he had a remarkable memory and never forgot stories, songs or poetry which he had once heard.

*H.H. The Gaelmar's Patronage.*—At the age of nine years Inayat composed a prayer to Ganesh, in Sanskrit, which he sang before the Court of the Gaekwar, and was awarded the prize of a necklace and a scholarship. This patronage encouraged him to advance in poetry and music. He studied the genius of Moula Bux, and others, immediately absorbing whatever subject interested him.

*Religious Belief.*—Inayat being born of a Muslim family, was much devoted to Mohammed and loyal to Islam. He disliked to miss even one prayer out of the five. One evening, on the roof of his house in the moonlight, he was offering his Nimaz (prayers) to Allah, the Great, when the thought came to him that though for a long time he had been praying with all devotion and humility no revelation had as yet been vouchsafed to him, and that it was not wise to worship any longer, one whom he did not see nor know. He went to his grandfather and told him he would not offer any more prayers to Allah until He was seen or known: “There is no reason why one should follow a belief and do as his ancestors did without knowing a proper reason for it.” Moula Bux was pleased with his inquisitiveness, and after being silent for a short time, answered his question with the following couplet of Koran:—

“We will show them our signs in the world and in themselves, that the truth may be manifest to them,” and said that God is seen in the world and the world in man. This explanation entered the soul of Inayat, so seriously, that from that time every moment of his life was occupied with the thought of Divine Immanence and his eyes became open to Nature as if by the sudden



illumination of an electric torch, everything appearing clear in its light. Thenceforth he devoted himself to the absorption of the truth.

*Leaves Home for the National Cause.*—When his grandfather died, Inayat was in deep despair at the loss of his dearly-loved teacher and inspirer. He realised then how uncertain is this life and thought it could only be worth living if he could be of some service in the world. He appreciated the great service which Moula Bux did for India by systematising its music. At one time, music in India was regarded not only as a means for the perfecting of humanity, but also as a spiritual manifestation. Moula Bux, with his intense feeling for his art and his Nation, believed that music could only be raised from its present degeneration, by moralising it. Inayat, in utter despair, said, “Alas! if our nation had lost only its wealth and power, it would not have been so bad, since these are always being moved from one hand to the other; but the inheritance of our race—the divine music—is also leaving us by our negligence.” He invoked the name of Sharadha, Goddess of Music, and cried for her help in this time of despair, and praying her to protect the sacred art. This idea made him leave home with the view of making an universal system for Indian music and to spread the knowledge of it abroad. He started on his first tour when eighteen years of age, travelling throughout India, visiting the most important places. He was welcomed at the Courts of Rajahs and Maharajahs, who gave him great rewards. He won the admiration of the leading public in all parts of India, receiving addresses and medals, and making innumerable friends and pupils. His Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad, a great Sufi mystic, and a master of music and poetry, received him with special appreciation. Inayat entertained the Nizam with his music, each time making a new impression upon him, even moving him to tears by his devotional music. This caused Nizam to think there was something mysterious in Inayat besides his music. Inayat replying to his questions, answered, “Your Highness, sound being the highest force of manifestation, it is mysterious within itself. Whoever has the knowledge of sound indeed knows the universe. My music is my thought, and my thought is my feeling. The deeper I sink into the ocean of feeling, the more beautiful pearls I bring forth in the form of notes. My music creates feeling within myself before others feel it. Your Highness, my music is my religion. Worldly success cannot be a proper price for it. My interest in music is to achieve

perfection in humanity.” This explanation of his feeling and wonderful command of music charmed Nizam so much that he presented him with a purse full of asharfys (gold coins), he placed a precious emerald ring taken from his own hand on his finger and gave him the title of Tansen (the most celebrated mystical singer). From that time Inayat was hailed as the greatest musical genius in the land. In the Northern part of India, he is looked upon as the “ Morning Star of Musical Revival,” and in the South he is called the “ Reincarnation of Maha Yaidyanad Iyer.”

*Inayat's Interest in Philosophy.*—He had learned the teachings of Islam, and also became familiar with all other religions. During his sojourn of India he entertained priests, philosophers and mystics, and discussed with them upon different subjects, gaining their favour by his music and pleasing personality. He travelled through jungles, across mountains, and along river banks, in search of the mystics. He went to the Himalayas during his stay in Nepaul, where he found the silent mystic Muni, who was so pleased with his Veena playing that he trained him in the mysticism of sound during the period of one year, after which time Inayat took leave of the Muni and started home, visiting all the sacred places on his way. He was a guest of Swami Vallabhacharya at Jeypoor, with whom he discussed music and philosophy.

*Inayat's Interest in Sufism.*—He visited the tomb of Khaja at Ajmeer, the greatest Sufi Saint of India, where he found a most spiritual atmosphere and met several Sufis who were blessed with Divine knowledge. At midnight, as usual, he engaged himself in Tahajjud (prayer), and after a few hours, heard a voice so distinct and appealing that he could not but listen. It was the voice of a Fakir, awakening the people for prayers before sunrise. He sang: “ Awake, O man, from thy fast sleep; thou knowest not that death watcheth thee every moment; thou thinkest not how much load thou hast gathered to carry, and how long is the journey for thee to accomplish. Awaken, O man, for the sun shall soon rise.” The unearthly calm and quiet of the place, the solemnity of the message, brought tears to the eyes of Inayat as sitting on his prayer-rug with a rosary in his hand, he reflected that all the proficiency and reputation which he had achieved in music, were profitless as regards Najat (salvation), and saw this world not as a stage of amusement, but as a

school of learning. From that time he became devoted to the esoteric side of knowledge. This developed in him a sad and serious disposition and kept him absorbed in the silent study of Nature.

*Inayat's Initiation into Sufism.*—His interest in Sufism made him very friendly with the Sufis while in Hyderabad. He liked the sweetness of their personality and enjoyed the perfume of their knowledge, while, being an artist, he was naturally attracted by their use of music. He began at first, to imitate their manners and characteristics and spent much time in silence. He once saw in a dream, a musical entertainment of the Sufis where the majority of great Saints were present. Becoming absorbed in the state of Wajad (ecstasy), his exultation continued after he had awakened, and he heard continually whether awake or asleep a voice crying “ Allah-Ilo-Akbar,” (God is Great); and while in meditation often saw visions of a Saint with a grey beard, and a very attractive spiritual face beaming with light. All this aroused his anxiety to know what it meant, but he was afraid to ask anyone, lest they might ridicule him. At last he explained it to a friend, who was an advanced Sufi and liked Inayat’s disposition and character. He said: “ The dream is symbolical of your initiation in the Order of Chishtys, and the word which you have been hearing is the voice of Truth, and the vision you have seen, is the spirit of your guidance.” He advised Inayat to be initiated in Sufism. Inayat wished to know more on the subject, and often paid visits to several Sufi teachers with a studious intention, but all refused to initiate him, feeling that Inayat was not to be their disciple. After longing in vain for six months, he visited a friend who was an advanced Sufi, to whom he told his great desire to study Sufism. This friend while thinking over the matter unexpectedly received a telepathic message that a great Sufi Master was intending to call on him. He at once arranged a seat of distinction, placing cushions over it, and walked towards the door to receive the Master. When the Master entered the drawing-room it seemed as if everything was lighted. All knelt before him. Inayat at first thought he had seen him long before, but could not recall when and where ; but after thinking a few minutes he realised this to be the same face which he saw so often in his visions.

All present were introduced to this great Master, and when Inayat's turn came the Master gazed at him keenly, and said to the host enquiringly : “ Tell me, who is this young man ?

He attracts my soul very intensely.” He said : “ Your holiness, this young man is a genius in music, and is desirous of submitting himself to your most inspiring guidance.” The Master at once granted the request and initiated Inayat immediately.

*Inayat's Training as a Sufi.*—The *Murshid* Saiyad Mohammed Madani, belonged to a distinguished family and was a direct descendant to Mohammed.

When he paid his first visit to him at the Khankah (the House of Meditation), he addressed him in a song, expressing his devotion to his Master.

This song impressed the *Murshid* very deeply. He placed his hands upon Inayat's head and blessed him, saying: “ Be thou blessed by the divine light and illuminate the beloved ones of Allah.” From this time the spiritual attachment between Inayat and *Murshid* was established and grew more and more. This opened a way for Inayat to receive the light which could hardly be received by discussions, arguments, reading, or even by spiritual practices,

Inayat often paid visits to his *Murshid*, and when he received telepathic messages he left his work and went at once. He never argued unless commanded to do so ; and was always respectful. He entertained his *Murshid* by his music, which brought about the state of *Wajad* (ecstasy). His daily practice and constant concentration had prepared him to absorb the light.

This is the ideal way of Sufic development. Inayat had read the Koran and Hadis, and was much interested in the writings of Rumi and the literature of India and Persia. He gave much time to the cultivation of the inner senses: clairvoyance, clairaudience, intuition, inspiration, impressions and dreams, and also made experiments in communicating with the spirits of the living and the dead. He delved in the occult and psychic side of mysticism. He also realised the benefit of morality in his own life, but all he learned and

experienced he valued less than the divine wisdom considering that to be the essence and the outcome of all knowledge.

After having received instruction in the five subjects of Sufism—the physical, intellectual, mental, moral and spiritual life—he took a complete course of training in the four schools: Chishtia, Nakshebandia, Kadaria and Soharvrda. He considered the period of instruction to be the most fortunate time of his life. After the accomplishment of his course in Sufism his *Murshid* blessed him, saying: “ Go, my child, into the world, harmonise the East and the West with the harmony of thy music; spread the wisdom of Sufism, for thou art gifted by Allah, the most Merciful and Compassionate.” This command made a deep impression upon Inayat, and gave him hope and courage to go forward into the world and serve humanity. He began his work with a large number of pupils in music, and inspired them with his divine knowledge. In 1910 he began a tour of the western world accompanied by four musicians, first visiting America, giving lectures in Sufism and music throughout the East and West. He lectured at Columbia University, New York, the Berkeley University of California, and at the Los Angeles University. He attracted many disciples and founded an Order of Sufism for America, the headquarters being at San Francisco. From America he came to Europe, where he carried on the same work.

Tserclaes.

*London.*

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## GOD

Beloved ones of God, you may belong to any race, cast, creed, or nation, still you are all impartially beloved by God. You may be a believer or an unbeliever in the supreme Being, but He cares not. His mercy and grace flow through all His powers, without distinction of friend or foe.

'Every leaf of tree, Allah's praise displays,  
Only the pious mind can hear their sacred lays.'

The sun, moon, and stars give light; the timely change of seasons promotes health and cheerfulness; the rain grows corn, fruits, and flowers; and the alternation of day and night provides the opportunity for work and rest.

'Earth, water, fire and air,  
All work harmoniously.  
For thee they always food prepare,  
Thou shouldst not eat unthankfully.  
For how each day the sun shines and serves,  
All praise from thee Allah deserves.'

If you study your own body, you will find its mechanism to be the original model of the artificial mechanism of the world. Art and science fail if compared with that of His nature. The ear, eyes, and all other organs, how perfectly they are adapted in shape and mechanism to the purpose which they must serve! How liberally the needs of life, water, air, and food, are supplied; even milk is prepared in the mother's breast for the unborn infant. Should we not appreciate the liberality of the Creator, and thank him each moment with all humility and gratitude? 'Praise be to Allah, the worship of whom is the means of drawing closer to Him, and the giving of thanks to whom involves an increase of benefits. Every breath which is inhaled prolongs life, and when exhaled it quickens the frame. In every breath, therefore, two blessings are contained, and for every blessing a separate thanksgiving is due' (*Sa'di*).

He has fashioned and molded you after His own image, and made you Ashráf al-Makhlúá t, the highest of all beings and the pride of the universe, having given you command over all other beings of both worlds. As is said in the Qur'an, 'Do you not see that Allah has subjected all things on earth to you?' And at the same time He has given you, by His grace, the attributes of humanity: kindness, gratitude, faithfulness, justice, modesty, piety, sympathy, reverence, bravery, patience, love, knowledge, and wisdom. This is an open proof of your being the real object of creation and the most beloved of God.

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## NATURE

The argument has been raised that all manifestation is due to the interaction of natural elements, working by their own force; every cause has its effect, and the effect again becomes a cause for the reaction; thus nature works unaided. The answer is, that every cause must have some preceding cause, or first cause, to produce it; and logically one cause may produce many effects, which effects again become second causes, producing new reactions, 'While intellectual minds are seeking second causes, the wise man only perceives the first cause. Air, earth, water, being second causes, the precedent cause, which makes them act and pause, is hidden.'

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## THE PERSONAL BEING

Granting that we see nature, and also admitting its original cause, upon what grounds do we consider the cause to be a personal God, meriting worship? The answer is that nature itself consists of different personalities, and each of them has its peculiar attributes. The sum total of all these personalities is One, the only real personality. In relation to that One all other personalities are merely an illusion. Just as, in a limited form, a nation or a community is the sum of many personalities. Just as nature manifested in numerous names and forms is still called nature, singular not plural, just as the individual combines within himself the different parts of his body, arms, limbs, eyes, ears, and is possessed of different qualities yet is one person, so the sum total of all personalities is called God.

He is the possessor of all the visible and invisible attributes of the Absolute, and has different names in different languages for the understanding of man. It may be said that the personality of a man is quite comprehensible, since his actions exhibit him as a single individual, whereas God's personality has no clear identification of its own. The answer is, that variety covers unity. 'Hidden things are manifested by their opposites, but as God has no opposite He remains hidden. God's light has no opposite in the range of creation whereby it may be manifested to view' (*Jelal-ud-Din Rumi*).

The wise man by studying nature enters into the unity through its variety, and realizes the personality of God by sacrificing his own. 'He who knows himself knows Allah' (*Sayings of Mohammed*). 'The Kingdom of God is within you' (*Bible*). 'Self-knowledge is the real wisdom' (*Vedanta*).

God's relation to nature may be understood by analysing the idea expressed in the words, 'I myself'. This affirmation means the one individual; at the same time it identifies the dual aspect of the One. In this phrase 'I' is the possessor, and 'myself' is the possessed. So also God, the unmanifested, is the possessor; and nature, the manifestation, is the possessed, which has its source hidden within itself.

The possessed could not have been created from anything other than the possessor's own self, as there existed none but the possessor. Although the possessor and the possessed are considered to be two separate identities, in reality they are one. The possessor realizes the possessed through the medium of his own consciousness, which forms three aspects, the Trinity, of the one Being. The German philosopher Hegel says, 'If you say God is one, it is true; if you say He is two, that is also true; and if you say He is three, that is true too, because it is the nature of the world.'

God is regarded from three points of view: personality, morality, and reality. According to the first view, God is the most high; man is dependent upon Him and is His most obedient servant. According to the second view, God is the all-merciful and all-good Master of the Day of Judgement, while all evil is from Satan. The third is the philosophic view that God is the beginning and end of all, having Himself no beginning nor end. As a Sufi mystic has said, 'The universe is the manifestation of Allah, where from His own unity He created, by involution, variety — the state of various names and forms — , thereby distinguished as Allah, worthy of all praise and worship.'

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## DUAL ASPECT

According to Sufi tenets the two aspects of the supreme Being are termed *Zát* and *Sifat*, the Knower and the Known. The former is Allah and the latter Mohammed. *Zát* being only one in its existence, cannot be called by more than one name, which is Allah; and *Sifat*, being manifold in four different involutions, has numerous names, the sum of them all being termed Mohammed. The ascending and descending forms of *Zát* and *Sifat* form the circle of the Absolute. These two forces are called *Nuzul* and *Uruj*, which means involution and evolution. *Nuzul* begins from *Zát* and ends in *Sifat*; *Uruj* starts from *Sifat* and ends in *Zát*, *Zát* being the negative and *Sifat* the positive force.

*Zát* projects *Sifat* from its own self and absorbs it within itself. It is a rule of philosophy that the negative cannot lose its negativeness by projecting the positive from itself, though the positive covers the negative within itself, as the flame covers the fire. The positive has no independent existence, yet it is real because projected from the real, and it may not be regarded as an illusion. Human ignorance persists in considering *Zát* to be separate from *Sifat*, and *Sifat* independent of *Zát*.

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## WORSHIP

We may ask: why we should worship God, and whether the theoretical knowledge of His law in nature is not sufficient For the highest realization. The answer is: no. Theoretical knowledge of a subject can never take the place of experience, which is necessary for realization. Written music cannot entertain us unless it is played, nor the description of perfume delight our senses unless we smell it, no recipes of the most delicious dishes satisfy our hunger. Nor can the theory of God give complete joy and peace; we must actually realize God or attain that state of realization which gives eternal happiness through the admiration and worship of nature's beauty and its source. 'The Beloved is all in all, the lover only veils him; the Beloved is all that lives, the lover a dead thing' (*Jelal-ud-Din Rumi*).

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## TRUTH

Different methods called religions and philosophies have been adopted by different nations at various periods. Though the form and teachings of the several religions appear so unlike, their source is one and the same. But from the very beginning the differences have created prejudice, envy, and antagonism between man. Such dissensions occupy a large portion of the histories of the world and have become the most important subject in life.

*'So many castes and so many creeds,*

*So many faiths, and so many beliefs,*

*All have arisen from ignorance of man,*

*Wise is he who only truth conceives.'*

A wise man realizes that the fundamental basis of all religions and beliefs is one: *Haq*, or truth. The truth has always been covered by two garments: a turban on the head, and a robe upon the body. The turban is made of mystery known as mysticism, and the robe is made of morality, which is called religion. Truth has been covered thus by most of the prophets and saints, in order to hide it from ignorant eyes, as yet too undeveloped to bear it in its naked form. Those who see the truth uncovered, abandon reason and logic, good and bad, high and low, new and old; differences and distinctions of names and forms fade away, and the whole universe is realized as nothing other than *Haq*. Truth in its realization is one; in its representation it is many, since its revelations are made under varying conditions of time and space.

As water in a fountain flows in one stream but falls in many drops, divided by time and space, so are the revelations of the one stream of truth. Not everyone can comprehend the idea of different truths being derived from the one truth. Common sense has been so narrowly trained in this world of

variety, that it naturally fails to realize the breadth and subtlety of a spiritual fact so far beyond the reach of its limited reasoning.

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## THE SUFIS

The word Sufi is derived from *Safa* meaning pure, purified of ignorance, superstition, dogmatism, egotism, and fanaticism, as well as free from limitations of caste, creed, race, and nation. The Sufis believe in God as the Absolute, the only Being; and that all creation is the manifestation of His nature.

There have been Sufis at all periods of human history. Though they have lived in different parts of the world, speaking different languages and born into different faiths and beliefs, they have recognized and sympathized with each other, through the oneness of their understanding. Yet with their deep knowledge of the world and of spiritual mysteries, they have concealed their beliefs from the multitude, and have pursued in secret their way of attainment to the highest bliss.

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## SELF-KNOWLEDGE

Nature has been involved through spirit into matter, and evolves through different stages. Man is the result of the involution of spirit and the evolution of matter; the final effect of this cause is 'self-realization', which means that the Knower arrives at that stage of perfection where He can know Himself...

'Thou art a mortal being,  
And thou art the Eternal One;  
Know thyself, through light of wisdom,  
Except Thee there exists none.'

The human being is inherently capable of self-knowledge; but to know oneself means not only to know that one is John, Jacob, or Henry, or short, tall, or of normal height, or to know that one is good, bad, and so forth, but also to know the mystery of one's existence, theoretically as well as practically: to know what one is within oneself, from whence and for what purpose one was born on earth; whether one will live here for ever, or if one's stay is short; of what one is composed, and which attributes one possesses; whether one belongs to angels, contemplating the beauties of God's nature, or if one belongs to the animals, who know nothing other than to eat, drink, and be merry; or whether one belongs to the devils. It requires perfection in humanity to attain self-knowledge. To know that I am God, or we are gods, or to know that everything is a part of God, is not sufficient. Perfect realization can only be gained by passing through all the stages between man, the manifestation, and God, the only Being; knowing and realizing ourselves from the lowest to the highest point of existence, and so accomplishing the heavenly journey.

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## LOVE

The greatest principle of Sufism is, 'Ishq Allah, Ma'bud Allah' (God is love, lover, and beloved).

When Ahad, the only Being, became conscious of his Wahdat, only existence, through His own consciousness, then' His predisposition of love made Him project Himself to establish His dual aspect, that He might be able to love someone. This made God the lover, and manifestation the beloved; the next inversion makes manifestation the lover, and God the beloved. This force of love has been working through several evolutions and involutions, which end in man who is the ultimate aim of God. The dual aspect of God is significant in Zát and Sifat, in spirit and matter, and in the mineral, vegetable, animal, and human kingdoms, wherein the two sexes, male and female, are clearly represented. The dual aspect of God is symbolized by each form of this wonderful world. This whole universe, internally and externally, is governed by the source of love, which is sometimes the cause and sometimes the effect. The producer and the product are one, and that One is nothing but love.

*'A church, a temple or a Ka'ba stone,  
Qur'an or Bible or a martyr's bone,  
All these and more my heart can tolerate,  
Since my religion now is Love alone' (Abul Ala).*

Sufis take the course of love and devotion to accomplish their highest aim, because it is love which has brought man from the world of unity to the world of variety, and the same force can take him back again to the world of unity from that of variety.

'Love is the reduction of the universe to the single being, and the expansion of a single being, even to God' (*Balzac*).

Love is that state of mind in which the consciousness of the lover is merged in that of the object of his love; it produces in the lover all the attributes of humanity, such as resignation, renunciation, humility, kindness, contentment, patience, virtue, calmness, gentleness, charity, faithfulness, bravery, by which the devotee becomes harmonized with the Absolute. As one of God's beloved, a path is opened for his heavenly journey: at the end he arrives at oneness with God, and his whole individuality is dissolved in the ocean of eternal bliss where even the conception of God and man disappears.

*'Although love is a sweet madness,*

*Yet all infirmities it heals.*

*Saints and sages have passed through it,*

*Love both to God and man appeals.'*

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## PERFECTION

The ideal perfection, called *Baqa* by Sufis, is termed 'Najat' in Islam, 'Nirvana' in Buddhism, 'Salvation' in Christianity, and 'Mukhti' in Hinduism. This is the highest condition attainable, and all ancient prophets and sages experienced it, and taught it to the world.

Baqa is the original state of God. At this state every being must arrive some day, consciously or unconsciously, before or after death. The beginning and end of all beings is the same, difference only existing during the journey.

There are three ways in man's journey towards God. The first is the way of ignorance, through which each must travel. It is like a person walking for miles in the sun while carrying a heavy load on his shoulder, who, when fatigued, throws away the load and falls asleep under the shade of a tree. Such is the condition of the average person, who spends his life blindly under the influence of his senses and gathers the load of his evil actions; the agonies of his earthly longings creating a hell through which he must pass to reach the destination of his journey. With regard to him the Qur'an says, 'He who is blind in life, shall also be blind in the hereafter.'

The next way is that of devotion, which is for true lovers. Rumi says, 'Man may be the lover of man or the lover of God; after his perfection in either he is taken before the King of love.' Devotion is the heavenly wine, which intoxicates the devotee until his heart becomes purified from all infirmities and there remains the happy vision of the Beloved, which lasts to the end of the journey. 'Death is a bridge, which unites friend to friend' (*Sayings of Mohammed*).

The third is the way of wisdom, accomplished only by the few. The disciple disregards life's momentary comforts, unties himself from all earthly bondages and turns his eyes toward God, inspired with divine wisdom. He gains command over his body, his thoughts and feelings, and is thereby enabled to create his own heaven within himself, that he may rejoice until merged into the eternal goal. 'We have stripped the veil from thine eyes,

and thy sight today is keen', says the Qur'an. All must journey along one of these three paths, but in the end they arrive at one and the same goal. As it is said in the Qur'an, 'It is He who multiplied you on the earth, and to Him you shall be gathered.'

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## PROPHETS

It is hard for intellect alone to believe in the possibility of prophetic inspiration. Intellect is the consciousness reflected in the knowledge of names and forms; wisdom is consciousness in its pure essence, which is not necessarily dependent upon the knowledge of names and forms.

The gift of wisdom gives vision in. to the real nature of things as the X-ray penetrates material bodies. Wisdom has been specially bestowed upon certain persons, and in these rare cases the receivers of it are more than merely wise, and may be regarded as the very manifestation of wisdom. They are the prophets, who have foresight, inspiration, intuition, clairvoyance, and clairaudience as their inborn attributes.

A Sufi considers all prophets and sages, not as many individuals, but as the one embodiment of God's pure consciousness, or the manifestation of divine wisdom, appearing on earth for the awakening of man from his sleep of ignorance, in different names and forms. Just as one's own sub-consciousness would awaken one at a certain time, if previously warned, in the same way the consciousness of God is the agency for awakening His manifestation, projecting itself through different names and forms to accomplish His desire of being known. All these causes of wisdom are the manifestation of the one cause, Haq.

The prophetic mission was intended to train the world gradually in divine wisdom according to its mental evolution, and to impart it to man, according to his understanding, in forms suitable to various lands at different periods. This is why numerous different religions are still in existence, although the moral principles of all are the same.

Each prophet had a mission to prepare the world for the teaching of the next; each one prophesied the coming of the next, and the work was thus continued by all the prophets until Mohammed, the *Khatim al Mursalin*, the last messenger of divine wisdom and the seal of the prophets, came on his mission, and in his turn gave the final statement of divine wisdom: 'None

exists but Allah.' This message fulfilled the aim of prophetic mission. This final definition is a clear interpretation of all religions and philosophies in the most apparent form. There was no necessity left for any more prophets after this divine message, which created the spirit of democracy in religion by recognizing God in every being. By this message man received the knowledge that he may attain the highest perfection under the guidance of a perfect murshid or spiritual teacher.

Sufis have no prejudice regarding any prophets and masters. They look upon all as divine wisdom itself, the highest attribute of God, appearing under different names and forms; and they love them with all adoration, as the lover loves his beloved in all her different garments, and throughout all the stages of her life. Sufis also respectfully recognize and offer devotion to their Beloved, the divine wisdom in all her garments, at all times, and under such different names and forms as Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed. Mohammed teachings are studied and followed by the orthodox as religion, and by the deep thinkers as a philosophy.

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## SUFISM

Sufis, who had received spiritual training from all previous prophets and leaders, likewise received training from Mohammed. The openness of Mohammed's essential teachings paved the way for them to come forward into the world without the interference they had previously experienced, and a mystic order called the Saheba-e-Safa, Knights of Purity, was inaugurated by the Prophet, and afterwards was carried on by Ali and Siddiq. The lives of these knights were extraordinary in their wisdom, piety, bravery, spirituality, and great charity of heart. This order was carried on by their successors, who were called *Pir-o-Murshid*, *Shaikh*, etc., one after another, duly connected as links in a chain.

The spiritual bond between them is a miraculous force of divine illumination, and is experienced by worthy initiates of the Sufi Order; just as the electric current runs through all connected lamps and lights them. By this means the higher development is attained without great efforts. Sufism was unostentatiously practiced in Arabia during the period of Sahabis, Taba'in, and Taba'-i-taba'in. Charity, piety, spirituality, and bravery are the real proofs of Sufi advancement.

The sensational Sufi movements which took place in Persia in the later periods, have won all the credit of Sufism for the Persians, and Sufism came to be regarded as a Persian philosophy. Imam al-Ghazali, Juneyd-e Baghdadi, Farid-ud-Din 'Attar had taken the lead in advancing Sufism in the world at large. Shams-e-Tabré z, Sa'di, Khagani, Firdausi, Omar Khayyám, Abdul Ala and other great Sufi poets, have very substantially established the reputation of Sufism by their inspired poetical works on divine wisdom. Sa'adi's works (*Gulistan* and *Bostan*) illuminate the intellect; the Divan of Hafiz expands the heart with divine love; Jelal-ud-Din Rumi's poems, the *Masnavi e Ma'navi* inspire the soul.

These works were originally composed in Persian, but are now translated into many other languages. They have been a most important source of

education for humanity, and are studied as the most popular treatises on the divine wisdom of the East.

The spiritual part of Sufism was most miraculously realized by Abdul Qadir Jilani, Moin-ud-Din Chishti, Bahaud-Din Naqshband, Shihab-ud-Din Sohrawardi, and others.

India, being greatly addicted to philosophy, was well suited for Sufism, where, in ancient and modern records, a great many Sufis with miraculous careers are to be found. The tombs of Moin-ud-Din Chishti, Nizam-ud-Din, Sharif-ud-Din, Bandeh Navaz, Mohammed Gauth, are visited with much reverence and devotion by people of various nations and many beliefs, in thankful remembrance of their great careers.

Sufism, as a religious philosophy of love, harmony, and beauty, aims at expanding the soul of man until the realization of the beauty of all creation enables him to become as perfect an expression of divine harmony as possible. It is therefore natural that the Sufi Order should stand foremost as a spiritual power in the East, and that it is rapidly becoming recognized in the West.

Many Sufi saints have attained what is known as Godconsciousness, which is the most all-inclusive realization of the meaning of the word 'good' attainable by man. Strictly speaking, Sufism is neither a religion nor a philosophy; it is neither theism nor atheism, but stands between the two and fills the gap. Among the religious, Sufis are considered to be free-thinkers; while among intellectual philosophers they are considered religious, because they make use of subtler principles in life to elevate the soul than can readily be followed by material logic.

Sufis have in many cases realized and shown the greatest perfection in humanity. And among the lives of the Sufi saints may be found some of the most divine models of human perfection in all capacities, from a king to a laborer. The idea that Sufism sprang from Islam or from any other religion, is not necessarily true; yet it may rightly be called the spirit of Islam, as well as the pure essence of all religions and philosophies.



A true Sufi remains in the thought of truth continually, sees the truth in all things and never becomes prejudiced, but cultivates affection for all beings. A Sufi accomplishes the divine journey and reaches the highest grade of Baqa during this life, but people of all beliefs arrive, eventually, at the same level of understanding and realization which Sufism represents.

Sufism contains all branches of mysticism, such as psychology, occultism, spiritualism, clairvoyance, clairaudience, intuition, inspiration, etc., but that which a Sufi particularly wishes to acquire is not necessarily any of the above-named powers; because the object of all these powers is towards greater individuality, and individuality itself is only a hindrance on the Sufi's path towards the accomplishment of his highest perfection. Therefore the main object of initiation in the Sufi Order is to cultivate the heart through renunciation and resignation, that it may be pure enough to sow the seed of divine love and realize the highest truth and wisdom, both theoretically and practically, thereby attaining the highest attributes of humanity.

Divine perfection is perfection in all powers and mysteries. All mysteries, powers, and realizations gradually manifest themselves to the Sufi through his natural development, without his specially striving for them.

Self-realization is the highest and most difficult attainment of all; it is impossible to acquire it in the manner of sciences and arts, nor is it possible to attain it as health, wealth, honor, and power can be obtained by certain means. For the sake of selfrealization, thousands have renounced family and all worldly possessions, and kings their kingdoms, and they have retired to desert, jungle, or mountain fastness, striving to find in asceticism the secret of this bliss.

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## SUFI TRAINING

The murshid prefers a mureed whose mind is unembarrassed by other methods of training; who is free from worldly considerations, and is possessed of whole-hearted perseverance; who is capable of committing himself with perfect faith and devotion to the guidance of his murshid.

The practice of harmony and temperance is essential, but the murshid never prescribes for his mureeds the ascetic life; rather it is a peculiarity of the Sufi training that the mureed is quickened to appreciate and enjoy the world more than others. The murshid at first creates divine love in the mureed, which, in the course of time, develops and purifies his heart so much that it permits the virtues of humanity to develop freely of themselves. He then receives more and more divine wisdom from the appointed channel, and at last arrives at complete self-realization.

There is no common course of study for mureeds; each receives the special training best adapted to his requirements. In other words, the murshid, as a spiritual physician, prescribes a suitable remedy for curing every mureed. There is no limit of time for the advancement to a certain degree. To one, realization may come the moment after initiation; to another it may not be vouchsafed during his whole life. Among the Sayings of Mohammed one finds: 'It depends upon nothing but the mercy of Allah whomever He may kindly choose for it.'

Still, there is hope of success: 'Whoever walks one step towards the grace of Allah, the Divine mercy walks forward ten steps to receive him' (id.).

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## MANIFESTATION

The only Being has manifested Himself through seven different planes of existence, to accomplish His desire of being recognized:

Tanzih

1. Zát — the unmanifested
2. Ahadiat — plane of Eternal Consciousness

Wahdat — plane of consciousness

Wahdaniat — plane of abstract ideas

Tashbih

5. Arwah — the spiritual plane
6. Ajsam — the astral plane
7. Insan — the physical plane

There are, again, seven aspects of manifestation:

1. Sitara — planetary
2. Mahtab — lunar
3. Aftab — solar
4. Madeniát — mineral kingdom
5. Nabitat — vegetable kingdom
6. Haywanat — animal kingdom

## 7. Insan — human kingdom

Insan, being the ideal manifestation, recognizes God by the knowledge of his own self. Man reaches this perfection by development through five grades of evolution:

1. Nasut — material plane
2. Malakut — mental plane
3. Jabarut — astral plane
4. Lahut — spiritual plane
5. Hahut — plane of consciousness

Each grade of development prepares a person for a higher one, and perfects him in five different grades of humanity:

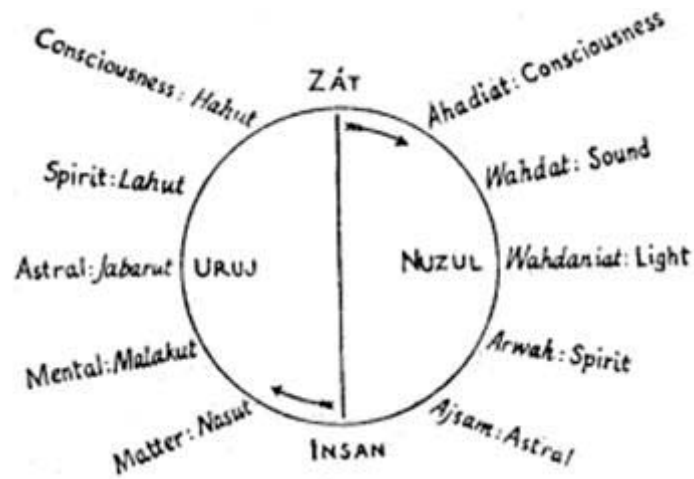
1. Adam — the ordinary man
2. Insan — the wise man
3. Wali — the holy man
4. Qutb — the saint
5. Nabi — the prophet

The five natures corresponding to these five grades are:

1. Ammara — who acts under the influence of his senses;
2. Lauwama — one who repents of his follies;
3. Mutmaina — one who considers before taking action;
4. Alima — one who thinks, speaks and acts aright;

5. Salima — one who sacrifices himself for the benefit of others.

The following is a diagram illustrating the planes of Nuzul and Uruj (evolution and involution):



All planes of existence consist of vibrations, from the finest to the grossest kind; the vibrations of each plane have come from a higher one, and have become grosser. Whoever knows the mystery of vibrations, he indeed knows all things. Vibrations are of five different aspects, appearing as the five elements:

1. Nur — ether
2. Baad — air
3. Atesh — fire
4. Aab — water
5. Khaak — earth

In relation to these elements, mankind has five senses:

Senses Organs

Basarat — sense of sight the eyes

Samat — sense of hearing the ears

Naghat — sense of smell the nose

Lazzat — sense of taste the tongue

Muss — sense of touch the skin

Through these senses and different organs of the mental and physical existence the *Ruh*, the soul, experiences life; and when the *Ruh* receives the highest experience of all phases of existence by the favor of the murshid, then it will have that peace and bliss, the attainment of which is the only object of manifestation.

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## INTEREST AND INDIFFERENCE

Interest results from ignorance and indifference results from wisdom; still it is not wise to avoid interest as long as we are in the world of illusion. It is the interest of God which has been the cause of all creation and which keeps the whole universe in harmony; nevertheless one should not be completely immersed in phenomena, but should realize oneself as being independent of interests.

The dual aspect of the only Being, in the form of love and beauty, has glorified the universe and produced harmony.

He who arrives at the state of indifference without experiencing interest in life is incomplete, and apt to be tempted by interest at any moment; but he who arrives at the state of indifference by going through interest, really attains the blessed state. Perfection is reached not through interest alone, nor through indifference alone, but through the right experience and understanding of both.

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## SPIRIT AND MATTER

From the scientific standpoint, spirit and matter are quite different from each other, but according to the philosophical point of view they are one.

Spirit and matter are different, bust as water is different from snow; yet again they are not different, for snow is nothing other than water. When spiritual vibrations become more dense they turn into matter, and when material vibrations become finer they develop into spirit.

For a Sufi at the beginning of his training the spiritual life is desirable, but after mastering it, material and spiritual lives become the same to him, and he is master of both.

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## THE HEART AND SOUL

Man's heart is the throne of God. The heart is not only a physical organ but is also the function of feeling, placed in the midst of the body and soul. The heart of flesh is the instrument which first receives the feeling of the soul, and transmits its effect through the whole body. There are four aspects of the heart:

1. *'Arsh — the exaltation of the will*
2. *Kursi — the seat of justice and distinction*
3. *Lawh — the fount of inspiration*
4. *Kalam — the source of intuition*

Breath keeps body, heart, and soul connected. It consists of astral vibrations, and has much influence upon the physical and spiritual existence. The first thing a Sufi undertakes in order to harmonize the entire existence, is the purification of the heart; since there is no possibility of the heart's development without devotion, so the faithful mureed becomes a Sahib-e Dil, as the easiest and most ideal way of development.

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## INTELLECT AND WISDOM

Intellect is the knowledge obtained by experience of names and forms; wisdom is the knowledge which manifests only from the inner being; to acquire intellect one must delve into studies, but to obtain wisdom, nothing but the flow of divine mercy is needed; it is as natural as the instinct of swimming to the fish, or of flying to the bird. Intellect is the sight which enables one to see through the external world, but the light of wisdom enables one to see through the external into the internal world.

Wisdom is greater and more difficult to attain than intellect, piety, or spirituality.

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## DREAMS AND INSPIRATIONS

Dreams and inspirations are open proofs of the higher world. The past, present, and future are frequently seen in a dream, and may also be revealed through inspiration. The righteous person sees more clearly than the unrighteous. There are five kinds of dreams:

1. Khayali — in which the actions and thoughts of the day are reproduced in sleep.
2. Qalbi — in which the dream is opposite to the real happening.
3. Naqshi — in which the real meaning is disguised by as symbolic representation which only the wise can understand.
4. Ruhi — in which the real happening is literally shown.
5. Elhami — in which divine messages are given in letters or by an angelic voice.

Dreams give, sometimes clearly, sometimes in a veiled form, warnings of coming dangers and assurance of success. The ability to be conscious of dreams and their meaning varies with the degree of development attained.

Dreams have their effect sooner or later, according to the stars under which they take place. The dream seen at midnight is realized within one year, and the dream of the latter part of night within six months; the dream of the early morning is realized soon after. At the same time the manifestation of dreams is subject to qualification according to the good or bad actions of the dreamer.

Inspirations are more easily reflected upon spiritual persons than upon material ones. Inspiration is the inner light which reflects itself upon the heart of man; the purer the heart is from rust, like a clean mirror, the more

clearly inspiration can be reflected in it. To receive inspirations clearly the heart should be prepared by proper training. A heart soiled with rust is never capable of receiving them. There are five kinds of inspiration:

1. Elham-e-'Ilm — inspiration of an artist and scientist
2. Elham-e-Husn — inspiration of a musician and poet
3. Elham-e-'Ishq — inspiration of a devotee
4. Elham-e-Ruh — inspiration of a mystic
5. Elham-e-Ghayb — inspiration of a prophet

Inspirations are reflected upon mankind in five ways:

1. Kushad der Khyal — in the wave of thought
2. Kushad der Hal — in emotions and feelings
3. Kushad der Jemal — in the sufferings of the heart
4. Kushad der Jelal — in the flow of wisdom
5. Kushad der Kemal — in the divine voice and vision

Some are born with an inspirational gift, and to some it appears after their development. The higher the development in spirituality, the greater the capacity for inspiration, yet the gift of inspiration is not constant; as the saying of Mohammed declares, 'Inspirations are enclosed as well as disclosed at times; they appear according to the will of Allah, the only Knower of the unknown.'

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## LAW OF ACTION

The law of cause and effect is as definite in its results in the realm of speech and thought as in the physical world.

Evil done, when it is considered evil, is a sin; and good done, when it is considered good, is a virtue, but one who does good or bad without understanding, has no responsibility for his sins nor credit for his virtues; but he is liable to punishment or reward just the same.

Man forms his future by his actions. His every good or bad action spreads its vibrations and becomes known throughout the universe. The more spiritual a man is, the stronger and clearer are the vibrations of his actions, which spread over the world and weave his future.

The universe is like a dome: it vibrates to that which you say in it, and echoes the same back to you. So also is the law of action: we reap what we sow.

It is impossible to differentiate between good and bad, because the thing seen is colored by the personality of the seer; to the bad view, all good is bad, and to the good view, even the bad seems good in a certain sense; so the wise keep silence in distinguishing good from bad. The most essential rule is not to do to others that which you would not have done to you. That action is desirable which results from kindness, and that action is undesirable which is unkind. Doubtless also, might is often right, but in the end, right is the only might.

There are different principles for life in different religions, but a Sufi's will is the principle for himself. He is the servant, who surrenders himself to principles; and he is the master, who prescribes principles for himself. One who has never been commanded in life, never knows how to command; in the same way, to be the master, one must first be the servant.

The murshid as a physician of the soul prescribes necessary principles to the mureed, who after accomplishing the training, arrives at that blessed state where he overcomes virtues and sins, and stands beyond good and bad. To

him happiness no longer differs from sorrow, for his thought, speech, and action become the thought, speech, and action of God.

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## MUSIC AMONG SUFIS

Music is called *Ghiza-i-ruh*, the food of the soul, by Sufis. Music being the most divine art elevates the soul to the higher spirit; music itself being unseen soon reaches the unseen; just as only the diamond can break the diamond, so musical vibrations are used to make the physical and mental vibrations inactive, in order that the Sufi may be elevated to the spiritual spheres.

Music consists of vibrations which have involved from the top to the bottom, and if they would only be systematically used, they could be evolved from the bottom to the top. Real music is known only to the most gifted ones. Music has five aspects:

1. Tarab — music which induces motion of the body (artistic)
2. Raga — music which appeals to the intellect (scientific)
3. Qul — music which creates feelings (emotional)
4. Nida — music heard in vision (inspirational)
5. Saut — music in the abstract (celestial)

Music has always been the favorite Sufi means of spiritual development. Rumi, the author of the *Masnavi*, introduced music into his Maulvi Order, and enjoyed the memory of his blessed murshid's association while listening to it. Since that time music has become the second subject of Sufi practices. They declare that it creates harmony in both worlds and brings eternal peace.

The great mystic of India, Khwaja Moin-ud-Din Chishti, introduced music into his Chishtia Order. Even today musical entertainments for the elevation of the soul, called *Suma*, are held among Sufis.

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## ECSTASY

Ecstasy is called *Wajad* by Sufis: it is especially cultivated among the Chishtis. This bliss is the sign of spiritual development and also the opening for all inspirations and powers. This is the state of eternal peace, which purifies from all sins. Only the most advanced Sufis can experience *Wajad*. Although it is the most blissful and fascinating state, those who give themselves entirely to it become unbalanced, for too much of anything is undesirable; as the day's labor is a necessary precursor of the night's rest, so it is better to enjoy this spiritual bliss only after the due performance of worldly duties.

Sufis generally enjoy *Wajad* while listening to music called *Qawwali*, special music producing emotions of love, fear, desire, repentance, etc.

There are five aspects of *Wajad*: *Wajad* of dervishes, which produces a rhythmic motion of the body; *Wajad* of idealists, expressed by a thrilling sensation of the body, tears and sighs; *Wajad* of devotees, which creates an exalted state in the physical and mental body; *Wajad* of saints, which creates perfect calm and peace; and *Wajad* of prophets, the realization of the highest consciousness called *Sadrat al Manteha*. One who by the favor of the murshid arrives at the state of *Wajad* is undoubtedly the most blessed soul and deserves all adoration.

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## CONCENTRATION

The entire universe in all its activity has been created through the concentration of God. Every being in the world is occupied consciously or unconsciously in some act of concentration. Good and evil are alike the result of concentration. The stronger the concentration, the greater the result; lack of concentration is the cause of failure in all things. For this world and the other, for material as well as spiritual progress, concentration is most essential.

The power of will is much greater than the power of action, but action is the final necessity for the fulfillment of the will. Perfection is reached by the regular practice of concentration, passing through three grades of development: Faná -fi-Shaikh, annihilation in the astral plane, Faná-fi-Rasul, annihilation in the spiritual plane, and Faná-fi-Allah, annihilation in the abstract.

After passing through these three grades, the highest state is attained of Bá qi-bi-Allah, annihilation in the eternal consciousness, which is the destination of all who travel by this path.

Breath is the first thing to be well studied. This is the very life, and also the chain which connects material existence with the spiritual. Its right control is a ladder leading from the lowest to the highest stage of development. Its science is to be mastered by the favor of the murshid, the guiding light of God.

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## MALE AND FEMALE ASPECTS OF GOD

The only Being is manifested throughout all planes of existence in two aspects, male and female, representing nature's positive and negative forces. In the plane of consciousness there are two aspects: *Wahdat*, consciousness, and *Ahadiat*, eternal consciousness, and thus also spirit and matter, night and day, signify the dual aspect on lower planes. In the mineral and vegetable kingdoms sex is in a state of evolution, but the highest manifestation of male and female is man and woman.

Man being the first aspect of manifestation, is the more spiritual and nearer to God; woman being the next manifestation, is finer and more capable of divine knowledge. Man's natural tendency is towards God, while woman's tendency is towards the world. These contrary tendencies result in balance. Therefore man needs woman to direct his life, and woman needs man for her guidance and protection, both being incomplete in themselves.

The problem of the emancipation of woman may be studied by a comparison of her position in the East and in the West.

The Oriental woman, whose freedom is restricted, is the better wife from the individual point of view, but the enforced inactivity of half the population is not beneficial to the nation. The Occidental woman who is given entire freedom is less anxious for and less capable of home life, but being out in the world her influence promotes the advancement of the nation.

At first sight it would appear that woman is more respected by man in the West, but in reality the East gives her the greater reverence.

Man has more freedom than woman throughout the entire world because he has more strength and power; and the fineness of woman needs protection, just as the eye, being the finest organ of the body, has been protected by nature with eyelids. Both excel in their own characteristics.

A virgin is idolized by man because she is the model of high manifestation; woman's virtue is a greater ideal than her physical and intellectual beauty. Nature has placed her under the protection of man, but what is most desirable is that man gives her freedom and that she appreciates it by making the best use of it.

There are three kinds of virgins. One, commonly considered a virgin, who has never had association with a man; another is the virgin in heart, whose love is centered in one beloved only; and the third is the virgin in soul, who considers man as God. She alone can give birth to a divine child.

A woman may become a doctor, solicitor, or minister, but it is incomparably greater if she can become a good wife and a kind mother.

Monogamy and polygamy are inborn human attributes. They also exist among birds and beasts. Each individual is born with one of these tendencies, but sometimes one rather than the other is developed by the effect of the atmosphere and surroundings. These tendencies also depend upon the climatic and physical conditions of different countries and races. Polygamy may be natural to man, and monogamy to woman, as the former helps manifestation while the latter destroys it. Illegal polygamy is worse than legal, because it creates deceit and falsehood. Monogamy is the ideal life which is a comfort in this world and the next, and perfects one in love.

Absolute renunciation is as undesirable as is the blind attachment to the world. The ideal life is detached interest in the world, which is best accomplished by man and woman together.

Woman is a mystery within herself, owing to her subtle nature. Sages who made the mistake of considering woman to be of lesser spiritual importance forgot that they themselves were the product of woman.

The majority of prophets and masters have been men because man is the higher manifestation, as is signified by the myth of Adam and Eve, in which Eve was born from the rib of Adam, meaning that woman is the later manifestation; the fruit means that woman directed man's thoughts towards procreation. The interpretation of Adam and Eve's exile from heaven is the fall of mankind from the state of innocence to the state of

youth. The separation and unhappiness of Adam and Eve show the object of God to manifest in the dual aspect, that He may accomplish his real desire of love. According to the Vedanta half of the divine body, Ardhangi, is womanhood, proving that unity of both is the complete life.

Sufis consider a life of complete unity the most balanced, if it is true and harmonious. Love and wisdom create harmony between man and woman; but these being absent, harmony ceases to exist.

A child inherits more attributes from its mother than from its father, therefore the mother is more responsible for its merits and defects and if she has knowledge she can train the soul of her child even before its birth by the power of her concentration, molding the child's future according to her own will.

Harmony between truer persons is more lasting than the affections of average mankind. People of angelic qualities have everlasting harmony between them, in which God Himself accomplishes His object of manifestation.

Mankind is born with a worshipful attitude, and as all attitudes demand satisfaction by expression, so the attitude of worship finds its object of adoration. The ancient Greeks and Shiva Bhaktas of India worshipped both aspects of manifestation in the names of gods and goddesses. Sufism, being the essence of all religions and philosophies, looks upon both the opposite aspects of nature as one in reality, and calls it *Safat Allah*. Sufis reach realization of God by adoring His nature, calling on Him saying, 'Kull-i shayin Há l-i kull', which means, 'Everything will perish except His own Face.' They look upon all names and forms as the means of realizing the One, the only Being.

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