

Vernacularization of Islam and Sufism in South Asia: A Study of the Production of Sufi Literature in Local Languages

Abstract

Vernacularization of Islam is the process through which the message and teachings of Islam adjusted and adapted in local regional environments outside Arabia. The universal principles of Islam were vernacularized in specific time and space, and contextualized or localized forms and expressions of Muslim piety emerged in these regions. The credit of vernacularization of Islam and Sufism in South Asia particularly goes to the sufis who challenged the Arabo-Persian linguistic hegemony by producing religious literature in vernacular languages and dialects, as a vast majority of the sufis depended less on Arabic and Persian for the popularization of the sufi message. They employed the medium of vernacular poetry to disseminate the message of Sufism among the common people. They contributed to the development of various scripts as well as new or existing literary genres such as *siharfis*, *kafis*, *Prem-kahani* or 'Sufi Romances,' and *ginans*, in order to popularize the teachings of Sufism in South Asia.

Keywords: Vernacular Islam, Sufism, sufi literature, poetry, languages, dialects

Arabia is traditionally considered the heartland of Islam, from where Islam, or more accurately, the *shari'ah* of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) originated. Soon Islam spread outside Arabia, resulting in mass conversions of the local population to Islam in Persia in the East, in Byzantium in the North, and in North Africa in the West. To the adherents of Islam in these regions, Islam as a faith promised enough flexibility and accommodation to be adjusted in varied socio-cultural backgrounds. Consequently, the universal principles of Islam were vernacularized in specific time and space, and contextualized or localized forms and expressions of Muslim piety emerged in these regions. Owing to the regional geographical and cultural variations, diverse manifestations of Islam in the form of beliefs, thoughts and practices can be seen in these regional settings. The indigenous social and cultural traditions came to be well-reflected in the beliefs and practices associated with Islam. Thus, vernacularization of Islam can be understood as a process through which the message and teachings of Islam adjusted and adapted in local regional environments, particularly in the non-Arab regions.

The notion of 'vernacular Islam' does not deny the consistencies or universalist

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orientations in many Muslim beliefs and practices, which are practiced all over the globe with considerable similarity. The five daily prayers facing Makkah or fasting from the sunrise till sunset during the month of Ramadan are very much identical. Probably, one of the greatest examples of the similarity of Muslim practices can be seen at the annual pilgrimage to Makkah, which is performed by the Muslims coming from all parts of the world, but they all perform its stipulated rites and rituals in specific dates of the Hijri calendar in a strikingly similar fashion. Vernacular Islam as an area of study does acknowledge this universalism of Islam. However, it tends to de-centre the traditional study of Islam in the Arab world, which has long been the focus of 'Islamic studies.' One must not forget that almost 80% of the world Muslims are non-Arabs, who live in the so-called fringes or peripheries of the Muslim world, away from the Arabian heartland. Vernacular Islam focuses more on the beliefs and practices of the Muslim living all across the globe, in very diverse geographies, speaking varied languages and dialects, professing multiple cultures with local forms of knowledge. Many Muslim practices in these regions have local cultural influences, and many of such practices are confined to specific locales. These practices can easily be distinguished from the universal practices shared by all Muslims. Vernacular Islam is sometimes dismissed as mere 'folk Islam' or 'popular Islam' associated with Sufism, and hence, an area unworthy of scholarly attention, though it has attracted the attention of anthropologists in recent decades. Vernacular Islam explores the creative adaptations of Islam in fringes or peripheries of the Muslim world. It challenges the popular image of the monolithic and homogenized Islam all across the globe. Nonetheless, one must not forget that the Quran was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in seventh-century Arabia. It was not revealed in a cultural vacuum; the Prophet of Islam (PBUH) translated the universal principles of Islam, as enunciated in the Quran, into practice keeping in view the specific socio-cultural conditions of the Arabs.

Historically, in Muslim societies, the sufis have been viewed as the agents of vernacularization of Islam through varied means and at varied levels. One of the means of vernacularizing the message of Islam and Sufism was the production of sufi literature in local languages. Though the founding sufi shaykhs of the early centuries of Islam had composed sufi texts in Arabic, and later on in Persian language, the later centuries witnessed the expansion of sufi literature into local vernaculars. Scholars of South Asian Islam have erroneously considered sufi vernacular literature, including the sufi poetry, as something marginal, since it is generally associated with 'folk Islam,' with whom the common people identify themselves. Contrarily, the sufi literature in Arabic or Persian languages had a popular appeal among the elite, and it was seen to represent the so-called 'high' Islam.¹ This literature generally consisted of sufi philosophical and theosophical works, and its target readership was the initiated people having some know-how of Sufism. However, the whole idea of 'high' sufi literature in Arabic and Persian—the so-called 'Islamic languages'—needs to be de-centred, while bringing the sufi literature including poetry in vernacular languages produced anywhere in the entire Islamicate world at the centre of academic discourse. The production of vernacular sufi literature is one of many expressions and ways of vernacularization of the message of Sufism.

The present article particularly focuses on the vernacularization of Islam and Sufism in South Asia by highlighting the production of sufi literature in local languages. It analyzes how the sufis challenged the Arabo-Persian linguistic hegemony by producing religious literature in vernacular languages and dialects. It studies how they used the medium of poetry in vernacular languages to disseminate the message of Sufism among the common people. It explores their contribution in the development of various scripts as well as new or existing literary genres such as *siharfis*, *kafis*, *Prem-kahani* or 'Sufi Romances' and *ginans* to popularize the teachings of Sufism.

1. Sufis Challenging the Arabo-Persian Linguistic Hegemony by Production of Religious Literature in Vernacular Languages and Dialects

In Islamicate South Asia, the sufis challenged the cultural and linguistic hegemony of the ruling elite, or the *ashraf*, through various means. The ruling elite, primarily comprising the migrant Muslims from Arabia, Persia, Central Asia, and Afghanistan, had Turco-Persian cultural expressions.² Since the ruling elite believed in cultural exclusivity, the process of their cultural assimilation in South Asia was very slow. Arabic was, and still, seen as the language of religious instruction and learning. Persian was the language of the court, and many rulers patronized the historians, prose-writers and poets writing in Persian and Arabic languages. Therefore, the need to translate and vernacularize Islam in local context was felt, though such efforts received bitter reaction and vehement opposition. The sufis were the prime agents of cultural assimilation of the migrants and the natives, hence, bridging the gulf between the elite and the commoners, referred to as *ajlaf*. The sufi *khanqahs* (hospices or sufi dwellings) were the places where people of different shades of opinion, professing different faiths and cultures, and speaking different languages met and interacted with each other, making the *khanqahs* centres of cultural synthesis. In these *khanqahs*, local languages and dialects were freely used, and in addition to Persian and Arabic, people were also instructed in the sufi doctrines in their native dialects and languages.

The sufis challenged the socio-cultural and religious hegemony of the *ulama*. The findings of the study on the role of the sufis in Bengali society by Asim Roy reveal that the sufis as 'cultural mediators' were able to challenge the religio-cultural domination of the *ulama*. These *ulama*, having elitist cultural orientation, were conventional in their religious attitude, and had not allowed the local Bengali language to become the vehicle for the dissemination and diffusion of Islam. They failed to realize that their use of Arabic was impeding the spread of the religion in Bengal. Consequently, the Bengali Muslims, as elsewhere in India, were unable to follow the religious works in Arabic and Persian languages. The attempts to make religious literature available in Bengali language were condemned by these *ulama*, who opposed the reduction of the sublime religious truth, enshrined in Arabic or Persian, to a 'profane' and 'vulgar' local language.³ The same is true for the sufis and *ulama* of other regions in South Asia.

On the one hand, Islam in its Arabo-Persian linguistic and cultural cast failed to get any meaningful response from the common people. On the other hand, the rendering of Quran in a language other than Arabic, in which it was originally revealed, was not acceptable to the traditionalist *ulama*. The resulting lack of intelligibility of the Quran seriously thwarted its understanding by the common people not conversant with Arabic. It created a dependence of the ordinary upon the *ulama*, well-versed in the language of the Quran, for its understanding and interpretation. It created the monopoly of the *ulama* over the production of Quranic meaning, and further strengthened their religious authority and social prestige. This 'Brahmanization' of the Quran created by the socio-linguistic hegemony of the *ulama* was challenged by the sufis.

These innovative views and efforts of the sufis for disseminating the word of God in a language other than Arabic began with its translation in Persian. Makhdum Nuh (d. 1590), a Suhrawardi sufi of Halah in Sindh, is said to have translated the Quran, the most important and authoritative religious text in Islam, in Persian language.⁴ It can be said to be the first ever Persian translation of the Quran in South Asia. Two centuries later, the translation of Quran in Persian language by Shah Wali-Allah (d. 1762) titled *Fath al-Rahman* was resented by his contemporary *ulama*, as they saw it as a threat to their religious authority. They accused him of religious innovation, and even tried to physically harm him.⁵ These efforts of Shah Wali-Allah were continued by his scholarly sufi sons: Shah Rafi al-Din (d. 1818) rendered Quran in literal Urdu language for the first time, while Shah Abd al-Qadir (d. 1813) produced its Urdu translation in idiomatic language.⁶

Shah Fazle Rahman (d. 1895) of Ganj Muradabad, a town in District Unnao in Uttar Pradesh (India), was a Naqshbandi sufi, and the founder of *Silsilah-i Rahmaniyya*, a sub-lineage of Naqshbandiyya, which is named after him. In the assembly of his disciples and devotees, Shah Fazle Rahman used to freely render the Quranic verses into colloquial Purabi-Hindi dialect, and some of his disciples used to record it. It was not a systematic attempt at translating the complete text of the Quran in a native dialect, and probably nor was it intended for wider dissemination at a later stage. Only some select *surahs* (chapters) or their select sections were translated. Later, it was published with the title *Mannmohan ki bataan*.⁷ The religious vocabulary and diction employed in the translation-interpretation of the Quran are very unusual and unconventional, as it has been derived from Sanskrit and Hindi language. The equation between the doctrines and beliefs of Islam with those of Hinduism speaks volume of his ingenious creativity in the realm of religious philosophy. For instance, he translates the term Allah as Ishwar and Parameshwar, and likewise translates the Quranic terms *Rasul* and *Nabi* as *Avatar*. In doing so, Shah Fazle Rahman first tried to decontextualize the

sacred text from Arab-Islamic context, and secondly, tried to recontextualize it in local Indian environment, i.e. Hindu context. In other words, his translation-interpretation tended to indigenize and vernacularize the sacred text by minimizing its foreignness.

Apart from translating the Quran in local languages and dialects in recent times,⁸ the sufis also tried to vernacularize other areas of worship as well. For instance, the renowned thirteenth-century Chishti sufi, Shaykh Farid al-Din Masud Ganj-i Shakar of Pakpattan, popularly known as Baba Farid (d. 1271), used to prescribe *dhikr* (remembrance of God) to the native people in Punjabi language.⁹ Another Chishti sufi, Shah Fakhr al-Din of Delhi (d. 1784) was bold enough to argue that the *khutba* (sermon) before the Friday congregational prayers should be read in Hindavi language,¹⁰ so that it could be understood by the common people who could not speak or understand Arabic. So the sufis tried to pull down the language barricade in order to make Islamic and sufi traditions look more meaningful, enabling the local people to relate these traditions to their culturally-grounded belief-systems. Apart from language, the sufis also translated the message of Sufism into a more locally familiar cultural worldview of common people. That was why the sufis had emerged as an alternative locus of religious authority in Islam, in addition to the *ulama*.

2. Dissemination of Sufi Message through Poetry in Vernacular Languages and Dialects.

The sufis who had immigrated to India from other regions of the Islamic world made themselves conversant with the local languages and dialects. In addition to Hindavi/Urdu and Hindi, the sufis could also speak other languages including Rajasthani, Punjabi, Sindhi, Marathi, Bengali, Bihari, Dakkani, Tamil, and Telugu, etc. in varied socio-cultural and geographical contexts. For instance, Khwajah Mu'in al-Din Chishti of Ajmer (d. 1236) had learnt 'Hindustani' language in Multan before he settled in Ajmer.¹¹ Another Chishti sufi, Shaykh Hamid al-Din Siwali of Nagaur (d. 1278) used to converse in Hindavi language.¹² According to Amir Khurd, Baba Farid could speak the local language.¹³ Another Chishti sufi, Saiyyid Bandahnawaz Gesudiraz (d. 1422) could speak Hindavi language.¹⁴ Though the assemblies in the *khanqah* of Sharaf al-Din Ahmad Yahya Maneri (d. 1381) in Bihar were conducted in Persian, he conversed with the common people in the local language.¹⁵ Shaykh Ahmad Khattu (d. 1447) of Maghrabi *Silsilah*, who lived in the town of Sarkhej near Ahmadabad in Gujarat, knew and spoke Hindi and Gojri (a dialect of Rajasthani).¹⁶

Though many sufis wrote philosophical and theosophical treatises in Persian and Arabic, they composed works on prose and poetry on sufi themes for the common people in local languages. The sufi poetry in particular acquired the form of popular songs or work songs sung by women in the villages while performing domestic chores. Interestingly, an important characteristic of vernacular sufi

poetry is the use of feminine voice by the male sufi poets. In particular, it is found in Punjabi, Sindhi, early Urdu poetry composed in Deccan, as well as Rekhti *ghazals* (love songs) from Lucknow.¹⁷ In many of such poems, the woman is taken as a symbol of the human soul. Moreover, the sufi poets employed the trope or literary motif of *virahini* (a woman separated from her husband or beloved and longing to be united with him), which symbolized the yearning human soul longing to be united with the Divine. The motif of *virahini* was borrowed from Hindi-Sanskrit literary traditions. The sufis took advantage of the popularity of this motif, and employed it in varied forms within the complex sufi context. By employing this motif, the sufis “indigenized their poetry to the literary tastes of their local Indian audiences.”¹⁸ Moreover, the sufis kept in mind the linguistic and phonetic features of local languages and dialects while composing poetry. Yusuf Husain maintains that “the metres used by them [the sufis] are mostly Hindi, and occasionally Persian. The rhyming of all words, whether of Hindi or Arab or Persian origin, is based on their similarity of sound, as they are pronounced by the inhabitants of this country.”¹⁹

The vernacular sufi literature greatly contributed to the dissemination of the teachings, values and ethics of Sufism and Islam among the common people. As Eaton has shown, the sufi folk literature including poetry provided a vital link between Hindus and Muslims, since the abstract sufi doctrines were translated in easily comprehensible and appealing form through this literature, which became popular among the illiterate Hindus and Muslims alike. In addition, the sufi folk literature played a vital role in the expansion of Islam in the Islamicate South Asia.²⁰ Schimmel reminds that in premodern times, poetry was “practically the only vehicle for influencing the illiterate masses. . . Poetry was the daily bread for millions of people who formed their *Weltbild* according to the picture presented to them by the poets.”²¹ These sufi poets played a crucial role in influencing and molding the worldview of the common people, who internalized the sufi teachings and ethics through the sufi verses orally transmitted to them. In the opinion of Nile Green,

... “these orally-transmitted verse forms were able to penetrate and shape the imagination of the masses in a way that the Quran could not. As with each passing century the Arabic of the Quran became ever more distant from the many spoken languages of Islam, the songs and the shrines of the Sufis served to bridge the growing distance between the believer and the moment of Muhammad’s revelation. And for increasing number of Muslims in their far-flung locales, what they knew of Islam was what was brokered through the tongues and tombs of their community’s Sufis.”²²

What follows is a brief analysis of the contribution of the sufis in the development of local languages through production of varied genres of sufi literature including poetry:

(i) Hindavi

According to Mawlvi Abdul Haqq (d. 1961), known as *Baba-i Urdu*, it was the sufi *khanqahs* where free interaction of the migrants and the natives led to the evolution of Hindavi (the earlier form of Urdu) as a common medium of communication.²³ However, recent scholars argue that Hindavi predates the Muslim arrival, which continued to develop after the advent of the Muslims.²⁴ Hindavi represented the assimilation and social integration of various social groups and classes. Realizing that they could not reach the common people through Persian or Arabic, the sufis employed the local languages and dialects, including the Hindi and Hindavi, for dissemination of the message of Islam and Sufism. So the literary compositions by the sufis played an important role in linguistic indigenization.²⁵

Some of the earliest sufis were familiar with Hindi and local dialects. Baba Farid was familiar with Hindavi, and conversed and composed poetry in it.²⁶ His contemporary Chishti sufi, Shaykh Hamid al-Din Siwali used Hindi and Hindavi words in his *malfuzat* (the conversations of the sufis recorded by their disciples) and also composed poetry in Hindi and Hindavi in addition to Persian.²⁷ However, the fourteenth-century South Asia witnessed a linguistic revolution when systematic sufi literature was produced in vernacular languages. The fourteenth-century Chishti sufi poet and musician, Abu'l Hasan Yamin al-Din Khusrau, popularly known as Amir Khusrau (d. 1325) and who was a disciple of Shaykh Nizam al-Din Awliya (d. 1325), wrote Hindavi couplets and riddles, and also mixed Hindi and Persian poems.²⁸ Many of his poems have assumed the status of folksongs commonly sung by the people. His Hindavi poetry is rich in imagery borrowed from the Indian landscape. In the words of a scholar: "The device of using a female voice to express her longing for a lover is characteristic of Indic poetry and here is used expertly by the poet [Khusrau] to be as inclusive as possible."²⁹ Though Khusrau's father was a Turk, he always took pride in his Indian blood from the maternal side. He preferred Hindavi to Persian language, as he declared:

"To speak the truth I am a bird of song (*tuti*) from India

I would love to sing only in Hindavi"³⁰

Owing to his literary contributions, his Hindavi or Hindi is considered the precursor of modern Urdu and Hindi.³¹ He was also the pioneer of term 'Hindi',³² as well as the pioneer of *qawwali*. The contribution of the sufis, particularly the Chishti sufis like Amir Khusrau, in the development of devotional sufi music called *qawwali* is another aspect of vernacularization of Sufism in South Asia, but the scope of the study does not permit to elaborate upon it, as the topic demands a detailed study.

Khusrau's contemporary Chishti sufi, Amir Hasan 'Ala Sijzi (d. 1337) also composed *ghazals* (love songs) in Hindavi. Other Chishti sufis like Shaykh Burhan al-Din Gharib (d. 1443), a renowned *khalifah* of Shaykh Nizam al-Din Awliya, and Saiyyid Bandahnawaz Gesudiraz, introduced and popularized Hindavi language in the Deccan. Gesudiraz's work, *Mi'raj al-'Ashiqin* (The Zenith of Divine Lovers), is considered the first prose work in Hindavi,³³ which

contributed to the indigenization of Islamic and sufi traditions in Deccan. Regarding the Chishti sufis of South Asia, Nile Green opines that they were “vernacularizing their teachings to an extraordinary degree. For many sufis, such rustification appeared to be diluting Islam with paganism...” but despite such criticism, the Chishti sufis were willing to take that risk.³⁴

(ii) Hindi

The sufis also contributed to Hindi literature. The Suhrawardi sufi, Shaykh Akhi Jamshaid of Rajgir (d. 1398)³⁵ and Shaykh Ahmad Khattu Maghrabi (d. 1445)³⁶ composed *dohas* in Hindi. Shaykh Nur Qutb-i ‘Alam (d. 1415) of Panduah (West Bengal) composed Hindi *dohras* (couplets with end-rhyme) which are found in his letters or *maktubat*. Shaykh Abd al-Quddus Gangohi (d. 1537) composed poetry in Hindi, and his work *Rushd-nama* also contains his Hindi *dohras*.³⁷ The Chishti sufi, Shaykh Rizq-Allah Mushtaqi (d. 1581), composed poetry in Hindi in addition to Gujarati. In Hindi, his pen name was Rajan, and Mushtaqi in Persian. His works in Hindi are titled *Paiman* and *Jot Naranjan*.³⁸ Shaykh Burhan (d. 1562) of Kalpi (in present day UP) was famous for his *dohras* in Hindi language.³⁹ His contemporary sufi of Gujarat, Shaykh Shah ‘Ali Ahmadabadi (d. 1562) composed a *diwan* (a collection of poetry) in Hindi.⁴⁰ The Hindi *dohras* composed by Shaykh Abd-Allah Abdal Dehlavi, a *majzub* (an ecstatic sufi) of Delhi, were noted for their simplicity of language.⁴¹

(iii) Urdu

A sufi-poet of the Rifa‘i *Silsilah*, Shah Ali Muhammad Jiv Gamdhani (d. 1565) of Gujarat composed poetry in Urdu with the title *Jawahir-i Asrar-i Allah* (Gems of the Divine Secrets).⁴² Through the use of symbolism, he tried to explain the mysteries and intricacies of the sufi philosophy of *Wahdat al-Wujud* (Unity of Being).⁴³ He is considered the first poet to expound the spiritual philosophy of *Wahdat al-Wujud* in Urdu poetry.⁴⁴ Haji Najm al-Din of Shekhawati in northeastern Rajasthan (d. 1870) was a *khalifah* of a renowned Chishti sufi, Khwaja Shah Muhammad Sulayman of Taunsa (d. 1850). He was prolific writer, who not only authored 17 books in Persian, but also wrote 14 books and treatises in Urdu language. He played an important role in popularizing Urdu in Rajputana.⁴⁵

(iv) Dakhani

Dakhani, written in Perso-Arabic script, is the vernacular dialect of early Urdu spoken in Deccan particularly by the Muslims. The renowned Chishti sufi of Bijapur, Shah Miranji Shams al-‘Ushshaq (d. 1499) and his successors “established the Dakhani language as a recognized medium of sufi literature,” and were “credited with contributing to the respectability and standardization of an evolving vernacular language.”⁴⁶ Miranji’s poetic works include *Maghz-i Marghub*, *Khush-nama* and *Khush Naghz*. His son, Shah Burhan al-Din Janam (d. 1597) and Burhan al-Din’s *khalifa*, Shaykh Mahmud Khush Dahan (d. 1617), and a later Chishti sufi, Mahmud Bahri (d. 1717-18) used Dakhani for composing poetical works.⁴⁷

The folk poetry composed by the sufis in Dakhani include *chakki-nama* (songs sung by women while grinding food grains at the grindstone/millstone or *chakki*), *charkha-nama* (songs sung by women while spinning thread at the spinning wheel or *charkha*), *lori-nama* (lullaby), *shadi-nama* (wedding song), and *suhagan-nama* (married-women's song), etc. These songs were sung by women while performing their domestic chores, but these songs also disseminated the sufi doctrines in a simple manner among the illiterate masses. Referring to the *Chakki-nama* attributed to Khwaja Bandanawaz Gesudiraz, in which *chakki* or millstone is employed as a metaphor, the daily chores become "a means of understanding abstract values and higher reality."⁴⁸ It is important to note that long before the advent of Islam in the Deccan plateau, the tradition of folk poetry related to domestic works performed by the women already existed. In the words of Eaton:

"What Sufis did was to adapt the simplest elements of sufi doctrine to the already existing vehicles of folk poetry and to substitute vernacular Dakhani for vernacular Marathi and Kannada. Since the Sufism injected into this literature carried with it the essentials of Islam, the Sufis' use of this vehicle may be said to represent a major development in the cultural history of the Deccan."⁴⁹

It would not be incorrect to assert that literary genres such as *kafi*, *doha* or *dohra* and *chakkinama* as well as devotional songs in vernacular languages including Sindhi, Punjabi and Dakhani were generally composed by the sufis. These literary contributions of the sufis not only disseminated sufi doctrines but also played a crucial role in cultural rapprochement among various sections of the Indian society.

(v) Punjabi

Baba Farid, the renowned thirteenth-century Chishti sufi of Pakpattan, is believed to be the first poet of Punjabi language. He composed poetry in Punjabi in order to disseminate the teachings of Sufism through popular songs. Some of these verses are said to be incorporated in *Guru Granth*, the sacred scripture of the Sikhs. Baba Farid's poetry, composed in local dialect, is believed to have commanded tremendous influence among local population.⁵⁰ As mentioned earlier, he used to prescribe *dhikr* to the native people in Punjabi language. (supra)

The sufis of the Punjab greatly contributed to the Punjabi literature and developed a distinct genre of sufi poetry called *kafi*, a distinct literary genre of Punjabi and Sindhi vernacular poetry,⁵¹ which is a "monorhyme stanzaic verse form usually set to music,"⁵² and that is why it is based on regional folk melodies. The Qadiri sufi-poet Shah Husayn of Lahore (b. 1538-d. 1599) is considered to be first among the Punjabi sufi poets who composed *kafis* in Punjabi and Hindi dialects. Being a spokesman of common people, he rarely used Arabic or Persian words in his lyrics.⁵³ He employed bridal symbolism in his poetry, wherein the human soul was represented as a bride, would-be-bride or a married woman waiting for the return of her husband, while God was symbolized by groom or husband. As pointed out above, the literary motif of *virahini* was borrowed from Hindi-Sanskrit literary traditions by the sufis, who took advantage of its popularity, and used this motif for discussing the subtleties of human-divine love relationship.

Bulhe Shah (d. 1757), considered to be the greatest of all the Punjabi poets, knew Arabic and Persian, but he preferred to compose poetry in Punjabi.⁵⁴ He popularized *kafis* in the Punjab as these are deeply rooted in Punjabi culture and world-view. A famous literary critic, Bawa Budh Singh calls Bulhe Shah the ‘Rumi of Punjab’ in his work *Hans Chog*.⁵⁵ Bulhe Shah also employed the indigenous motif of *virahini*, and used it as a vehicle for expressing the notion of divine love as well as for preaching the sufi ethics.

Another Qadiri sufi-poet Sultan Bahu (b. 1629-d. 1691) composed poetry in Punjabi along with Persian.⁵⁶ His poetry is more didactic, which was addressed to the peasants and illiterate people. He is known for his Punjabi *siharfis* (a literary genre in folk poetry in which each line or each stanza begins with succeeding letters of the Arabic alphabet), each line of which ends with the exclamation ‘*hu*’. Other famous Punjabi sufi poets include Shah Sharaf (b. 1640-d. 1724), ‘Ali Haydar (b. 1690-d. 1785) and Hashim Shah (b. 1735-d. 1843). Khwaja Ghulam Farid (d. 1901) is considered the most celebrated poet of Saraiki language⁵⁷ (which according to some is a dialect of Punjabi, to others a northern dialect of Sindhi, while to some others a language itself). His verses overflow with sufi symbolism.

The Punjabi sufi poets also contributed to *qissa* (the oral story-telling tradition) literature as well. Miyan Muhammad Bakhsh (d. 1907) of Qadiri *Silsilah* composed *Sayf al-Muluk* which contained the famed *qissa* or story of a love stricken prince named Sayf al-Muluk who fell in love with the queen of the fairies, Badi‘ al-Jamal.⁵⁸ The love tale was primarily meant to disseminate the sufi teachings and ethics among the common people through symbols and metaphors.

(vi) Sindhi

The fourteenth-century Ismaili sufi, Saiyyid Pir Sadr al-Din Husayni (circa d. 1400) composed *ginans* (hymn-like poems) in Lari and Katchi dialects of Sindhi language written in Khojki script. His contribution to the *ginan* literature has been discussed in a succeeding section in this study. In Sindh, the renowned Sindhi sufi poet Shah Abd al-Latif of Bhit Shah (d. 1752),⁵⁹ the composer of *Shah Jo Risalo*, popularized *kafis* in Sindhi language.⁶⁰ He is greatly loved and remembered by the people for his delightful and melodious poetic compositions.⁶¹ His long poems are divided in several cantos, at the end of which generally comes *vai* (lyrical form of poetry which can be sung). He followed Persian tradition, but blended it with local legends and folk tales. The work includes seven stories of tragic romances, employing the motif of human love to represent the complex phenomenon of divine love. In sufi symbolism, Bhitai’s heroines or female characters, namely Sassi, Momal, Marui, Sohni, Lila, Nuri and Sorath allegorically represent the human soul and its base desires, worldly engagements and material pursuits that do not let the human soul reach and recognize its divine destination.⁶²

Abd al-Wahab (d. 1829), better known as Sachal Sarmast, popularized *kafis* in Sindhi language. In addition to Sindhi, Sachal Sarmast also wrote in Saraiki/Punjabi, Persian and Urdu. He is often referred to as “the [Farid al-Din] ‘Attar of Sindh.’”⁶³ Like his predecessor Bhitai, he also drew on folk tales of Sassi and Sohni in order to elaborate upon the concept of divine love. The heroines or

the female lovers of his love tales symbolize the human urge to reach out to the divine and experience union with Him. He boldly expressed his own experience of unity with the Being in his verses.⁶⁴

(vii) Other Vernaculars

Shaykh Nur al-Din Rishi (d. 1442) of Kashmir composed poetry in Kashmiri language, also known as Koshur.⁶⁵ Owing to its popularity, this didactic poetry is elevated to the position to *Koshur Qur'an* (Qur'an in the language of the Kashmiri people) by the Kashmiri Muslims.⁶⁶ Shaykh Rizq-Allah Mushtaqi (d. 1581), composed poetry in Gujarati in addition to Hindi. Shaykh Muhammad Baba of Shirgonda of Ahmadnagar wrote in Marathi language for Marathi-speaking community in Maharashtra. Khwaja Muhammad Sulaiman (d. 1870), who lived at Shekhavati in north-east Rajasthan, composed poetry on sufi themes in Rajasthani language.⁶⁷

3. Development of Scripts of Local Languages and Dialects

The fourteenth-century Ismaili sufi, Saiyyid Pir Sadr al-Din Husayni (circa d. 1400) played an important role in the popularization and elaboration of Khojki script of Sindhi language.⁶⁸ The devotional poetry or *ginans* which he composed was written in Khojki script, and are considered the oldest extant documents of *Sindhi* religious literature.⁶⁹ Bayazid Ansari (d. 1585), also known as 'Pir-i Raushan' (literally the enlightened guide), was the founder of Raushaniyya Movement. His tri-lingual work, *Khayr al-Bayan*, which elaborates upon his sufi philosophy, was written in Pashtu, Persian and Arabic languages. He and his successors promoted and systematized the Pashtu script by inventing new and modifying the existing letters and phonics.⁷⁰ Similarly, a twentieth-century revolutionary thinker and sufi activist, Ubaid-Allah Sindhi (d. 1944) realized the need to disseminate the teachings of Islam in local languages and dialects among the native population. He tried to standardize and improve Saraiki language, known as 'Riyasati,' being patronized by 'Riyasat' or the State of Bahawalpur in those days.⁷¹

4. Development of New or Existing Literary Genres

The South Asian sufis also played important role in the development of new literary genres, or popularizing and improving the existing ones. The role of the sufis in developing literary genres like *siharfi* and *kafi* in Punjabi and Sindhi poetic traditions has already been discussed above. What follows is a brief discussion on the development of *Prem-kahani* or 'Sufi Romances' and *ginnan* literature.

(i) Prem-kahani or 'Sufi Romances'

The sufi poets writing in 'eastern Hindi' or Awadhi language developed a new literary genre called *premakhyān* or *prema-kavya* or *prema-kahani* (literally meaning love story), termed as 'sufi romances' by modern critics. These narrative poems were modeled on the Persian *mathnavi* genre. The tradition of the sufi *premakhyān* appeared in the fourteenth century, but became popular in the sixteenth century, and continued till the beginning of the seventeenth century. Its central theme was the sufi concept of '*ishq*' or love of the human soul for God. The composers of *premakhyān* translated the sufi doctrine into a more familiar local

cultural world through the use of symbols. In such literary compositions, the divine love was symbolized by human love. Earliest of these *premakhyans* is *Chandayan* or *Laur Chanda* (composed in 1378-80 in Awadhi dialect) by Mulla Daud, a Chishti-Nizami sufi from Dalmau in Rai Bareli District near Lucknow.⁷² He was a disciple of Shaykh Zayn al-Din Shirazi (d. 1369), who was a *khalifa* of Shaykh Burhan al-Din Gharib (d. 1337).

Qutb ‘Ali Qutban of Jaunpur, a disciple of Suhrawardi sufi, Makhdam Buddhan of Bihar or Kalpa, wrote another *premakhyan* titled *Mrigavati* (completed in 1503).⁷³ The love story is based on a local folk tale that revolves around Princess Mrigavati of Kanchanpur and Raj Kunwar, the Prince of Chandranagar. Another *premakhyan* titled *Madhumalti* was composed around 1545 by Mir Saiyyid Manjhan Rajgiri,⁷⁴ who was a Shattari sufi. Similarly, *Chitravali* was composed by ‘Uthman Ghazipuri in 1613.⁷⁵ He was a disciple of a Chishti sufi, Baba Haji. As pointed out above, all of these poets had allegiances to the sufis, and their works are interpreted in sufi context.

However, the contribution of Malik Muhammad Jaisi (d. 1542), a Chishti sufi-poet, is outstanding in the popularization of *premakhyan*. Malik Muhammad, who lived in Jais, a city in the District Rae Bareli, Uttar Pradesh, was a disciple of Saiyyid Muhiyy al-Din, and he is known as *Muhaqqiq-i Hind* (Researcher of India).⁷⁶ He authored some famous works in Awadhi dialect of Hindi including *Padmavat*, *Akhravat*, *Akhiri Kalam*, *Kaharnama*, *Maslanama* and *Chitrarekha*, composed during 1500-40. These works were written in the tradition of the sufi *premakhyan*. His work *Padmavat*, completed in 1540, is more famous than others.⁷⁷ It is the first epic in Awadhi dialect which synthesizes legend and folklore with history.⁷⁸ Its central theme is the romance between Ratnasen and Padmavati, who are identified as the symbols of a sufi seeker or the human soul, and God. This epic poem is, however, not a historical reconstruction of the siege of Chittor by Sultan ‘Ala al-Din Khalji in 1303, who attacked Chittor after hearing of the beauty of Rani Padmini, the wife of King Rawal Ratan Singh. The epic expresses the sufi notion of love through the use of local dialect, popular folk-tales, and allegories from local environment.

The literary genre of *premakhyan* not only marks the beginning of an Indo-Islamic literary tradition, it also characterizes the indigenization of Islamic religious traditions in Indian cultural landscape. Though these narrative poems borrow ideas and conventions from the Persian, classical Sanskrit and regional/local literary traditions, they are distinct both from the Persian and classical Sanskrit traditions. Moreover, eroticism and asceticism are frequently linked together in them.⁷⁹ These sufi romances are very important source for constructing the social history of the medieval Deccan, as “these works bring out the syncretistic ethos of traditions, resilience and strength of a society wherein the idioms and conventions of the other were freely adopted; a society that had faith in the co-existence with diverse cultural groups.”⁸⁰

(ii) *Ginan* Literature

The Ismaili sufi literature, particularly produced by the Khoja branch of Ismailis, abounds in South Asia. It includes *ginan*, a distinct literary genre found in many Indic vernacular languages such as Sindhi, Multani, Hindi, Marathi and Gujarati.

According to studies, these poetic compositions exist in forty-two languages, and are characterized by the use of Indian meters, while another scholar claims that thirty-six meters of Indian prosody have been used in them.⁸¹ They are hymn-like poems dedicated to the Shi'i Imams, the first and the foremost of whom is Imam Ali (d. 661). The fourteenth-century Ismaili sufi, Saiyyid Pir Sadr al-Din Husayni (circa d. 1400) composed *ginans* in various dialects of Sindhi, as well as in Punjabi, Saraiki, Gujrati and Hindi languages. Later, his son, Pir Hasan Kabir al-Din (d. 1470) also composed *ginans*. In these *ginans*, they evoked the vernacular symbol of bride for the human soul awaiting the divine, symbolized by a groom.⁸²

¹ Ali S. Asani, "Sufi Poetry in the Folk Tradition of Indo-Pakistan," *Religion & Literature*, Vol. 20, No. 1, The Literature of Islam (Spring 1988), pp. 81, 91 [pp. 81-94].

² For a detailed discussion, see Imtiaz Ahmad, "The *ashraf-ajlaf* Dichotomy in Muslim Social Structure in India," *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. 3 (1966), pp. 268-78.

³ Asim Roy, *The Islamic Syncretistic Tradition in Bengal* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983), pp. 58-83. See also a summary of Roy's findings in his "The Pir Tradition: A Case Study in Islamic Syncretism in Traditional Bengal," in *Images of Man: Religious and Historical Process in South Asia*, ed. Fred W. Clothey (Madras: New Era Publications, 1982).

⁴ Annemarie Schimmel, *Pearls from the Indus: Studies in Sindhi Culture* (Jamshoro & Hyderabad: Sindhi Adabi Board, 1986), p. 55. For a discussion on translations and commentaries of the Quran in Sindhi, see pp. 54-78. Though almost three centuries earlier, Malik al-Ulama Qazi Shihab al-Din Daulatabadi (d. 1445) had rendered the Quran in Persian, it was more of a commentary than a translation.

⁵ M. Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1967), p. 277.

⁶ Aziz Ahmad, "Political and Religious Ideas of Shah Wali-Ullah of Delhi," in *Shah Waliullah: His Religious and Political Thought*, ed. M. Ikram Chaghatai (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel, 2005), p. 164.

⁷ Shah Fazle Rahman Ganj Muradabadi, *Manmohan ki batain* [Purabi-Hindi tr. of Select Verses and *Surahs* of the Quran], ed. Nazar Ali Khan (Patna: Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, n.d.).

⁸ For instance, Ubaid-Allah Sindhi (d. 1944), a sufi activist of the twentieth century, wrote *Tafsir al-Maqam al-Mahmud* (The Praised Station; Hyderabad, 1959) which is a commentary of the Qur'an in Sindhi language, as well as a Qur'anic commentary titled *Ilham al-Rahman fi Tafsir al-Qur'an* (published from Karachi in 1952, and from Hyderabad in 1960) in Sindhi language.

⁹ Shah Kalim-Allah Jehanabadi, *Kashkol-i kalimi* (Delhi: Matba' Mujtabai', 1308 AH), p. 25.

¹⁰ Shah Fakhr al-Din Dehlawi, *Fakhr al-talibin wa manaqib-i Fakhriyya* (Delhi: Matba' Mujtabai', 1315 AH/1897-98 AD), p. 23.

¹¹ S. M. Ikram, “*Khawaja-i Khwajgan*”, Karachi (1972), p. 99, as cited in Muhammad Aslam, *Malfuzati adab ki tarikh ahammiyyat* (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1995), p. 339.

¹² Shaykh Farid al-Din Mahmud, *Surur al-sudur*, MS, Mawlana Azad Library, Muslim University, Aligarh, *Farsi Tasawwuf*, No. 21/161, f. 8.

¹³ Baba Farid is recorded to have uttered a sentence in Urdu: “*Pōnūn kā chānd bhī bālā hotā hāē*” (the crescent is also small). Amir Khurd Saiyyid Muhammad ibn Mubarak ‘Alawi Kirmani, *Siyar al-Awliya* (comp. in 1351-82 A.D.), ed. Chiranji Lal (Delhi: Muhibb-i Hind Press, 1302 A.H./1885 A.D.), p. 183.

¹⁴ Aslam, *Malfuzati adab*, p. 339.

¹⁵ *In Quest of God: Maneri’s Second Collection of 150 Letters*, Eng. tr. of Sharaf al-Din Ahmad Yahya Maneri’s Letters, with introduction, and notes Paul Jackson (Anand; Gujarat: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 2004), see Introduction, p. xx.

¹⁶ K. A. Nizami, “Shaikh Ahmad Maghrabi as a Great Historical Personality of Medieval Gujarat,” *Medieval India: A Miscellany*, Vol. III (Aligarh: Centre of Advanced Study, Dept. of History, Aligarh Muslim University, 1975), p. 255.

¹⁷ Carla Petievich, *When Men Speak as Women: Vocal Masquerade in Indo-Muslim Poetry* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2007).

¹⁸ Ali Asani, “Devotional Poetry, South Asia,” in *Muhammad in History, Thought and Culture: An Encyclopedia of the Prophet of God*, eds. Coeli Fitzpatrick and Adam Hani Walker (Santa Barbara; Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2014), p. 140.

¹⁹ Yusuf Husain, *Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1962), p. 108.

²⁰ Richard M. Eaton, *Essays on Islam and Indian History* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), see chap. 8, “Sufi Folk Literature and the Expansion of Indian Islam”, pp. 189-99. Earlier published in *History of Religions*, Vol. 14 (1974), pp. 117-27.

²¹ Annemarie Schimmel, “The Influence of Sufism on Indo-Muslim Poetry,” in *Anagogic Qualities of Literature*, ed. Joseph P. Strelka (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1971), p. 202.

²² Nile Green, *Sufism: A Global History* (Chichester & Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), p. 113; for some discussion, see pp. 103-15.

²³ Mawlvi Abd al-Haqq, *Urdu ki ibtedai nashonuma mein sufiya-i karam ka kam* (Delhi: Union Press, n.d.).

²⁴ Amrit Rai, *A House Divided: The Origin and Development of Hindi/Hindavi* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1984).

²⁵ Simon Digby, “Sufi and Bhakti Compositions and Linguistic Indignization”, in *Sufism and Bhakti Movement: Eternal Relevance*, ed. Hamid Hussain (Proceedings of International Seminar on ‘Sufi and Bhakti Movement: Contemporary Relevance’, held in New Delhi, India in February, 2005), (New Delhi: Manak Publications, 2007), pp. 238-62.

²⁶ For extracts of Baba Farid's poetry in Urdu language, see Rajendra Sarup Bhatnagar, *Mysticism in Urdu Poetry* (New Delhi: Department of Islamic Studies, Jami'ah Hamdard, 1995), pp. 16-17.

²⁷ Farid al-Din Mahmud, *Surur al-sudur*, passim.

²⁸ For English translation of Khusrau's Hindavi poems, see Amir Khusraw Dihlavi, *In the Bazaar of Love: The Selected Poetry of Amir Khusrau*, Eng. tr. Paul E Losensky and Sunil Sharma (New Delhi and New York: Penguin Books, 2011).

²⁹ Sunil Sharma, *Amir Khusraw: The Poet of Sultans and Sufis* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2006), p. 76. For details, see pp. 74-84; and Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, *Tarikhi maqalat* (Delhi: Nadwat al-Musannifin, 1966), pp. 45-78.

³⁰ Saiyyid Naqi Husain Jafri, "Sufic Themes and Images in Persian and Hindavi Poetry: A Reordering of Universe and Readjustment of Impulses," in *The Islamic Path: Sufism, Politics and Society in India*, eds. Saiyyid Zaheer Husain Jafri and Helmut Reifeld (New Delhi: Rainbow Publishers, 2006), p. 63.

³¹ Sharma, *Amir Khusraw*, p. 81.

³² Abdul Jamil Khan, *The Politics of Language: Urdu/Hindi: An Artificial Divide* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2006), p. 160.

³³ Saiyyid Muhammad Akbar Husayni, *Jawami' al-kalim*, (*malfuzat* of Saiyyid Bandahnawaz Gesudiraz) ed. Muhammad Hamid Siddiqi (Kanpur: Intezami Press, 1356 A.H./1937 A.D.), p. 119.

³⁴ Green, *Sufism: A Global History*, p. 111.

³⁵ See a study of *Malfuzat-i Akhi Jamshaid Rajgiri* in Aslam, *Malfuzati adab*, pp. 264, 271-72.

³⁶ S. A. Rizvi, *A History of Sufism in India*, vol. I (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1978), Appendix B, p. 408.

³⁷ Simon Digby, "Shaikh 'Abdul Quddus Gangohi (A.D. 1456-1537): The Personality and Attitudes of a Medieval Indian Sufi," in *Medieval India: A Miscellany*, vol. III (Aligarh: Dept. of History, Aligarh Muslim University, 1975), p. 57.

³⁸ 'Abd al-Haqq Muhaddith Dehlavi, *Akhbar al-akhyar fi asrar al-abrar*, Urdu tr. [*Anwar-i Sufiyya*] Muslim Ahmad Nizami (Delhi: Kutubkhana Naziriyya, n.d.), p. 305.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 449.

⁴⁰ Muhammad Ghausi Shattari Mandavi, *Gulzar-i abrar*, ed. Muhammad Zaki (Patna: Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, 1994), p. 280.

⁴¹ Abd al-Haqq, *Akhbar al-Akhyar*, pp. 462-63.

⁴² Gamdhani is considered one of the earliest Urdu poets of South Asia. See Muhammad Sohail, "Origin and Development of Urdu Language in the Sub-Continent: Contribution of Early Sufia and Mushaikh", *South Asian Studies*, vol. 27, no. 1 (January-June 2012), pp. 141-69.

⁴³ Vijay Mishra, *Devotional Poetics and Indian Sublime* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998), p. 156.

⁴⁴ Bhatnagar, *Mysticism in Urdu Poetry*, p. 19.

⁴⁵ Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, *Tarikh-i mashaikh-i Chisht*, vol. 5 (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 1984), pp. 408-11.

⁴⁶ Richard M. Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur, 1300-1700: Social Roles of Sufis in Medieval India* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 137, 143.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 141. Shah Burhan al-Din Janam's *Irshad-nama* (composed in 1582-83) was written in a highly Sanskritized form of Dakhani. p. 142.

⁴⁸ Jafri, "Sufic Themes and Images in Persian and Hindavi Poetry," p. 63.

⁴⁹ Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur*, p. 158; for details, see pp. 157-64.

⁵⁰ Najm Hosain Syed, *Recurrent Patterns in Punjabi Poetry* (Lahore: Majlis Shah Hussain, 1968), chap. 1, *Austere Rhythms of Farid*, pp. 33-41; Muhammad Asif Khan, *Akhiya Baba Farid ne* [Punjabi: Baba Farid Says] (Lahore: Pakistan Punjabi Adabi Board, 1978); Brij Mohan Sagar, *Hymns of Sheikh Farid* (Amritsar: Guru Nanak Dev University, 1999), pp. 118-19, and Baghwant Singh Dalawari, "Divine Songs of Sheikh Baba Farid", *Sikh Review*, Vol. 47, No. 3 (March 1999), pp. 8-11.

⁵¹ For a detailed study, see Saeed Bhutta, "Kafi: A Genre of Punjabi Poetry", *South Asian Studies*, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Vol. 23, No. 2, July 2008. pp. 223-29.

⁵² A. Singh, "Punjabi Poetry," in *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, eds. 4th eds. Roland Greene, et. al. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), p. 1132.

⁵³ Sadhu Ram Sharda, *Sufi Thought: Its Development in Panjab and its Impact on Panjabi Literature, from Baba Farid to 1850 A.D.* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1974), p. 122.

⁵⁴ *Kalam-i Bulhe Shah*, Introduction and notes Dr. Nazir Ahmad (Lahore: Packages Limited, 1976).

⁵⁵ As cited in Surinder Singh Kohli, *Bulhe Shah* (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1987), p. 42.

⁵⁶ Sultan Bahu, 'Aks-i Bahu, Punjabi Text with Urdu tr. Mas'ud Qureshi (Islamabad: Lok Virsa, 2002).

⁵⁷ For some details, see Jamal J. Elias, "Sufi Poetry of the Indus Valley: Khwaja Ghulam Farid," in *Tales of God's Friends: Islamic Hagiography in Translation*, ed. John Renard (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), pp. 249-60.

⁵⁸ Christopher Shackle, "Story of Sayf al-Muluk in South Asia," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. 3, No. 17/2 (2007), pp. 115-29.

⁵⁹ See biography in Motilal Wadhwal Jotwani, *Shah Abdul Latif, His Life and Work: A Study of Sociocultural and Literary Situations in Eighteenth Century Sindh (now in Pakistan)*, (Delhi: University of Delhi, 1975).

⁶⁰ Shah Abd al-Latif, *Shah Jo Risalo, Alias Ganje Latif*, ed. and Eng. trans. Muhammad Yaqoob Agha (Hyderabad; Sindh: Shah Abdul Latif Bhitshah Cultural Centre Committee, 1985).

⁶¹ For a tabular list of *rags* and *ragnis* of classical Indian music used by Bhitai, see Appendix D in K. F. Mirza, *Life of Sháh Abdúl Latíf Bhitáí and a Brief Commentary on his Risáló with Selections Bearing on the Mystic Philosophy of Súfis* (Hyderabad: Bhit Shah Cultural Centre Committee, 1980; first published 1887), p. 144.

⁶² For a detailed discussion, see Fahmidah Husain, *Image of 'Woman' in the Poetry of Shah Abdul Latif* (Karachi: Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai Chair, University of Karachi, 2001).

⁶³ Annmarie Schimmel, "Attar of Sindh" in *Sachal Sarmast*, ed. Tanveer Abbasi (Khairpur; Sindh: Sachal Chair, Shah Abdul Latif University, 1989), p. 11.

⁶⁴ Annemarie Schimmel, *The Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel, 2003; first pub. 1975), pp. 393-96.

⁶⁵ Moti Lal Saqi, *Kulliyat-i Shaykh al-'Alam*, 2 vols. (Srinagar, Kashmir: Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, 1979-1981).

⁶⁶ Muhammad Ashraf Wani, *Islam in Kashmir (Fourteenth to Sixteenth Century)* (Srinagar: Oriental Publishing House, 2004), pp. 67-68.

⁶⁷ Refaat Ali Khan, "Sufis of Rajasthan: Inter-Community Co-existence," in *Sufism and Bhakti Movement: Eternal Relevance*, p. 89 [pp. 76-91].

⁶⁸ Ali S. Asani, *Ecstasy and Enlightenment: The Ismaili Devotional Literature of South Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), p. 101. Here it is important to note that he did not invent in Khojki script, as mistakenly assumed.

⁶⁹ Schimmel, *Pearls from the Indus: Studies in Sindhi Culture*, p. 55.

⁷⁰ *Encyclopaedic Ethnography of Middle-East and Central Asia: A-I*, Vol. 1, ed. R. Khanam (Delhi: Global Vision Publishing House, 2005), p. 17.

⁷¹ He got published a booklet on Saraiki alphabets, which included new phonics, the first of its kind, titled *Riyasti zaban ka qa'eda* in 1939 from Dinpur (District Rahim Yar Khan). M. Ahsan Wagha, "The Development of the Siraiki Language in Pakistan," Ph.D. diss. School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, 1998, pp. 75-76.

⁷² Mawlana Daud Dalmai, *Chandayan*, ed. Parmeshwari Lal (Bombay: Hindi Granth-Ratnakar, 1964).

⁷³ Syed Hasan Askari, *Aspects of the Cultural History of Medieval Bihar* (Patna: Kashi Prasad Jayswal Research Institute, 1984), p. 20.

⁷⁴ Simon Weightman, Aditya Behl and Shyam Manohar Pandey, eds. *Madhumalati: An Indian Sufi Romance By Manjhana, Mir Sayyid Manjhan Shattari Rajgiri*, Eng. tr. Simon Weightman and Aditya Behl (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

⁷⁵ Sansar Chandra, *Some Prominent Muslim Hindi Poets* (Delhi: Atma Ram, 1986), p. 61.

⁷⁶ Rizvi, *A History of Sufism in India*, vol. I, p. 370, for details, see pp. 367-70. However, according to others, Malik Muhammad Jaisi was a disciple of Shaykh Burhan al-Din Ansari (Shaykh Burhan of Kalpi). Aditya Behl and Wendy Doniger, *Love's Subtle Magic: An Indian Islamic Literary Tradition, 1379-1545* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 150.

⁷⁷ Malik Muhammad Jaisi, *Padmawat*, ed. & Eng. tr. A. G. Shirreff (Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1944).

⁷⁸ Jafri, "Sufic Themes and Images in Persian and Hindavi Poetry," p. 69.

⁷⁹ Aditya Behl, "The Magic Doe: Desire and Narrative in a Hindavi Sufi Romance, circa 1503," in *India's Islamic Traditions, 711-1750*, ed. Richard M. Eaton (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 180-208.

⁸⁰ Madhu Trivedi, "Popular Culture as Represented in the *Premkhyanas*: Fourteenth to Sixteenth Centuries," in *Popular Literature and Pre-modern Societies in South Asia*, eds. Surinder Singh and I. D. Gaur (Delhi: Dorling Kindersley, 2008), p. 331; for details see pp. 315-33.

⁸¹ S. T. Lokhandwalla, "Indian Islam, Composite Culture and Integration", in *Composite Culture of India and National Integration*, ed. Rasheeduddin Khan (Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1987), 110.

⁸² Asani, *Ecstasy and Enlightenment*, pp. 57-58. See also Ali S. Asani, "The Ismaili Pir Sadr ad-Din," in *Tales of God's Friends*, pp. 261-68.