

The Flight Within: The Quintessence of Reflection and Recollection in the Teachings of Hazrat Deewan Syed Abu Sayeed Jafar Mohammed Quadri

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Abstract

The essence and strength of Sufism lies in the renaissance of the human soul. The mystical experience of a Sufi ennobles his mind and elevates his spirit to an extent where he reaches an intimate and comprehensive understanding of the Truth and the Universe. This study explores the attainment of that understanding through contemplation and remembrance, or more precisely, reflection (tafakkur) and recollection (tadhakkur), the two intrinsic practices of the Sufis for their spiritual ascension. These two complex phenomena that set the internal transcendental experience of a Sufi in motion are examined in this paper with particular reference through the works and teachings of Hazrat Deewan Syed Abu Sayeed Jafar Mohammed Quadri, a renowned saint of the Qadria-Qalandaria Silsila, an alim and Sufi and Sajjada Nashin of the Silsila at his Dargah at Barh (Bihar) during the seventeenth century. The purpose of this paper is to elucidate some of the conceptual and existential characteristics of tafakkur and tadakkur and to expound and explain their correlation with regard to the inclusive Sufi way of life as explained by the Hazrat Deewan, and examine how they lead to kamaal or perfection. It is a qualitative paper with a thorough literature review where the qualitative data is collected and analyzed, and a discussion is generated with facts to support the conclusions.

Keywords

Aurad, Hazrat Diwan Jafar, malfuzat, mysticism, Recollection, Reflection, Spirituality, Sufism, tadhakkur, tafakkur

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Introduction

It is a fact widely researched and fully understood that belief in mysticism and its practice has been there for thousands of years. Yet no recorded history exists which throws light on the origin of mysticism today, and no access is possible to prehistoric mysticism, if something like that ever existed in the primeval ages. But there is ample evidence to show that all great religions of the world carry some sort of a mystical tradition throughout their epochal journey to the present day. Apart from differences in certain practices and rituals, mysticism in all its forms in every religion seems interlinked as it reveals the basic philosophy of all of the world's major religions. (Collins 6-9).

The mystical experience evolves out of a state of being in which the self and the Divine conflate into a fundamental and endless unity where the identity of the individual disappears, which Sol and Luna describe as 'ego death' (18-24). This awareness of the self, melting or transcending into supra-consciousness offers the individual a greater vision which is fair, impartial, and absolute, and which is vividly described as coming to terms with an experience where the individual discovers that there is a reality that is tangible, and which exists independent of the mind. At this stage, the mystic achieves a profound consciousness of objectivity, where the self and the Divine merge and unify into an intricate unity of existence. This numinous experience elevates the mystic to a state of blissfulness, joy and contentment, where he perceives the Oneness of all things, beyond the limits of time and space. In that blissful state of mind an overpowering feeling of astonishment creeps over the inconsequentiality of the self with respect to the immensity of existence. It is here that the mystic enters a profound state of Being, and he sees life as full of beauty and sacredness. (Sol and Aletheia 49-50).

Mysticism, as much as it appears to the common reader, is not a subjective experience. In his book *Scientific Approaches to Mysticism*, Kaplan notes that mysticism is a conscious experience where the boundaries of subjective feelings and objective realities merge into a unity, into the oneness of Being. Moving away from the psychological state of Being, beyond the functions of language, memory, and emotion,

some thinkers have described and interpreted mysticism with relation to the theories of relativity and quantum physics that elucidate how physical matters work, explaining the nature of particles and the forces with which they interact. Relativity and quantum theories have become the interpretive tools to analyze and interpret the declarations of all sorts of mystical experiences (Sampolahti 743-744). Renowned physicists have shown great interest and entertain a fervent hope in unifying the four forces of nature, and establishing some amazing relationships between the fundamental and basic building blocks of the universe and the origin of the universe. These are exactly what the mystics are concerned with – establishing a unity between matter and that which is beyond it, merging the physical and the metaphysical worlds. But this is not the focal point of interest in this research paper. The researcher does not wish to explain in detail the scientific veracity of the mystical experience. The details are presented because they were important by way of delineation and introduction to the idea of mysticism, and to bring home the point that mystical experiences are not just pure sensations, but objective realities involving a direct perception of the Divine.

At the root of every religious tradition there lie those esoteric experiences in which those who go through spiritual contemplation arrive at an alternate state of consciousness where they discover that their selves have dissolved into a superior and divine truth, and this is how they reach to the awareness of the ultimate truths. In the Islamic tradition, mysticism is by and large recognized and practiced as Sufism. The Arabic word *Ṣūf* means fleece, the coat of wool covering a wool-bearing animal or the wool obtained from a sheep at one shearing (Ba'albaki 704). It is a metaphor for a clothing that symbolizes simplicity and austerity, a dress which the mystics of the earliest times wore, and perhaps that might have been the reason for calling them Sufis. It might as well have been originated from the word *Ṣūffa* which means a stone bench, and refers to the People of the Bench, or the homeless unmarried companions of the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh), who stayed at the stone platform built at the rear side of the then Masjid *an-Nabawi*.

It is still not clear as to how Sufism came into existence or which term signifies its exact derivation; it, nevertheless, came to be regarded as a system of belief and practice that cannot be separated from Islam. It is true that the Quran and the Holy Prophet's (pbuh) teachings do not espouse a total abstinence from worldly blessings of God, but they undoubtedly uphold and edify piety and a certain kind of austerity, and a self-mortification that draws man to keep concentrating on Allah and the *yaum ul-deen*, the Day of the Last Judgment. And to a certain kind of otherworldliness. These are exactly what the Sufis practice and preach.

The ultimate spirit of Sufism is often said to have stemmed and developed from the Prophet's (pbuh) meditation practices and numinous experiences and revelations in the *hira* Cave at Makkah. These experiences and mysteries were then transferred to Ali ibn Abi Talib. (Anjum 222-225). The mystical experiences were eventually believed to have been transmitted to Imam Ali ibn Husayn Zayn al-Abidin, the son of Hazrat Imam Hussain AS, who interpreted it in his famous supplication *Al-Sahifa al-Sajjadiya* "The Scripture of Sajjad" and *Risalat al-Huquq* "The Treatise on Rights." It is narrated from the Imam that when he was asked about asceticism, he answered,

Asceticism is of the ten degrees: The highest degree of asceticism is the lowest degree of piety. The highest degree of piety is the lowest degree of certainty. The highest degree of certainty is the lowest degree of satisfaction. (Al-Qurashi 67-68)

The reference to asceticism can be found in one among the many verses of Allah's Book: '*Hence that you may not grieve for what has escaped you, nor be exultant at what He has given you.*' Surah Al-Hadid, Verse 23" (Al-Qarshi 67-69). Imam Zayn al-Abidin withdrew himself from all kinds of social engagements and lived and guided a few of his very close companions, while listening to and advising those who sought his guidance. His life and teachings were completely dedicated to abstinence, simplicity, and the Quranic teachings, predominantly by way of invocations and supplications. Though not subjecting himself to poverty, the Imam forsook worldly pleasures but did not give way to poverty and any kind of infirmity and debility. He was a self-disciplined

ascetic who “turned away from the world, and Sufis consider him as a Sufi and wrote biographies about him” (Munifi 71).

This research paper is going to refer to and elucidate the concepts of reflection (*tafakkur*) and recollection (*tadhakkur*) as the two most important terminologies from the Quranic and Sufi perspectives, and their relevance and reference to the teachings and preaching of Hazrat Deewan Syed Abu Sayeed Jafar Mohammed Quadri as reflected in his masterpieces on Sufism, namely, *Aurad Mujahidat Al-Sufia* “Invocations and Struggles of the Sufis,” *Adab Al-Dhikr* “The Etiquettes Remembrance and Recollection”, and *Adab Al-Muhaqqaqeen* “The Etiquettes of Scholars.”

The spread and influence of Sufism continued after Imam Zayn al-Abidin, and it is often recorded by writers that the name and nature of Sufism expanded to the four corners of the world, as Islamic teachings reached beyond the borders of *hijaz*. According to the medieval mystic Jami, Abd-Allah ibn Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah (died c. 716) was the first person to be called a Sufi. He was the third son of Ali ibn Abi Talib and a person known for his valour and righteousness, who also distinguished himself as a pious, peace-loving man. He was called Ibn al-Hanafiyyah after his mother, Khawlah bint Jafar, who was known as Hanafiyyah, "the Hanafi woman", after her tribe Banu Hanifah. (Jullundhri 166).

This “inward dimension of Islam” or the marvel of mysticism reached its pinnacle and popularity between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries of the Islamic era, which is often regarded as the Golden Age of Sufism. Sufis like Ali-Hujwiri, Ibn Arabi, Rumi and others wrote their masterly treatises on the mysteries of Sufism and their journey towards God. However, some Islamic scholars living before the Golden Era of Sufism were also referred to as Sufis, like Hasan al-Basri and Habib Al-Ajami. Adel notes that “according to Ibn Khaldun, Sufism was already practiced by the *sahaba*”, but given a more functional and exclusive interpretation the term Sufi was later used to refer to those who emphasized the spiritual practice of Islam” (Adel 3-5).

Towards the eleventh century AD several booklets came to be written recapitulating the canons and practices of Sufis, defining certain distinctive Sufi practices, like *muraqabah* (meditation), *ziyarat* (making a pilgrimage), *karamat* (performing spiritual wonders), *dhikr* (supplication and repetition of divine names), and *tafakkur* (contemplation). Ali Hujwiri's *Kashf al-Mahjub* (Revelation of the Veiled) is the most notable in this context (Al-Qushayri 10-15).

There are different orders of Sufis, and their method of practicing *tadhakkur* and *tafakkur* is also different. Some of these orders organize spiritual sessions known as *majalis* or *majlis-e Sama*, a ceremony performed as *dhikr* where they listen to devotional hymns and recitations of poetry and prayers wearing symbolic attire (Nasir and Malik 3-5). In some orders, the Sufis perform physically active meditation, like the whirling Dervishes of the Mevlevi order, through which they aim to forsake their egos or personal desires, by listening to the music, concentrating on God, and whirling in rhythmic circles. In Sufi philosophy *tadhakkur* comes after *tafakkur*. *Tafakkur* is meditating and thinking about the Worshipped One and striving for *ihsan*, perfection of worship, and *tadhakkur* is the resulting attainment. (Green 15).

This paper purports to study, examine and elucidate the general name and nature of the practices of *tadhakkur* and *tafakkur*, their importance for a Sufi, and the purpose for which they are performed, with special reference to their explanation in the works of Hazrat Deewan Syed Abu Sayeed Jafar Mohammed Quadri, one of the most important seventeenth century saints of the Quadria *silsila* in Bihar (Barh). The present paper focuses on the twin concepts of Sufism as understood and practiced by Hazrat Deewan Jafar, expounding on their relationship in the inclusive structure of the Sufi path of initiation, enlightening on and elucidating some of the epistemological and ontological aspects of the concepts of *tafakkur* and *tadhakkur*.

Literature Review

The significance of *tafakkur* and *tadhakkur* lies in the fact that they are the two most important aspects of the epistemic and spiritual ascent of the Sufis. They signify a very intricate spiritual practice whose

ultimate and utmost purpose is the mystical comprehension of God. The Holy Quran constantly, in various verses, keeps reminding believers about the obligation and importance of *dhikr*, which can also mean invocation or remembrance. “Then do ye remember Me; I will remember you. Be grateful to Me, and reject not Faith.” (2:152). “Behold! In the creation of the Heavens and the earth, And the alternation of Night and Day, - There are indeed Signs for men of understanding. Men who celebrate the praises of God, standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and contemplate the (wonders of) creation in the heavens and the earth, (With the thought): ‘Our Lord! Not for naught hast Thou created (all) this! Glory to Thee! Give us Salvation from the Penalty of the Fire.’” (3:190-191). “The most beautiful names belong to God; So, call on him by them;” (7:180). “Those who believe, and whose hearts find satisfaction in the remembrance of God; for without doubt in the remembrance of God; Do hearts find satisfaction.” (13:28). “O ye who believe! Celebrate the praise of God, and do this often;” (33:41).

In Surah Al-Imran (3:190-191) there is a term “*ulul albab*” which is used for those who are men of understanding and insight. The implication here is that those believers who contemplate and think and understand fully well the purpose of creation and its meaning are the ones who can really remember and invoke Allah in the true sense. Offering prayers five times every day, as instructed in the Quran is the best way to spend time in remembrance and adoration of Allah.

Quran is also very clear about the importance of contemplation and reflection, *tafakkur*, in attaining spiritual knowledge, and stresses strongly and repeatedly on the correct understanding of God as the Supreme Being, and the physical world as His creation. Contemplation rewards believers with wisdom, which brings knowledge and insight with it, and which in turn makes *tadhakkur* meaningful and acceptable to Allah. And they are the “wise knowledgeable doers.” (Al-Zamakhshari 151). Ibn-Qayyim Al-Jawziyya observes that reflection and contemplation is the early phase of spiritual understanding, and is related to the ‘*qalb*’, the heart. Contemplation or ‘*tafakkur*’ according to him, provides insight and perspicacity, which further develops into wisdom. It

is only after the attainment of wisdom that remembrance or *tadhakkur* can be effective and meaningful. *Tafakkur* appears in a number of verses of the Quran implying different levels of thinking.

Does any of you wish that he should have a garden with date-palms and vines and streams flowing underneath, and all kinds of fruit, while he is stricken with old age, and his children are not strong (enough to look after themselves)- that it should be caught in a whirlwind, with fire therein, and be burnt up? Thus, doth God make clear to you (His) Signs; that ye may consider. (2:266).

Had We sent down this Qur'an on a mountain, verily, thou wouldst have seen it humble itself and cleave asunder for fear of God. Such are the similitudes which We propound to men, that they may reflect. (59:21)

Allah exhorts believers to use their intellect to understand the signs, revelations and parables sent in the Quran, so that they may derive lessons from them. The term *tafakkur* is used in the Quran to mean reflection, thought, and consideration. It also signifies meditation and deep thinking, as in Al-Anam (6:50). In Al-Baqra (2:266) Allah asks believers to use their intellect to think about and to understand his Signs and know the realities of temporal existence. So, *tafakkur* is employed here for the intellect. In Surah Ar-Rad (13:3) *tafakkur* is used to mean reflection and deep thinking after observing the earth, mountains, rivers, and every kind of fruit as signs of Allah, in order to attain a deeper understanding of man's life on the earth and Allah's limitless power. In An-Nahl (16:44) *tafakkur* is drawn on to mean the use of imagination and consideration in order that believers may perceive the clear signs revealed in the Holy Quran, and act and disseminate the message that is revealed in the book. In Al-Hashr (59:21) *tafakkur* denotes employing a deep thinking to understand the reality and the power of the Quranic message. The Quran insists believers to interpret and consider the signs and symbols of Allah and realize the awe-inspiring sublime message.

It is evident from the aforementioned Quranic verses and their analysis that the signs, symbols, parables and revelations in the Quran

summon and urge us to comprehend and grasp the truth in them by meditating, evaluating, pondering and reflecting on each and every aspect of Allah's creation, so that we may gain a complete understanding about ourselves and the world around us and beyond. Only after then, *tadhakkur* will be meaningful, acceptable and plausible.

Malik Badri, a well-known scholar and academic, affirms the importance of meditation or *tafakkur* and remembrance, *tadhakkur*, as the two comprehensive Sufi practices that influence and affect his conduct and his activities spiritually as well as cognitively. Contemplation or *tafakkur* involves imagination, and along with invocation, it

“brings about the gradual realization in the self of the virtues of higher order such as repentance (*at-tawbah*), patience (*sabr*), gratitude (*shukr*), hope (*rajā*), fear (*khawf*), divine unity (*tawhīd*), trust (*tawakkul*), and finally the highest virtue for the attainment of happiness in worldly life, love of God” (p. 29).

What Badri emphasizes on is that *tafakkur* is the highest form of spiritual awareness, a powerful state of divine consciousness which has the potential to transform human beings. Badri regards contemplation of Allah and His creation as the highest kind of worship. He explains that it has the power to prevent people from going astray and indulging themselves with the material aspects of life. It inspires them to observe and perceive with insight and a receptive heart, the signs of Allah in the universe. Badri believes that the contemplation of the magnificence and marvel of creation without any faith in the Omnipotence, Omniscience, and Omnipresence of Allah, is akin to *shirk*, polytheism, and *kufr*, impiety (Badri 53).

The eleventh century Persian theologian, Mohammed al-Ghazali, considered as one of the most renowned and significant Muslim philosophers and mystics of Sunni Islam, says in his book *Revival of the Religious Sciences (Ihyā' ulūm ad-dīn)* indisputably held to be the most important treatise on Sufism, that the knowledge acquired through contemplation transforms the heart of the contemplator. Adding on to Al-Ghazali's concept of contemplation and reflection, Jamal Farooqui

asserts that *tafakkur* demands pondering over Allah's creation and being thankful for His gifts to mankind. This eventually and necessarily leads the believer to articulate his awe and veneration of Allah and seek His guidance and help. In this way he surrenders himself completely to the will of Allah, and desists from committing any sin, or any act not earning Allah's reward both here and in the hereafter. Only after that stage, arrives the higher level of *tadhakkur*, recollection or invocation which ennoble the heart and the mind (Farooqui 14-15).

But Khurram Murad considers both reflection and recollection as different categories of understanding. He says that a believer first reflects over an occurrence or whatever he or she observes, tries to grasp its essence and existence, and then considers it very seriously and in turn gets affected by it. He observes that according to the Holy Quran, *tadhakkur* or recollection implies being warned and guided, be wary and watchful, and recollect and invoke Allah's mercy. It entails a constant effort to comprehend the message of the Quran, believe it fully well, and act accordingly with the unity of heart and mind. Murad does not think that *tadhakkur* needs a higher degree of skill and intellect. He believes that it dwells on inspiration and insight through which truth could be known and realized (Murad 77). In fact, Murad fails to mention that understanding, knowledge, intelligence, and mental prowess are already achieved by the believer before he enters the state of *tadhakkur*, because in the true spirit of Sufi theology, *tadhakkur* cannot be complete and acceptable, and will remain only a repetition of words, if true understanding, faith, and deep thinking have not been undertaken earlier in order to comprehend and grasp fully well the purpose and significance of *tadhakkur*. A very detailed discussion on this aspect of reflection and recollection is to be found in the writings of Hazrat Deewan Syed Abu Sayeed Jafar Mohammed Quadri, a matter which is taken up in the Discussion part of the present paper.

There is a very strong insistence on creative thinking in Islam, and this aspect of thinking passes through many stages of observation, understanding, and contemplation, after which that deep sense of reflection is transferred into action and conduct. Contemplation or reflection should be so intense and deep that it should inspire and stir the

mind and heart, and urge and encourage the believer to act. It fosters tolerance, honesty, beneficence and resilience, espousing analytical and evaluative thinking also refers to Al-Razi's views on thinking in the Quranic context. He quotes from Al-Razi's explanation of Sura Al-Baqarah, verse 31, which says, "And He taught Adam the nature of all things; then He placed them before the angels and said: 'Tell me the nature of these if ye are right.'" (Badi 44)

Here Al-Razi says that the word thinking is compatible with knowledge. He describes this verse as the victory of knowledge. It is knowledge that originates in *fahm*, understanding and *tafaqquh*, profound understanding, and inspires insight and rational observation of the world before us and beyond. Islam, strictly speaking, recommends rational knowledge and understanding that fosters insight as against a strictly narrow and subjective approach to knowledge, which can be anything else but knowledge (Al-Razi 222-226).

The Sufis connect themselves with the Divine through the process of reflection or meditation, at which stage the realization dawns upon them that Allah is the only truth, the rest is all fantasy. It is the highest stage of the mystical awareness of Allah's Oneness and Sovereignty, and of the fact that praise is only due to Him. Ezzeldin describes the different stages of contemplation,

"from the stage of observing creation and wondering about its beauty and uniqueness, to the stage in which the contemplator related his spiritual and aesthetic experience of creation with the almighty Creator Himself, and finally, to the stage which entirely transcends the boundaries between creation and Creator" (122-123).

For Ezzeldin, therefore, contemplation, is much more than a spiritual pursuit. It is closely interrelated with the intellect and imagination. It is through imagination that the Sufi moves from the world of senses to the eternal world of spiritual reality, the world that lies beyond the physical existence. It is a kind of an inward flight, an ascent to the utmost height of knowledge and awareness. The succeeding pages will make a concerted attempt to understand, explore, analyze, and introduce the

works of Hazrat Deewan Syed Abu Sayeed Jafar Mohammed Quadri, and his concept of *tafakkur*, reflection, and *tadhakkur*, recollection, as two distinctive aspects of Sufi doctrine and practice. Attempt will also be made to show how his observations of these two practices of Islamic spirituality are significantly unique, all-embracing, and fundamental to the understanding of mysticism in Islam.

About the Sufi Saint Hazrat Deewan Jafar

Hazrat Deewan Syed Abu Sayeed Jafar Mohammed Quadri was born in 1634 (Hijra 1044) at Barh town, a subdivision of Patna district of Bihar, India, and the oldest subdivision of India. It is located on the southern bank of the Ganges river, and is 34 miles south-east of Patna. Hazrat Deewan died at the age of sixty-five on September, 19. 1699 (24 Rabi ul Awwal, 1111 Hijra). He was a prominent Sufi saint of the Quadria *silsila* and his father was also a very saintly person. Hazrat Deewan was also a poet, who wrote poems in Arabic, Persian, and Hindavi languages. He was an outstanding spiritual scholar, and an incomparable Sufi master, proficient in various branches of knowledge, and the author of Sufi supplications and incantations. Nothing much is known about his life, because he chose to keep himself away from much public appearances. The researcher's great grandfather's grandfather, Meer Qadir Ahmed, was married to Hazrat Deewan Jafar's great granddaughter Bibi Baratunnisa. As she had no brothers, her husband, Meer Qadir Ahmed, became the Sajjada Nashin of the Khanqah Hazrat Deewan Jafar at Barh.

The influence of Hazrat Deewan Syed Abu Sayeed Jafar Mohammed Quadri had spread far and wide, and his preaching and spiritual thoughts and writings influenced a number of leading Sufi saints across Bihar. Hazrat Makhdoom Shah Muhammad Munim Pak who was born in 1671 (1082 Hijra), and whose family lineage goes back to Hazrat Makhdoom Shamsuddin Haqqani, one of the great Sufis of his time, presented himself before Hazrat Deewan Syed Abu Sayeed Jafar Mohammed Quadri's Khanqah at Barh for a deeper insight, initiation, and knowledge in Sufi theology and precepts. After Hazrat Deewan Jafar's death, Hazrat Munim Pak received knowledge from his son Deewan Syed Khaleel and

became his "*murid*" (disciple) under the Quadria Qutubia order, and was rewarded with "*Khilafah*", as his successor in the Quadria Qutubia order. The Khanqah of Makhdoom Munim Pak is situated at Meetan Ghat, Patna City, and it is through this Khanqah that the silsila of Hazrat Deewan Jafar has spread all around the world. Deewan Khalil's grandsons also became the murids of Hazrat Makhdoom Munim Pak. The present successor and Sajjada Nashin of Khanqah Munemia, Hazrat Dr. Syed Shah Shamim Ahmed Munemi, has been very kind and generous to allow the present researcher to take help from the wealth of books that are excellently preserved in the impressive and valuable library at the Khanqah of Hazrat Munim Pak at Patna City.

The concepts of Reflection and Reflection in Hazrat Deewan Jafar's works

Fortunately for the seekers of Sufi knowledge and research, Deewan Jafar has left behind a considerable literature in the form of commentaries, discourses, and supplications for daily recitals, and other mystical treatises, which can give us precise and valuable ideas and understanding about his mystical convictions, experiences and outlook. Among these, his discourses and supplications constitute the bulk, and are by far the most important part of his writings, as they discuss and elaborate in detail the importance of *tafakkur* and *tadhakkur* as pivotal to Islamic faith and Sufi thought and practices. He considers these two concepts as twin components of Sufi theology and practice which play a hugely central and necessary role in helping the Sufi in the attainment of *kamal*, perfection, in his journey towards the realization and awareness of Divine realities and the essence of existence. '*Aurad Mujahidaat Al-Sufiya*' (Supplications and Strivings of the Sufi) is Hazrat Deewan Jafar's most voluminous and important writing. It is distributed into sixteen chapters, every chapter contains about a hundred pages, and each chapter has subdivisions. The book is written in Persian and is not yet available in print. Three copies of this handwritten manuscript, written in Deewan Jafar's own handwriting, are safe in the library of Khanqah Munemia at Patna City, Bihar (India). Perhaps very few books on Sufism, or none, can be compared with the depth, extensiveness, and the perspicacity with which *tafakkur* and *tadhakkur*, termed as the essential

features of Islamic mystical thought, are discussed in this book. The present researcher would refer to some parts of this book that illuminate the meaning and significance of *tadhakkur* and *tafakkur*. ‘*Adaab ul Muhaqqaqeen*’ (Etiquette of Researchers) is his other handwritten manuscript preserved at the Khanqah Munemia Library. ‘*Adaab Al-Dhikr*’ is Deewan Jafar’s very important treatise on *tadhakkur*, recollection, and it is available in the library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. This paper includes Deewan Jafar’s concept of ‘*dhikr*’ explained from this book too.

Aurad Mujahidaat Al-Sufiya’ (Supplications and Strivings of the Sufi) carries a comprehensive and meticulously expounded exposition on the concept, importance and inevitability of reflection and recollection (*tafakkur and tadhakkur*) in Islam and its imperativeness for a Sufi. The book also specifies and describes the language of recollection, its nature and the manner in which it should be invoked, and the various forms of recollections or invocations propounded by great Sufis of different *salasil*, orders. Chapter One of the erudite work is labeled as *ilm*, Knowledge, and talks about the role of a Sufi, which is to arrive at the highest level of *kamaal*, perfection, through inner illumination. This inner illumination has to be achieved through sacrificing and surrendering all personal whims and fancies and desires to the passionate, all-infusing love for God. Hazrat Deewan encourages a devotion and a passion where fear gives way to a keen realization and knowledge gained from a deep reflection that God is the only Reality, the only Truth, to be believed, obeyed, and loved. A realization that is beautifully described in Surah An-Nur of the Holy Quran,

“God is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His Light is as if there were a Niche and within it a Lamp: The Lamp enclosed in Glass: The glass as it were a brilliant star: Lit from a blessed Tree, an Olive, neither of the East nor of the West, whose Oil is well-nigh Luminous, though fire scarce touched it: Light upon Light! God doth guide whom He will to His Light: God doth set forth Parables for men: and God doth know all things.” (24:35).

Hazrat Deewan Jafar encourages and espouses the comprehension of and reflection on this Light that is so accurately and tellingly described in parables in the Holy book, and which illumines the inward and the outward of a believer, a Sufi more so than anyone else.

Chapter four of the book is labeled as *Aqa'id e Sufia wa Istalahat Ishan*, The Beliefs of the Sufis and their practices and conventions. Hazrat Deewan considers reflection or *tafakkur* as a journey, the Sufi's pursuit for comprehending the Truth, reflecting on the Supreme Being. It is a long tortuous pursuit where the Object is alienated and far-off from the seeker. It is a cognitive, conscious search, an ontological journey where the seeker has to negate his self to illumine himself with God's Light. He transcends himself and becomes fully aware of the mysteries of existence and does nothing except what God wills him to do. The strength and perfection of a Sufi's *tafakkur* or reflection is ultimately going to decide the power and reach of his *tadhakkur*, recollection or supplication, and its approval by the Ultimate Master towards whom it is directed. According to Hazrat Deewan Jafar, it is the stage where, *ilm ul yaqeen*, the knowledge of certainty, ascends to the state of *ain ul yaqeen*, the vision of certainty, and in a moment of bliss soars to the pinnacle of *haq ul yaqeen*, the final level of certainty gained through personal experience. At this ultimate stage the certainty evolves as Truth. This is what God describes in the Holy Quran as "Indeed, this is the true certainty" (56:95). It is here that the Sufi witnesses the Divine entering his self and soul.

The quintessence of such profound, spiritual reflection are the supplications, or the *tadhakkur*, or recollections or invocations, with their mystical style, their eloquent, articulate expressions, replete with Divine wisdom, not to be found in ordinary languages and expressions. It is the attainment of such a state which Hazrat Deewan regards as the *Irfan* or *muarfa*, a state of esoteric ecstasy, a *wajdan*, and emphasizes on it in the fifth and sixth chapters of the manuscript that reflect on the performance, etiquettes, manners, and discipline of recollection or supplication, and their mystique paranormal power. This aspect of *dhikr* or *tadhakkur* is also reflected in his other book *Adaab al-Dhikr, The Etiquette of Recollection*. Hazrat Deewan Jafar believes that "*al-iman huva alwahdan*

alwujood ma'a al-dhahira wa albatin" (Faith is the unity of the outward and the inner existence) (194). And this can be achieved only through recollection. It is a mystical state of realization which is the consequence, the reward and the ripeness of all '*ibadat*', prayer or meditation. According to Hazrat Deewan Jafar, *salah*, the obligatory and all other Islamic prayers, are means and sources of recollection, invoking the Almighty, beseeching Him, remembering His names. This can only be attained through valid contemplation. *Tadhakkur*, or reflection, for him, is not just parroting of supplications, and mere chanting of God's names, and imploring Him. Hazrat Deewan stresses that it is a stage where all worldly desires fade away, a state of '*fana fillah*' the extinction, the evanescence of the self and the melting away of it to God's will. According to him, as to the general Sufi doctrine, a Sufi attains divine revelation through *tadhakkur* or reflection.

In *Adaab al-Dhikr*, The Etiquette of Recollection, Hazrat Deewan writes that the remembrance and recollection of God should be attuned in conformity with the body, so much so that the tongue that supplicates and the heart and mind that draw upon that supplication themselves become a quintessence, a pivot of *tadhakkur*, nothing else occupies them, to the extent that they become the abode of God. But Hazrat Deewan also enlightens in the book that as much as recollection is the matter of the heart, it must also become an oral incantation, where the tongue becomes immersed in invocation of the Almighty. In this way, recollection or invocation achieves its ultimate perfection and goal where both the inner and the outward unite with a single purpose at all levels of a believer's existence and thoughts, merging the evident, the palpable and the veiled and hidden aspects of his existence. The test of flawless *tadhakkur* or recollection is that the physical existence and the heart within become greatly enamored with the Divine supplications, the recollection of the absolute beauty and the beneficence of God.

Hazrat Deewan Jafar's concept of *tafakkur*, reflection, and *tadhakkur*, recollection, has influenced an entire generation of Sufis because of his fundamental and inclusive understanding of the two predominantly important practices and principles of Sufi theology which take their inspiration and spirit directly from the Holy Quran, the practices of the

Holy Prophet (pbuh), his *ahl al-bayt*, (People of the House) and the early Muslim saints. His teachings about those twin repositories of mystic realization have had far-reaching influences. He believes that the incantations of *ism al-azam*, the Greatest names of Allah, brings forth to the mind's eye of the Sufi, the *mazhar*, the manifestation of Allah. Any shortfall or ignorance in supplication or recollection, any incorrect utterance of the words, would reflect the imperfection of *tafakkur*, reflection or meditation. In his two books mentioned above, he has elaborated and explained, and even noted the various manners and diverse assortments of *tadhakkur*, only to show and emphasize how exactly, and in what manner and mood, the supplications should be offered, and what exact words and phrases should be used to express the strength, the depth, and excellence of *tafakkur*, reflection. Hazrat Deewan's manuscripts and books have much to offer to the seekers of truth and illumine further the enlightened path of the Sufis, where a believer is summoned by Allah Himself to perceive the creation, to assess and investigate his soul, to think and ponder on the mysteries of revelation and to remember The Creator, and seek Him through supplications and prayers day in and day out.

Conclusion

In the preceding pages, the present researcher has presented successively a survey and observation on mysticism, and its role in shaping religious thoughts pertaining to different religions, in addition to its impact in transforming human lives and thinking. The discussion then moved on to the enumeration and analysis of Sufism, its tentative birth and its obvious and steady interpretation of Islam and its practices. Moving from a threadbare analysis of Sufism, the present researcher then focuses on the stipulated title of the research paper, namely the study of the concept of reflection (*tafakkur*) and recollection (*tadhakkur*) as perceived by different Sufi masters, and particularly explicated, examined, and spelled out by Hazrat Deewan Syed Abu Sayeed Jafar Mohammed Quadri, the great seventeenth century saint of the famed Quadria order, in his books. A comprehensive Quranic view on reflection and recollection, through the verses from the Holy book, has been presented in order to show and ascertain that Sufism is a faith

which is very much attested by the Holy Quran. The fundamental tenets of the two concepts were highlighted through the works of Sufis and scholars on Sufism, with particular references to the teachings and thoughts of Hazrat Deewan Jafar as found in his books. It was, however not possible to encapsulate all that the reverend saint has said in detail in his voluminous books. Some of his noteworthy observations were discussed here. So, this research does not claim to be a complete study on *tafakkur* and *tadhakkur* as perceived by Hazrat Deewan Jafar, as his intensive and vastly exhaustive books have much to offer, and more intensive researches are needed to be undertaken to understand and explore his theological insight into the tenets of Sufism.

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