

Fana fi Pir

By
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1. One's attunement to and effacement in one's earth plane teacher, in Fana-fi-Sheikh may be continued after the passing of the Sheikh from the physical plane into the stage of Fana-fi-Pir.
2. Fana-Fi-Pir is not to be understood as merely involving effacement in the living Pir of the Order, though it may also involve that and be fulfilled in that. And while Fana-fi-Pir should be understood as involving effacement in beings who have been the founders of Sufi Orders (e.g. Hazrat Inayat Khan, Abdul Kadr Jilani, Moin-ed-din Chisti, Shahab-ud-din Sohrawardi, or Rumi), in reality it is much broader than this also.
3. Fana-fi-Pir should be seen to involve the personal effacement in any great teacher who has passed from the physical plane.
4. It is in virtue of the teacher-relation that any given fana practice may be a mode of Fana-fi-Pir. The Pir may also have been and be a Nabi or Rassul (without such a claim being made). Thus one may enter into Fana-fi-Pir with relation to Hazrat Pir-O-Murshid Inayat Khan insofar as one imbibed his guidance like a mureed in relation their Murshid. And yet at some other time, or simultaneously, one may be in the stage of fana-fi-Nabi of Fana-fi-Rassul with regard to the same being.
5. While Sheikh, Pir, Nabi and Rassul are helpful and legitimate grades to understand, nevertheless, it is essential to always know that these are all modes of God, Who is the Only Being. This is the fundamental realisation of Sufism.
6. Murshid Sufi Ahmed Murad Chisti (Samuel L. Lewis) said he would be remembered for accomplishments in the field of Fana-fi-Pir. He had many experiences of this variety, especially at the tombs or dargahs of Sufi saints. Some of these experiences are recorded in his diaries and correspondence. Often times he would refer to some teaching which he had received through attunement to a particular saint or khwaja. An example is the teaching that Allaho Akbar esoterically means "peace is power". This was an instruction given to Murshid with regard to the Sufi Saint Mian Mir. But for Murshid this was the usual state of affairs, no sooner than he would enter a tomb the presence of the saint would be evoked. One can read about this kind of experience in the lives of many Sufis. We cannot always put such accomplishments in the past. Allah is eternally present.
7. Shortly before his death Murshid has completed his literary work, "Fana-fi-Sheikh". It was his intention to follow this with the work to be entitled "Fana-fi-Pir". This was never done during his lifetime. I hope these paragraphs will carry with them the continuing and growing power of his intention.
8. Another reason why Murshid SAM may be remembered for accomplishments in Fana-fi-Pir is because he communicated this to his disciples through numerous Tassawur practices. The following is a list of teachers whom this writer remembers Murshid presenting in the above way: Hazrat Inayat Khan, Papa Ram Dass, Mother Krishna-bai, Abdul Kadr Jilani, Mian Mir, Nyogen Sensaki and others. But just as important was his teaching how this knowledge can be drawn from the space, from what in Buddhist terminology is called the alaya-vijnana, the storehouse repository of all creation.
9. Murshid also gave written instructions for singing Zikar with conscious effacement in great teachers and Prophets of God, as well as giving this in the fana-fi-rassul draft sangathas and in dance form, such as the Krishna Dance (though this is rassul).
10. In the section on "The Spiritual Hierarchy" Pir-O-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan says this about the Pir: "The work of the Pir is helping individuals towards the unfoldment of their soul." Thus the founders and directors of Orders are called Pirs, and this aspect of the teacher is an important one called Fana-fi-Pir. In

Fana-Fi-Pir one often receives spiritual instructions for the unfoldment of one's being; there is an intimate relationship of instructions developed exactly parallel to the relationship between mureed and Murshid. Thus Inayat Khan refers to the practice of Tassawuri Murshid with regard to himself (in or out of the body) and this is really the same as Fana-fi-Pir.

11, In the same section Inayat says: "According to the Sufi conception there are seven degrees of the spiritual hierarchy, which can be distinguished as different stages of responsiveness, in other words higher initiation, They are: Pir, Buzurg, Wali, Ghauth, Qutb, Nabi and Rassul." What we are calling Fana-fi-Pir relates particularly to effacement with regard to a being in the first five of these grades (or to a Nabi or Rassul insofar as they are also one of these others too). Abdul Kadr Jilani was clearly Pir (founder of the Qadiri Order), Buzurg, Wali, Ghauth and Qutb. If he was also Nabi and/or Rassul this remains silent following the advice of the Prophet Mohammed.

12. One who by grace becomes accomplished in Fana-Fi-Pir may win the sobriquet Moin-ed-din. A number of great Sufi teachers have been given this name. It can be translated as "Reviver of the faith" or "Quickener of the faith". A Moin-ed-din may manifest in several different ways. Though the power of his being he may revive a whole religion or several religions, which have fallen into degeneracy or decay. Periodically in the history of Islam one notices this phenomena – the appearance of a Moin-ed-din who shakes into wakefulness the sleeping of dead forms of the religion. The occasional appearance of Moin-ed-dins is the justification of the claim in Islam to be the final revelation of a full shariat for humankind. The shariat in this sense refers to a complete exoteric code for individuals and society as a whole to follow for the preservation of the religious way of life. Abdul Kadr Jilani (Ghaus-i-Azam) is a perfect example of a Sufi who functioned in this way. When he came to the fullness of realisation he brought the whole Islamic religion with him. In our own time we are noticing a revival of Christianity and Judaism through the infusion of living spirit of Sufism embodied in Moin-ed-dins in our own day and age. But this revival of religion is often only a side effect. The central stream is the infusion of light and life and power into the world, into the consciousness of humanity as a whole. This may then be used to awaken old forms or not. Light is light; it illuminates whatever it shines upon. Thus the Moin-ed-din or the representative of the spiritual hierarchy is delegated the operative functions of Nabi and Rassul without having to make or live with these claims.

13. The effacement in Fana-fi-Pir may determine the family with which one progresses in a caravan after death. There are spiritual families which are established by the link of initiation with a particular teacher, or with a chain of teachers. Thus the Pir may be like a patriarch of a large clan for which they are responsible before God in this world and the next world. After death it is important to keep the orientation of Toward the One, to be drawn continually onward to complete absorption in God. One's Pir and family of fellow mureeds thus become a cosmic body, a caravan to the goal and a source of guidance.