



A Study of Professor Khaliq Ahmad Nizami and his Contribution to Sufi studies.

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Abstract

Professor Khaliq Ahmad Nizami was one of very well-known historians of Medieval India. He was a prolific writer and he wrote extensively on Sufism and Political history of Delhi sultanate. He was among the first to activate academic interest to the study of ulama and Mashaikh of India. He maintains that the study of medieval Indian history has a long-centered monopoly of courts and camps of kings and we have got in the habit of surveying historical landscape from the point of view of royal throne as it has to be seen through other perspectives as well. He considers this Sufi literature is a rich source of constructing and understanding the religious and social history of medieval India.

My paper deals with a study of the life of Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, his academic career and his contribution to Sufi studies. In this paper I will highlight some of his major works on *Sufism* along with their basic introduction. He wrote more than 40 books and 200 papers in Urdu, Arabic, Persian and English dealing with various aspects of medieval Indian History, culture, sir Sayyed and Aligarh.

Keywords; Sufism, Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, medieval India, History, contribution

Introduction

Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami was born in *Amroha*, located in the united provinces of British India on December 5, 1925. Aziz Ahmad was his father and Sayyidah Nizami his mother. His other siblings were Swaleha Nizami, Liaqat Ahmad Nizami, Zilley Ahmad Nizami, Taufiq Ahmad Nizami and Jamal Ara Nizami. Er. Zilley Ahmad Nizami moved to Pakistan after completing his graduation in Civil engineering from Aligarh Muslim university in 1951. Dr. Taufiq Nizami also served as faculty of Department of Political Science in Aligarh Muslim University. Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami was married to Raziyah Nizami, sister of noted Urdu scholar Khwaja Ahmad Farooqi. The couple had five children, Ahtesham Nizami, Azra Nizami,

Wajih Nizami, Mujib Nizami and Farhan Nizami. Dr. Farhan Nizami is the prince of wales fellow in the study of Islamic world, Magdalena college, Oxford and the founder director of the Oxford Centre of Islamic Studies.

Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami received his education in India and though he travelled extensively and gained much recognition abroad. He attended Meerut college, which was attached to University of Agra, where he completed his M.A. in History in 1945. In the following year he was awarded the LL. B degree by the same Institution. Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami was also a religious scholar and a Diplomat. Apart from academic arrangements, he was also part of the University administration and played an important role in the ruling of Aligarh Muslim University. In 1973, the students were on the verge of losing one academic year, due to student agitation for the restoration of minority character. He helped to put in a unique system by having three semesters in a year instead of two and modifying the examining system temporarily.

Academic career

Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami's rise in position at Aligarh was both steady and swift. He joined the university in 1947 and held the offices of Professor and chairman of Department of History; provost of Sir Sayyid Hall; Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences; pro-vice chancellor and vice chancellor. In 1953, he became reader of history. In 1963, he was promoted to rank of Professor. He also served as secretary of the Islamic studies section of International Congress of Orientalists held in New Delhi in 1963. He was president of the Medieval Indian History Section of Indian History Congress convened at Allahabad in 1965. In 1968, he gained the respected title of senior professors of the university. Similarly, he served as president of the history section of the Punjab History Congress in 1969. He was member of the U.P. Regional Records Survey in Allahabad. He participated in many other congresses and conferences, both in India and elsewhere. In 1971, Professor Khaliq Ahmad Nizami became the Head of Department of History and headed it till his superannuation in 1984. He served as pro Vice chancellor from 1972 to 1974 with professor Abdul Aleem as the vice Chancellor. Professor Khaliq Ahmad Nizami served as Officiating Vice Chancellor from 3rd January to 30th August 1974. He was one of the strongest candidates for the vice chancellorship of Aligarh Muslim University.

Professor Khaliq Ahmad Nizami's efforts brought establishment of Sir Sayyid Academy in Sir Sayyid House and became its founding Director on 20th September 1974 and served as a director till 1985. In 1975 he was appointed as an Indian ambassador to Syria and he served his responsibilities as an Indian ambassador to Syria till 1977. The latter appointment was accompanied by his being made head of University's Centre of Advanced Study in History, which has numbered many of the best and most famous twentieth-century historians of India among its personnel. He also served as Dean Faculty of Social Sciences from 3rd July 1977 to 30th July 1980. Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami was also associated with *Darul Musannefin* Shibli

Academy and served as a management Committee and member of editorial board of its monthly journal *Maarif* from 1989 till his last breath.

A new Centre for Quranic Studies KANCQS was established. He had been associated with the university for nearly half a century. In addition to his formal duties to the University, Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami was an active member of extra-curricular and professional Organizations, especially those designed to promote the study of Indian history. During his provost, he decided to print the book, "history of M.A.O College, Aligarh" written by Mr. Shyam Krishna Bhatnagar and distributed to every resident member of the Hall.

Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami died on Thursday, December 4, 1997 and was laid to the rest in University graveyard "Mintoyee" and the world lost one the most outstanding historians of Medieval India. He was very concerned with the student's problems ranging from micro to major levels. He was a strict administrator. He was innovative as a provost, worked hard to improve the Hostel life of students. He improved the quality of food given to the students. he was quite hard on kitchen staff, which revolted and went on to strike at one point ,but he did not yield. He hired vegetarian cooks from outside for a week until the agreement was made with the kitchen staff. Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami was an active and honest administrator.

He wrote more than 40 books and more than 200 papers in Urdu, Arabic, Persian, and English dealing with various aspects of Medieval Indian History, Culture, Sir Sayyed and Aligarh. His major works related to Sufism are *Tarikh-i Mashaikh-I Chist*, *Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during 13th C.E*, *The Life and Times of Shaikh Farid-Ud-Din-Ganj Shakar*, *The Life and Times of Shaikh Nizam-Ud-Din Awliya*, *The Life and Times of Shaikh Nasir-Ud-Din Chirag Dilli*, *Persian Influence on the development of Literary and Sufi Traditions in South Asia*, *Salateen-e- Delhi Kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, *Sufiya Kiram Aur Qowmi Yakjihati*, *Hayat-i-Shaykh Abdul Haq Muhadith Dehalvi*, *Historical Role of Three Auliya Of South Asia*, *Hazrat Shah Kalimullah Dehalvi studies in Islamic Mysticism*, *Hazrat Bibi Fatimah Sam*. As a research student I seemed it a precious duty to highlight some important writings along with their basic introduction.

Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami wrote "*Tarikh-i-Mashaikh-i-Chist*" with a foreword by Late Dr. Zakir Hussain. Its first edition published at *Nadwat-ul-Musannifin*, Delhi in 1953 and second revised and enlarged edition at *Idarah-i-adabiyat-I Delhi*, in two volumes, Delhi in 1960. Dr Zakir Hussain writes that personality building is probably the hardest and most important task of human beings and the Sufis have done this work with great sincerity. but in the time of decline people are attributing all sorts of fabricated myths to these men of God and do not even look at their real character and thought. He applauds Nizami's efforts to present an objective study of these Sufi's especially the elders of Chishtiya Order and argues that Nizami has tried to present the living condition of Sufi's with the correct historical background by taking them out of fabricated myths. According to prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, the Sufi's did their best to hold the Islamic tradition and ignoring few, who are claiming their offerings as the Islamic tops.

Another famous writing of Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, "*the Life and times of shaikh Farid-ud-din Ganj Shakar*", foreword by sir Hamilton Gibb. It has first edition at *Aligarh* in 1955 and reprinted at *Idarah-I Adabiyat-I Delhi* in 1973. Again it came with revised and enlarged edition at *Idarah-I Adabiyat-I Delhi* in 1998. In his writing, Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami estimated a good concept about Saint from his birth to death with the faces of his family, works and contribution to the religion. In this book, prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami mentioned about religious spirituality during medieval times of India. He maintains that the study of medieval Indian history has a long-centered monopoly of the courts and camps of kings and we have got in the habit of surveying historical landscape from the point of view of royal throne. As it has to be seen through other perspectives as well. Historian should turn to humble dwellings of Saints and sages who avoid wealth and uncorrupted by court life, dedicated their pious lives for the spiritual uplift of man. Taking the best line of his writing that the medieval *khanqa's* were the places of high and low, rich and poor, the learned and the illiterate, men and women, villagers and town folk, were very cooperative and shouldered together. There was not any system of class and creeds. Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami draws a very nice sketch of shaikh Farid-ud-din Ganj Shakar. While Preparing this biography of great medieval Saint, he used critical and logical sources.

Another writing of Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, "*Salateen-e Delhi kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*" Foreword by Syed Bashir Hussain Zaidi. *Matbua al- Jamiyyat press*, Delhi published in 1958. Syed Bashir Hussain Zaidi maintains in the foreword that much of work on Indian history has been done by European historians, although, they could not do justice to the history of medieval India. first of all, they didn't had access to all the material that was in Persian. Secondly, they also made mistakes in its translation relating their works as misleading. However, after independence efforts are being made to reshape Indian history in an unbiased manner. Among the historians who have contributed richly to the study of medieval India, Nizami has a privileged position. He has specially studied the Sufi personalities and their valuable services and explained their role in historiography and socialization. This book contains a complete discussion on the religious ideas, the system of govt of all Sultans of Delhi from Aybak to Sultan Ibrahim Lodhi.

The next very beautiful writing contributed by Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, "*some Aspects of religion and Politics in India during 13th C.E.*", published at *Oxford university Press* Delhi 2002. In this book Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami first deals with the Political expansion and ideological integration of Islam down to Ghurid conquest of northern India. The second part of the book discusses the establishment of Muslim power and nature of Muslim rule in northern India during thirteenth century. Other topics discussed are the position of Ulama in thirteenth century India; the part played by Muslim mystics especially the *Chisti* and *suhrawardi* Orders; the status and treatment of Hindus; and the foreign policy of Delhi Sultanate. The whole book is based on a careful examination of contemporary sources, both in manuscript and in print.

Another famous writing of Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, "*state and culture in Medieval India*", published by *Adam publishers* Delhi in the year of 1985. The studies that constitute this volume were either delivered as

Presidential Addresses at Conferences or presented as Papers at seminars. It is an effort to identify new sources of investigation underlines the studies presented inside. Besides emphasizing the value of geopolitics in the study of medieval Indian history, attempt has been made to evaluate the application of new tools of historical analysis-like quantification of data and psycho-historical method-to the study of the main political and cultural developments of the period. It is felt that fresh perspectives may be added to the study of medieval India. A synoptic overview of the non-interested attitude of *Chishti* saints towards rulers, an analysis of role of Naqshbandi order in Indian politics, an assessment of Shah Waliullah's contribution to the dynamic elements of the Muslim thought in India, provide background for the study of many, an aspect of the political and cultural history of medieval India.

Conclusion.

In conclusion I will bind up my paper saying that Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami has profusely contributed to the Indian religious, social and political history. He made novel attempts of bringing under study the socio-political aspect of medieval Sufism with a logical, critical and objective approach. He was among the first to activate academic interest to the study of '*ulama* and *Mashaikh* of India.

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