

Contribution Of Sufi Saints To Indian Culture

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***Abstract:** The most interesting aspect of Islam in the medieval Indian is Sufism. The medieval period witnessed the rise and development of a large number of Muslim religious movements, mystic organization. The Islamic mysticism was known as Sufism. As a matter of fact, both Hindus and Muslims had mutual admiration for each other's culture, since the early days of the advent of Islam into India. Famous Muslim scholars and saints lived and laboured in India during the medieval period. Sufism is typical mysticism. According to Tarachand, 'sufism is a complex phenomenon, it is like a stream which gather volume by the joining of tributaries from many lands. It was born in the bosom of Islam. It is said that during the very lifetime of Prophet Hazarat Muhammad there were some men of virtue and of retiring nature who embraced Islam with pleasure but showed laity in the observation of its ritualistic or dogmatic aspects. Such liberal minded men of God drew their inspiration from the Quran and the life of the Prophet.*

***Key words:** Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism, Golconda, Bijapur, Ahmednager, Deccan, Khuldabad, Daulatabad, Aurangabad, Burhanpur, Balapur, Bidar, Gulbarga, Bijapur and Hyderabad.etc.*

Introduction:

The most interesting aspect of Islam in the medieval Indian is Sufism. The medieval period witnessed the rise and development of a large number of Muslim religious movements, mystic organization. The Islamic mysticism was known as Sufism. As a matter of fact, both Hindus and Muslims had mutual admiration for each other's culture, since the early days of the advent of Islam into India. Famous Muslim scholars and saints lived and laboured in India during the medieval period.

They helped the spreading of the ideas of Islamic philosophy and mysticism in India. The early Sufis traced their ideas to some verses of the Quran. They gave a mystic interpretation that they differed from the orthodox Muslims who insisted upon a literal interpretation.

Origin of Sufism.

Sufism is typical mysticism. According to Tarachand, 'sufism is a complex phenomenon, it is like a stream which gather volume by the joining of tributaries from many lands. It was born in the bosom of Islam. It is said that during the very lifetime of Prophet Hazarat Muhammad there were some men of virtue and of retiring nature who embraced Islam with pleasure but showed laity in the observation of its ritualistic or dogmatic aspects. Such liberal minded men of God drew their inspiration from the Quran and the life of the Prophet.

It is said that it assumed the form of a regular movement in Persia in the ninth century as a reaction against the rigid formalism of Islam. It received a theosophical basis during the age of Abbasid caliphs of Bagdad and the sufi saints drew freely from the mystic concepts of other peoples and religions, including

Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. The credit for bringing about reconciliation between orthodox Islam and sufism goes to Al Ghazali (1057-1112 A) an Arab Philosopher. He provided a metaphysical basis to mysticism as a part and parcel of the Islamic theology. The Sufi orders and the saints from various cults came to India with these merchants. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries Lahor and Multan attracted many well know sufis from countries outside India by land route. The greatest figure in the history of sufism in India, KhwajaMuinuddinChishti, arrived at Lahor from Ghazni in 1161 and settled at Ajmer during the reign of Prithviraj. There he died in 1235, his tomb continues to attract many pilgrims even now. After the establishment of the Muslim rule in northern India, the Sufis from the Muslim countries of Central Asia, began to migrate to India in large numbers

Nature of Sufism.

The Sufis were the deep religious feelings. They led ascetic lives and laid emphasis on the practices of self-discipline. They sought personal communion with God through self-surrender, meditation and total dedication to the service of mankind. The sufis did not form an organized sect. They neither had a Prophet, nor a sacred book, nor a uniform code of religious doctrines. They accepted Muhammad as their prophet and the Quran as their sacred book According to an observation; the orthodox Muslims depend upon external conduct while the sufis seek inner purity. The orthodox believe in blind obedience to, or observance of religious rituals while the Sufis consider love to be the only means of reaching God. The sufis used singing and dancing,

The term sufi was derived from 'safa' (pure) because of the purity of their thoughts and the nobility of their action. The sufi has been derived from the word suffa (a bench) as the virtuous character and qualities of their saints were similar to those of 'Ashab al suff- or 'People of the Bench' who were attached to the prophet. They were called his companions (sahaba).. The term sufi also bears resemblance with the word suf or coarse wool, suggesting thereby that the sufis might have been so called because of their habit of wearing a woolen blanket purpose sheet of cloth. The Sufis were the peaceful scholars, missionaries and preachers of Islam. They used local languages to explain the Quran and traditions of Prophet Muhammad

They established orphanage, services for humanity during flood, famine and war time. They dedicated their lives to the service of making and the spread of the Islamic faith. The propagation of Islam was regarded by them to be the greatest and the most meritorious service to be rendered to the people. Many text and written material regarding Sufi cults during medieval period has historical importance. The social and religious sources of medieval history give importance to the Sufic literature in many languages. The Arabic, Persian, Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali and other many vernacular languages have Sufi literature or source material in India too. Sufi literature has been classified in various categories by different historians and scholars of Sufism.

Teaching of the Sufism

Most of the Sufi saints belongs to the liberal school of thought. Their popularity in India was due to their understanding of the Indian conditions and the religious attitudes and aspirations of the Indian people. They adopted many Hindu customs and traditions in the initial stages of the development of their philosophy in India.

They laid much emphasis on the service to mankind. The monistic philosophy of Sufism was based on the theory of

The sufis stood for the establishment of harmonious relationships with God through intense love for and total surrender and dedication to the Supreme Power. The sufi saints, in their capacity as pirs were the living teachers or spiritual guides. They showed the path and suggested the means to their followers, called (murids) for the attainment of eternal bliss which was called union by them. The sufi philosophy was based on the principal of 'Love' which was the essence of all the religions.

Silesia's or orders

The Sufis were divided into number of sects, called silsilahs or orders. According to one estimate, as many as 175 such orders of Sufis came into existence in the Muslim world. AbulFazal lists 14 orders of the sufis which apparently found their way to India. Out of which only two took deep roots in the Indian soil. These were Chisti and the Suhrawardi orders. The Subravardisilsilahs made its presence felt in sind and north-western India. Whereas the Chistissilsilah became most prominent throughout the country.

Chits order thechistisilsilah established itself at Ajmer and gradually spread to other parts of Rajasthan, Punjab, Utter Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and Deccan. The chisti order was founded by khwaja Abdul chisti. It was introduced in India by Khwaja Muinuddin Chisti, a native of Sijistan in Persia. He reached India and settled down at Ajmer which was a place of considerable political and religious importance. He worked amongst the low caste people and spent his life in the service of the helpless and downtrodden. He died in 1236 A.D. Thus, he won over the hearts of the people around him by selfless service to the poor and needy. He made many converts to Islam through peaceful means. Since then Ajmer became an important centre of pilgrimage for Hindus and Muslims alike Sheikh Hamiduddin and Sheikh Farid or Baba Farid, ShaikhQutbuddinBhaktiyar Kaki, ShaikhNizmuddin, AuliyaChishti of Delhi, ShaikhSalimChisti and many other disciple popularized chisti order throughout the India. The Chishtis favoured asceticism and isolation from public life. Most of the Chisti saints belonged to the liberal school of thought. Their popularity in India was due to their understanding of the Indian conditions and religious attitudes and aspirations of the Indian people. They laid much emphasis on the service to mankind.

uhravardisilsilahIt was the second most popular order of the sufis which flourished in north western India. It was founded by ShihabuddinSuhrawardi (1234), a teacher in Bagdad. Their foundations on Indian soil were laid by Sheikh BahauddinZakariya of Multan. He carried on his missionary work at Multan for about twenty-five years and rose to be the most prominent muslim divine of his age in north-western India. The Chishtis and Suhrawardis differed in respect of religious practices as also their attitude towards secular activities. Unlike the Chishti saints, the exponents of the suhravardi order did not believe in excessive austerity or selfmortification. Rather they constituted an influential and affluent priesthood of the muslims. They lived comfortable family live's and felt no scruples in accepting expensive presents and patronage from the muslim aristocracy. They took active part in the state politics. Thus Sufism 55 Surhravardisilsilah was confined mostly to upper strata of the Mughal society. Many other sufi mystic orders also were introduced in India. But they did not make much impact on the people of India. Some others silsilah were limited to certain regions only some of them were:

The Qadiri Silsilah .Introduced in India by Iyyid Muhammad Gilani (1517), The Firdausi Silsilah Shaikh Badruddin. The Shattari Silsilah - Shaikh Abdullah Shattari. The Nagshahandi Silsilah - Khwaja Baki Billah. sufis played an important role in spreading the muslim culture among the masses in various parts of the country. Sufism also contributed to a great extent in moulding the character of the medieval Indian society

After the Khilji and Tughluq dynasty Deccan ruled by Bahamani rulers. Bahamanis conquered Telangana in 1373 AD and Warangal in 1421, and the coastal Andhra 1472 AD. On the dissolution of the Bahamani Empire in 1482, its dominions were distributed into the five Muslim states of Golconda, Bijapur, Ahmednager, Bihar and Berar. Berar Imadshahi had been annexed by Nizam Shahi Ahmednager in 1572, and Bidar (Baridshahi) was absorbed by Bijapur in 1109. Ahmednager was conquered by Mughals in 1616 AD, Bijapur, in 1686, and Goldkonda in 1688. NizamulMulk established the seat of an independent government at Hyderabad and Aurangabad in 1724. In thirteenth century, Alaud Din Khilji conquered Deogiri Yadava state (now Daulatabad, in Dist. Aurangabad). That time many disciples of Nizamud Din Auliya Dehlawi migrated to Daulatabad, Khuldabad (Rauza) and Aurangabad. Shaikh Nizamud Din Auliya sent to Khwaja Aziz ud Din Chishti and Kamal ud Din Chishti to Deccan. They were grandsons of Shaikh Nizamud din Auliya's spiritual master Shaikh Faridud Din Ganj I Shakar. Khwaja Aziz ud Din settled at Daulatabad. Muhammad bin Tughlaq took historic decision to make Devgiri (Daulatabad) 'a second administrative city / capital', of his Empire. He forced the 'ulama and the mashai'kh of Delhi to migrate to Daulatabad (Deogiri). Many of the Saints who left for Daulatabad like Shaikh Burhanud Din Gharib Maulana Fakhrud Din Zarradi Amir Hasan Sijzi, Syed Yusuf Raju Qattal Husaini (father of Syed Muhammad Gesu Daraz of Gulbarga), Khwaja Husain, Khwaja Umar and other Chishti saints were brought up in the Chishti mystic traditions of Shaikh Nizamud Din Auliya and had imbibed from him the Chishti mystic principles. Shaikh Burhanud Din Gharib was the senior most disciple of Shaikh Nizamud Din Auliya. Maulana Ghulam Ali Azad Bilgrami calls him Sahib i-Walayat of the Deccan, which shows that his supreme position amongst the mystics was recognized even by the later generations.

In Deccan since Thirteenth century to Seventeenth century, many Sufi Silsilas and Khanqahs established including Chishti, Qadiri, Rafai, Naqshbandi and Suharawardi. In Deccan, Khuldabad, Daulatabad, Aurangabad, Burhanpur, Balapur, Bidar, Gulbarga, Bijapur and Hyderabad has number of Sufi shrines. Many Hindu Muslim devotees visited regularly for occasion of Urs festivals or death anniversary of the saints. Khuldabad and the Daulatabad region was the early center of Sufism in Deccan. During Khilji and Tughlaq dynasty rule, Deccan region has saw the spread of Sufism in Daulatabad, Khuldabad, Gulbarga, Bijapur, Bidar, Balapur, Burhanpur and Hyderabad. Burhan al-Din Gharib's Dargah has situated at South Gate of Khuldabad town. He was studied under Nizamud Din Auliya (Awliya) of Delhi. He was Khalifah (spiritual successor) of Nizam ad-Din Auliya in Deccan. Contemporary writers states, that the death of Shah Munajabu-ud Din in Daulatabad, his brother Burhan al-Din was sent to succeed him, and was sent to succeed him by Nizam al-Din Auliya, and was accompanied by 1400 disciples (Murid). It appears more probable however, that Burhanud-Din succeeded the Sultan-i-Mashaikh as Khalifah, and that he immigrated to the Deccan (Dakhan) when Sultan Muhammad Tughlaq transferred the capital from Delhi to Daulatabad. After Burhan al Din Gharib, many Sufis

settled and spread spiritual ideas in Khuldabad, Daulatabad and Aurangabad region. Shah MuntojiBahamani, MuntjibZarZariBaksh, Hamid Qalandar, Rukn al din Kashani, FaridAdibChishti, Zayn al Din Shirazi (1301-1369), Shah JalaluddinChishti, Yusuf Husaini, Amir HasanSijisi (author of FawaidulFuwad book) etc. Sufism settled in Khuldabad and buried there in many shrines. In Daulatabad region, HazratMominArifSuharawardi was famous sufi saint. Shaikh Chand BodhaleQadiri was another famous Sufi in Daulatabad town. KhwajaSarwarMaqdoom Haji SayahRafai was the famous sufi saint who came from Iraq and settled at Kandhar fort area in Nanded during Bahamani period. Sayed NizamuddinChishti and Shah Muizuddin Chishtisufi saint settled in Paithan. KhwajaAbulFazl KochakshahShahenshawWali was famous in Beed region. Mansur Shah sufi shrine was regularly visited by Maratha ruler MahadjiShinde during Peshwa Period. Malik Ambar established new town near Khadki village beside Daulatabad fort in 1608, which known as today Aurangabad. This town developed during Nizamshahi and Mughal rule. Many Sufism settled here and established Khanqahs and Sufi shrines. Shah Noor HamwiQadiri came from Iraq and died here in 1692. His shrine is very famous today in Aurangabad. Baba Shah Musafir and Shah PalangposhNaqshbandi came from Central Sufism 57 Asia to Aurangabad during Mughal rule. Their shrine known as PanchakkiNaqshbandiDargah in Aurangabad today. In the 1860, one British visitor, Major Robert Gill, wrote about Panchakki in 1864 that, 'the place is much resorted to by the English for purposes of eating and drinking: by the Moslems, and even Hindoos, in honor of the Peer (Shah Musafir), and for purposes of veneration'. NizamuddinChishtiAurangabadiDargah also famous in Aurangabad. These shrines have many grants and properties sanctioned by Sultanate period to Maratha rule. ShivajiMaharaj also visited the Khanqah of Baba YaqootSarwari of Kelashi, near Suwarndurg, Ratnagiri. He granted land for mosque and shrine there. Baba Yaqoot died in 1681. His Dargah is famous today in Konkan region.

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