



Sufi Saints of India: The Role of Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia in Indian Nation Building.

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ABSTRACT

The primary aim is to evaluate and analysis the role of Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia's teachings in Nation Building. Present study would also find out more beneficial theories for Nation Building through Sufi teachings. Ongoing research also promotes National integration and creates awareness towards positive living in the national interest with identifying the role of Indian Sufi saints in promoting and achieving national integration and peace.

Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia teachings should be encouraged in today's time to combat anti social and anti national ideologies. It would also be very helpful in enlightening the youth to follow the path of peace and humanity and at the same time would also restrain from all acts of terrorism. He was one of the most renowned and celebrated Sufi Saint in Indian history, whose teachings and techniques would provide many object lessons and a exemplary pattern to everyone with a view to help them in molding their character. Sufis movement was not a political movement but their preaching's can be used for national interest. Without character building it is not possible to attain successful nation building of present time. if we dive deep into the philosophies and teachings of all the great personalities like Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia, we come to the irrefutable conclusion that, in essence, all of them emphatically advocate the building up of human character as an essential instrument of achieving success in nation building.

Key Words: Nation Building, Nizamuddin, National Integration, India, Sufi Saints.

INTRODUCTION

Wikipedia says Nation Building aims at the unification of the people within the state so that it remains politically stable and viable in the long run. In Nation building promoting social harmony is one of the most essential features. On a similar note 718 years ago, In Indian histories from 12 to 13 century we have a great example of famous Sufi saint of India Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia. He was a radiant picture of "simple living in high thinking". So dominating was his personality and illuminating character that nobody could dare to stand their magnetic pull. His great love and sympathy for the oppressed humanity were equally unique and unparalleled. He united people from different folks of life in single identification which is humanity.

He was not only the mystic but the great educationist, social reformer, social activist and moreover he was nation builder. He filled love, peace and happiness in the hearts of people. He taught people and inculcates the values of humanity which based on equality and love for each other irrespective of any religion, caste and creed.

History is evident that all his teachings and efforts illuminate the nation with love, peace and communal harmony. His teachings, theory, practices and contributions to society are not only immortal but also relevant to present problems. In fact still 718 years of his death, he is a Nation Builder of present day. His shrine becomes a very big podium for the composite culture, love, peace, integration or unification of people. Well some people say it is a miracle, I say it his immense hard work and sacrifices which he did for humanity and for the nation that still paying off. Thousands of People from different belief or religion came to his shrine without any fear. Thousands of people feed daily and hundreds of them getting shelter at his shrine. Many Indian Festivals celebrated at his shrine like Basant Panchmi, Eid, Diwali & etc. he had given his whole life to our nation and selfless services to humanity.

HAZRAT NIZAMUDDIN AULIA (1238-1325)-

Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia is one of the most popular Sufi saints from the Indian subcontinent region. Like most of the Chisti Sufi saints, he also stressed the love of God implied a love of humanity. He had a major influence on the masses of India and the world over. He never differentiated only propagated the message of love, universal brotherhood, peace harmony and tolerance. He showed the path of love and respect, irrespective of social and religious status. His character was built upon the essential teachings of Islam and principals of Sufism which mean 'Peace' in their true religious sense. His strong character shook the bottoms of seven powerful kingdoms of India for 100 years in defending the cause of truth. He raised his voice and fought the battles of truth and justice, courageously whenever any of the mighty kings of Delhi, intoxicated by temporal powers, deviated from the path of righteousness and justice. And, in all these hard encounters, he never looked back or wavered or saw defeat but always triumphed gloriously, keeping the banner of truth flying high. Hazrat Nizamuddin was extremely popular both during his lifetime and after his death. When he was alive, people flocked to him in such large numbers that he acquired vast experience in dealing with all types of individuals. Being unusually, he developed a deep insight into human nature and was able to satisfy most of his visitors. Even the scholars, who were very reluctant to acknowledge anyone, found his discourses inspiring.

LIFE

Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia was born in Budaun, Uttar Pradesh in 1238 AD. He was a very sharp and bright student. Also very sincere and devoted to his studies and this makes him very popular among teachers. Later, in Delhi he distinguished himself among the highest academic circles. He was the best debater of his times and got the title of "smasher of debate". Many great educationists of his times predicted an illuminating and glorying future for him, but when time comes he proved everyone wrong and chooses a path of hardship and sacrifices in spite of luxurious life for the upliftment of human life. He devoted his whole life and education in the service of mankind. After getting a highest educational degree of his times, started receiving very tempting job offers from royal courts but he denied all and joins the mission of great Sufi Saint Baba Farid as a disciple to learn and serve the mankind. Baba Farid himself was the great ambassador of humanity. Under Baba Farid, Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia got more human values and learned service humanity. Baba Farid appointed Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia as his chief of successor after him. Baba Farid also advised him to lead an ascetic life and gave him blessings in these beautiful words: "O Nizamuddin, you will be a tree under whose shadow the people will find rest".

After the death of his master Baba Farid, he settled in Delhi and built his Khanqah (hospice) there. Before long, the Khanqah (hospice) became a place thronged with all kinds of people, rich and poor alike. In his khanqah the kitchen remain busily hot all day long, and thousands of people without any distinction whatever, began to partake of his splendid generosity, while he himself used to fast daily and lived in strict austerity. All he ate was a small piece of bread prepared from barley.

KHANQAH (HOSPICE)

His Khanqah's doors were open day and night for everyone irrespective of religion, caste and creed. Either the visitor was Hindu, Muslim, rich or poor everyone gets an equal love and care. Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia's charity had no limits. His charity becomes proverbial and enviable. His kitchen always remained hot, and thousands of people used to eat in his kitchen daily. The poor and the needy from across India visited his Khanqah (hospice), and every one of them was provided with food, money and clothing. Whatever gifts and presents came to him, they were invariably distributed among the poor before the sunset every day. It was his stern order that everything in the khanqah's kitchen must be given away to the poor and that nothing should be stored for tomorrow. In recorded history it is said that in his khanqah 70 maund (1maund to kg=37.3242 kg) of salt used for cooking food on daily basis. So it means a huge langar (food for all) cooked and distributed daily.

LOVE FOR HUMANITY

He loved everyone immensely. All sorts of people, Hindus and Muslims, were equal in his eyes and esteem, and enjoyed his courtesy and love without any reservations. He ate very less and mostly he was on fast. Even at the time of breaking his fast, he never ate anything to his heart content; he merely tasted a thing, that's all. Often he did not eat anything at all even at the time of Sehri (midnight meal to keep fast) and when the servant complained: sir if you will give up even this scanty meal, then weakness must overcome you", he used to start penitent weeping like a child and say: many poor and destitute persons at this time must be sleeping in the corners of city or their humble dwellings without any food at all. How can this morsel then pass easily down my throat"?

Once, a fire broke out in an adjoining locality where he lived in Delhi. Seeing the houses burning Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia began to weep out of overwhelming sympathy. He ordered his disciples to go and help them. He also sends food, water, clothes to them.

TEACHINGS AND MISSION

Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia believed that, above all, one had to be a good human being and only then could one be a good Muslim or a good Hindu. He would often recount this Hadees (saying of prophet) to his disciple: "whatever you would not like to be done to yourself, do not wish it to happen to others. Wish for others what you wish for yourself. He was humanitarian par excellence, attaching the greatest importance to the service of humanity. For him service to mankind is service to God. He taught his disciple to keep the peace all the times and to develop good relations with everyone, irrespective of caste, colour or creed. He preached also that Islam did not teach violence against or discrimination between human beings. Only taqwa (the virtue of being God fearing) - and certainly not material grandeur could raise ones

status in the eyes of God. He thus devoted his entire life to bringing people closer to the true spirit of religion. Islam to him was not a sect of hollow rites and rituals. It was rather a superior ethical code. At times he felt how unfortunate it was that Muslims, preoccupied as they were with the rituals of religion, failed to delve deeper into the spirit of Islam. He did not, however, ask his disciples to shun their responsibilities towards their families. The only thing he disapproved of was the mentality that craved money in excess of actual need or greed.

He was very strong on contentment. He has quality of forbearance and forgiveness. His love for his enemies was commendable. Though Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia's continuous efforts came to fruition as people began to change their lives. Under his influence and training thousands of persons moral and social character vastly improved and developed. They all became a God fearing and well disciplined assortment of people. Thousands of people changed their way of life. Drinking, gambling, back biting, lying, debauchery, fraud and usury, all were reduced to a most appreciable low, thousands of people offered repentance for the past sins and took oath on Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia's hand to leave all wrongdoings and adopted a clean life.

He was quite generous in accepting disciples. Usually who ever came to him for enrolling under his discipleship was granted that favour. This resulted in him being always surrounded by people from all strata of society. With the presence of Hazrat Nizamuddin in Delhi near Sultan Kaikbad's new splendid colony, many of the courtiers, princes and officials became his devotees. The world renowned Sufi poet Ameer Khusro also known as Tuti-i-Hind, the parrot of India was his disciple from the age of eight.

Some of his teachings are as follows:-

- Renunciation and having complete trust in God.
- The unity of mankind and shunning distinctions based on social, economic and religious status.
- Helping the needy, feeding the hungry and being sympathetic to the oppressed.
- Strong disapproval of dirty politics and mixing with all the sultans-kings, the princes and nobles.
- Laid the strong foundation of democratic values among the masses and create awareness among people.
- Inculcate the values of equality, love, compassion and opposition of unjust.
- Exhortation in making close contact with the poor and downtrodden.
- Adopting an uncompromising attitude towards all forms of political and social oppressions.

SEVEN MONARCHIES

He saw seven Mighty kings in his lifetimes but he never bowed his head to any king and never visited their royal courts. His strong character shook the bottoms of seven mighty kingdoms of India for 100 years in defending the cause of Truth and Humanity. He raised and fought the battles of 'Divine Truth' fearlessly whenever any of the mighty kings of Delhi, intoxicated by temporal powers, deviated from the path of righteousness and justice. And, in all of these tough encounters, he never looked back or wavered or saw defeat, but always triumphed gloriously, keeping the banner of truth flying high.

It was not the era of democracy like today. Kings and their words were the ultimate law. No place for the voices of depressed and oppressed. No value of humans and their freedom. However, Hazrat Nizamuddin was the man who not himself raises his voice against the unjust kings but also taught the masses how to stand against unjust and oppressed rule of kings. He taught the value of human freedom, equality and social justice. He lived nearly a century and during his life he witnessed rising and falling of seven reigns. Some of the monarchs were staunch devotees of the saint, while some others were short-sighted and oppressive being jealous of his lavish hospitality and widespread popularity. Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia never visited any royal court or durbars of any ruling monarchs, neither did he ever permit them, inspite of their best efforts to come near him all his life. He was only observing one of the most important principles of Sufism in this respect. But except these kings, there was no restriction or discrimination whatever for the general public, especially the poor classes of people, to come and enjoy his gracious blessings and sumptuous hospitality. All sorts of people, Hindus and Muslims were equal in his eyes and esteem and enjoyed his courtesy and love without any reservations. However, despite remaining completely detached from the political life of his times, his towering personality had an ennobling effect on the masses as well as the royalty.

1. Sultan Gyasuddin Balban- he was the staunch devotee of Baba Farid (spiritual master of Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia).
2. Sultan Moizuddin Kaikbad- he had a great regard for Hzt Nizamuddin Aulia.
3. Sultan Jalaluddin Khilji- he was devotee of Hzt Nizamuddin Aulia and was fond of him. It was his great wish to meet the saint personally but it was never fulfilled as Hzt Nizamuddin Aulia never allowed him. Very often he used to send the saint presents and gifts but everything was distributed among needy people on the same day.
4. Sultan Alauddin Khilji- after coming to power, some of his courtiers tried to misguide him with the idea that Hzt Nizamuddin's influence was increasing due to the allegiance of great scholars, princes and the public as his devotees, that his flourishing income can be judged by the vast expenses of his 'langarkhana' (alms-house) where thousands of people enjoyed his hospitality daily, and that this unusual philanthropy was dangerous to the interests of the kingdom. But later he also become a devotee of Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia and asked him to pray on many occasions.
5. Sultan Qutubuddin Khilji- he was 3rd son of Allauddin khilji. Murdering his other brothers and captured the throne of Delhi. Because his brothers were devotee of Hzt Nizamuddin Aulia, therefore he carried a grudge against the saint also which, later on, turned into an open enmity. At that time, the daily expenses of Hzt Nizamuddin Aulia langarkhana were 2000 Tankas, apart from other charities to the poor widows, orphans and the destitute dervishes. Some of the jealous Clergy and Advisors to the royal court, poisoned the ears of the king on the plea that the wealth of 'Nazar'(gifts) was derived by the sheikh from the royal

durbaris, princes and the officials of the state who visited the saint too frequently. They advised the king to issue an order restraining everybody from visiting him. On the other hand, when Hzt Nizamuddin Aulia heard of this order, he increased the expenses of his langarkhana doubly and the number of beneficiaries reached from 10,000 to 16,000 per day. The royal order had, therefore no affect whatsoever on the expenses of a saints charity.

6. Khusro Khan- had a very short lease of life and rule. He sent 500000 tankas to Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia, which was distributed among needy on the same day by Hzt Nizamuddin Aulia.
7. Ghayasuddin Tuglaq- when he took charge of the treasury, he found not a single shell in it. He was annoyed and was told, that the late king distributed it. Tuglaq issued an order to all those who had received the money, to return it to the government treasury. Many of the Scholars and the Sufis deposited their shares back into the state treasury. But when Hzt Nizamuddin was asked to return his share of 500000 tankas, the saint replied: it was Gods property and it went into Gods charity. It was recognized fact that Hzt Nizamuddin Aulia like Sufi spiritual ancestors never kept even a single penny from the offerings. Every pie was given away in charity the moment gifts came. The above reply however displeased the king and from there he starts disliking him.

Well how many kings and rulers of the world have been ruined by the selfish and intriguing manipulations of their counsellors. Sometimes so immense is the pressure of counsel even upon the capable and just rulers that they are inevitably obliged to fall and prey to intrigue against their conscience and public interests. Such kings were the result of undue jealousy and intrigue incited by their courtiers. History proves that there has always been a mighty and unending struggle between the forces of Truth and evil on earth. Whenever there has been a moral and religious deterioration, divine messengers have been appearing on the scene to punish the errant and to restore order, peace and tranquility with their divine powers. And the beauty of this phenomenal struggle is that these messengers- the great Prophets, avatars and saints- have never lost even a single battle in this age long war of Truth.

However, Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia justified the noble principles of Sufism with exemplary fortitude throughout all the ups and downs of his life.

OBJECTIVE

The primary objective is to find out more beneficial theories for Nation Building through Sufi teachings. Present study would provide many object lessons to all aspirants with a view to help them in molding their character on the pattern of the exemplary noble live and work of Sufi Saint Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia. Also it is small effort to cherished aim of promoting mutual goodwill and love among mankind in the cause of truth and peace.

Without character building it is not possible to attain successful nation building of present time. if we dive deep into the philosophies and teachings of all the great personalities like Hzt Nizamuddin Aulia, we come to the irrefutable conclusion that, in essence, all of them emphatically advocate the building up of human character as an essential instrument of achieving success in both “spiritual” and “material worlds”.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A brief review of the literature to the present study is detailed as follows: Book entitled by “Big Five in Sufism”, by W.D Begg presents a wonderful account of life and teachings of Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia. He also describes in detail its relevance for today’s issues and their impact. In a book Sufism: an introduction, by Dr Farida Khanum, has an unparalleled exploration of Sufism and life’s of Sufi saints. Ultimately, this book acts as a guide to the Sufi path and offers wise insight into the teachings and practices of Sufi saints of India.

Book entitled by “the life and times of Sheikh Nizamuddin Auliya by Khaliq Ahmed Nizami reveals the life and teachings of the most beloved and revered of Sufi saints. Mehru Jaffer’s book; The Book of Nizamuddin Aulia, tells the story of Hzt Nizamuddin Aulia from man to saint, vividly bringing alive history of the period.

The book “winds of grace, compiled by Vraje Abramian. Collection of Sufi stories, teachings and poetry. Book “Winds of grace” is a fresh and extensive collection that will both instruct and encourage individual on the path of love, peace and humanity. In a book Sufi Encounters: sharing the wisdom of enlightened Sufis, by Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri and Munnera Haeri, has an unparalleled exploration of Sufism as it’s practiced globally. Ultimately, this book acts as a guide to the Sufi path and offers wise insight into the meaning and purpose of life.

The book From Mosques to Khanqahs: the origin and rise of Sufism and Sufi institutes, by Spahic Omer. This book critically examines the themes of the evolution of Sufism and Sufi institutions and their impact on society. The Article Political Disfunctionalism: the problem of nation building in India, by Vinod Khobragade. He gave a account of changing circumstances on which our nation is facing plenty of disrupting various anti social elements and the ideologies clashes. Also described how Indian nation is struggling to maintain its unity and integrity.

It is noted that a good number of manuals on present study, particularly the life, contributions and teachings relating to such issues are available. Similarly there are several seminar reports on the subject and relating issues.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive-analytical methods adopted for research. The empirical methods also used. Relevance and impact of teachings of Sufi saint Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia with the perspective of the role in Indian nation building has been analyzed and described. This study based on an extensive and critical study of the contemporary literature.

CONCLUSION

Without character building it is not possible to attain successful nation building of present time. If we dive deep into the philosophies and teachings of all the great personalities like Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia, we come to the irrefutable conclusion that, in essence, all of them emphatically advocate the building up of human character as an essential instrument of achieving success in nation building. The Sufis have always come over successfully over evil; their teachings cannot and should not be ignored by us at present times, mainly and religious values are deteriorating under the violent impact of anti national elements, unsocial ideologies and bad political policies. It is pity, intoxicated by the hatred, anti nationalism and communalism. Human is going astray from the right path. Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia's teachings can be used as the measure for national integration and peace. It would also be important as it helps us understand more than a few aspects of life or we can say such teachings showed us the path of spiritual life based on truthful and moral values unfettered by assertive orthodoxy and ritual piousness. All Great Sufi Saints like Hzt Nizamuddin Aulia emphasized universal brotherhood and communal harmony, messages which remain as urgent today as ever. They polish human character. Sufi Saint Hzt Nizamuddin Aulia's teachings should be encouraged in today's time to combat anti social and anti national ideologies. His teachings are an antidote of all these evil ideologies and would be very helpful in enlightening the youth to follow the path of peace and humanity and at the same time would also restrain from all acts of terrorism.

Even after 718 years, Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia's shrine becomes a great platform for love, peace and humanity or you can say a centre of composite culture. Daily around 2000 thousand people visit his shrine which located in Delhi. Everyone is welcome there with love and compassion. No one who came left empty-handed, and for centuries his Shrine (Dargah) has maintained its spiritual reputation as a refuge for the hungry, sick and peace searching.

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