

Sufi Tariqahs in Islam : A Historical Study

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Abstract : *Sufism is a mystic cult under Islam. Sufi saints exercise their practices and rituals under Islam. Sufism is based on truth. It emphasizes inward search of God. Sufism emphasizes on harmony and selfless service of all human being. Sufism came to India 1000 years ago. Sufism influenced the people of Indian sub-continent very much through its different orders as Madariyyah, Chistiyyah, Nagshbandiyyah, Qadriyyah, Suhrawardiyyah, Kubarawiyyah, Shadihiliyyah etc.*

Keywords : Sufism, Islam, Emphasize, People, Orders.

Introduction: Sufism is often defined as “Islamic mysticism.” It is a mystical trend in Islam characterized by ritual practices, values, doctrines and institutions which started very early in Islam. Sufism is also called “Tasawwuf”. The substance of Sufism is truth. The real meaning of Sufism is the selfless experience of truth. It emphasizes the inward search for God and Shuns Materialism. Sufism is way of life in which a deeper identity is discovered and lived. This deeper identity is in favour of harmony with all people. As for as India is concerned, Sufism has a

history in India involving for over 1000 years through its different orders.

Sufi-Tariqahs:

Madariyyah : The Madariyya are the members of Sufi order. It was popular in North India, Particularly in Uttar Pradesh, Mewat, Bihar and Bengal, as well as in Nepal and Contemporary Bangladesh. It was founded by Syed Badiuddin Zinda Shah Madar (1434 A.D.) who is called “Qutb-ul-Madar”. His Dargah is situated at Makanpur in Kanpur in Uttarpradesh. Madariyya is known for its syncretic aspects they did not emphasis on external practice. They focused on internal ‘dhikr’.

Chishtiyyah : The Chistiyya order was the most popular among all Sufi orders. This order emerged from central Asia and Persia by Abu Ishaq SHami (940-41 A.D.). But in India, it emerged with the arrival of Saint Moinuddin Chisti in 1190-92 A.D. Kwaja Moinuddin was originally from sistan (eastern Iran, Southwest Afganistan). He reached Delhi in 1193 during the end of Ghurid reign. Soon Khwaja Settled in Ajmer in Rajasthan. Soon Ajmer became the centre of Islamization in central and southern India. Another popular Chisti Saint was

Nizamudin Auliya (1335 A.D.) in Delhi. In his time, Chisttiyyah order became more popular and spread mostly in northern India. There were some other important saints of this order as Qutbuddin Bakhtiar Kaki (1236 A.D. in Delhi), Sheikh Fariduddin Ganjshakar (1265 A.D. Pakpatan, Pakistan), Nasiruddin Chirag Delhvi, Bandu Nawaj (1422 A.D. in Gulbarga), Akhi Siraj Aaihae Hind (1357 in Bengal), Ashr of Jhangir Semnani (1386 A.D. in Kichaucha).

The Chisti Saints established khanqas to reach the local communities. They always remained ready to help the poor and needy people. They were the real saints in the eyes of lower and oppressed classes in Hindu society. At that time, in Hindu society, caste system was rigid. The feeling of untouchability was strong among the people. Chisti saints soon became popular among people of India due to their simple teachings of humanity, peace and generocity. Soon a lot of people from lower caste Hindus accepted Islam and became Mohammdan.

It became possible not due to any force or blood-shed but because of helping and good nature of Chisti saints. There were some special terms which were practiced by Chisti saints as following :

1. Wahjat-ul-Wajud

2. Sama
3. Chilla
4. Hashm-A. Dam
5. Fana
6. Tavvabul

These were the main parts of Chisttiyyah order.

Suhrwardiyya : It was established by Sihabuddin Suhrawardi who belonged to Baghdad in Iraq in 12th Century. The order was prominent in Medieval Iran prior to Persian migrations into India during the Mongol invasion. But in India the credit to make it popular goes to Bahaudin Jakaria and Jalaludin Tabriji. The main centre was Multan in Pakistan. But it was also popular in Sindh and Punjab. Suhrawardiyya Saints lived a luxurious life. They believed in Political liaison. They accepted the title as ‘Sheikh-Ul-Islam’ or ‘Sadar-a-Wilayat’ etc. given by the Sultans. Hamiddudin Nagori was the famous saint of this order.

Shadhiliyya : Imam Noorudeen Abu-Al-Hasan Ali Ash Sadhili Razi founded Shadhiliyya. Sheikh Aboobakkar Miskeen Sahib Radiyallah of Kayal Patnam and Sheikh Mir Ahmad Ibrahim Raziyallah of Madurai brought the Fassiya branch of shadhiliyya to India. There are about 70 branches of Shadhiliyya of these fassiyatush is the most popular order. Mir Ahmad Ibrahim is the first of three Sufi saints

revered at the Madurai Maqbara in Tamilnadu.

Shatariyya : Shah Abdullaha Shastari founded Shatariyya in 15th century. Mohmmad Gaus was the famous saint of this order. Hamayun and Tansen were very much influenced by the preaching of Mohmmad Gaus of Gwalior. Shatariyya also lived luxurious life like suhrawardiyya.

Qadiriyyah : It was first mystic order in Islam. It was founded by Shekh Abdul-Qadir Gilani who was originally from Iran (1166 A.D.) In India it was started by Saiyad Muhmmad Giani. Most famous saint of this order was Sheikh Mian Meer. Dara Shikoh was the follower of Miyan Meer. After Mian Meer, Dara became the disciple of Multan Shah Badkhsi.

Kubrawiyyah : Najmuddin Kubra (1221 A.D.) founded this order. He was from the border between Uzekistan and Turkmenistan. This order became important in Kashmir in 14th century. Kubra and his students made significant contribution to Sufi literature such as text “Al-Usul-Ashara” and “Mirsad-UI-Ibad.”

Naqshbandiyah : The origin of Naqshbandiyyah can be traced back to Kwaja Yaqub Yusuf al-Hamadani (1390 A.D.), who lived in central Asia. It was later organized by Bahauddin Naqshbandh

(1318-1389 A.D.) of Tajic and Turkis background. He is said to be the founder of the Naqshbandi order. It was introduced by Kwaja Muhammad al-Baki Billah Berany (1603 A.D.) in India. Sheikh Ahmad Sarhindi was the famous saint of this order. he was also famous as the name of “Mujahid-Al-Fasani.” He was contemporary of Akbar and Jhangir. He enuciated the philosophy of “Wahzat-UI-Shudh”. This order has been considered as Most orthodox among all Sufi orders. It strictly prohibits music, dance and other liberal ingredients of the Sufism.

Firdausiyyah : Firdausiyyah was the branch of surhwardiyyah. It was active in Bihar and Bengal. Badruddin was the founder of this sub-order.

Sarwari Qadiriyyah : It was the sub-order of Qadiriyyah order. Sultan Bahu founded it. It had no more formalities of dress code etc. Its philosophy is related directly to heart and contemplating on the name of Allah (God).

Conclusion: Sufism had great impacts on People in mediaeval India. They tried to establish harmony between people. They influenced the kings of that time also. Truth and devotion was the essence of Sufism. They were always ready to help the poor and needy people. Due to their love and affection to the poor people,

many lower caste Hindus converted into Islam. Sufi had many orders or Tariqas through which they influenced people in one or other way. Sufism is a mystic order under Islam. By their service to humanity they served a lot to Islam and soon Islam became a wide-spread religion in India.

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