EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF SUFISM IN SINDH TO PROMOTE IDEOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS HARMONY AND TOLERANCE

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Abstract
The real essence of Sufism in Islam teaches about the self-purification and practical mystic way of life. It is accompanied with the worship and union to Almighty Allah. Sufism is massive integral part of efforts to revive peace, religious harmony and tolerance, where people possess the extreme bent of ideologies in mind. Sufism plays a vigorous role to establish justice, equality, love, forgiveness, sacrifice, humanity, unity and affection. Sufism also provides guidance to mankind for peace, resolution and compassion that worked for the comfort of humanity around the world. Sufism also offers a remedy to religious hatred, exploitation, dishonesty, internal disputes, greediness, disagreements and fundamentalism that leads to conflict in the society. Sindh is civilized nation since excavations of Mohen-jo-Daro in third millennium. Historically, the process of arrival of Islam in Sindh was started from the pious caliph period. General Muhammad bin Qasim conquered several regions of Indus Valley in 712 AD. After that, the introduction of Islam, the Indus Valley by Sufi Saints resulted in the conversion of large scale population into Islam. The present discussion aims to assess the important features of Sufism and its position in the contemporary society of Sindh. Moreover, this study will help to understand the paramount role of Sufism to establish the religious harmony and tolerance in Sindh.

Keywords: Sindh, Sufism, Tolerance, Religion, Harmony, Indus Valley

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1. Introduction

Sufism is a mystical phenomenon and a distinctive path of spiritual advancement and a mode of self-purification. There are different and divergent opinions amongst scholars regarding the etymology of the term 'Sufi' and its origin. Sufism or the mysticism in Islamic terminology stands for "Tasawwuf", but the word Tasawwuf itself is not mentioned in the Qur'anic verses and in literature of Hadith. Linguistically, Tasawwuf is taken from Arabic lexis "Suf" that means "wool", referring the specific woolen clothes worn by the early sufi saints. According to Islamic scholars, it is derived from the word "Suffa" or the "bench" in English that refers to a group of Muslims living in a shelter at the time of our beloved Prophet of Islam, Mohammad (P.B.U.H) in order to acquire the knowledge of Islam. They are known to be as the "Ashaab e Suffa". In Arabic reference, this has been taken from lexis, "Safu" meaning as purity. 'Súfí' is a name formerly been given to the spiritual adepts. It is one who is purified by the pure love, and tends to absorb in the love of the Beloved (Allah Almighty) and abandon everything else of world in true essence is known to be Sufi.' The name itself finds no proof of derivation that could answer the requirements of etymology, as the Sufism has been exalted to find genus that could be derived later.[1] Therefore, according to Arberry (1966), the Sufis are termed because they have pure insights and clean acts.[2]

Rippin (2012) defined Sufi as an adherent to the mystical way of Islam.[1] Dr. Sorley (1966) stated that the philosophy behind Sufism tends to demand a regular discipline of one's self with abandonment of one's self feelings and curb of devilish ideas. Therefore, it has been the system based on ethics that emphasis on the pure insight. The one's self has been at the time of purification is at danger. Therefore, it might mislead and interposes the seeker. It is sought as the veil that is difficult to be pierced.[2]

Ernst (1985) identified the actual role of Sufism that is towards the mystical phase of life, it begins as conversion of soul with the Allah. The

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[1] Rippin, Andrew, Muslims: their religious beliefs and practices, 4th editions. Abingdon: Routledge, 2011, P 336

end of following path is perfect mode of human with the Allah. [3] According to eminent scholar Sheikh Abdur Rahman Jami, who quotes earlier sources, the first spiritualist (Sufi) to be given the title of Sufi was Sheikh Abu Hashim Kufi (d. 776 A.D).[2] Furthermore, Sufism is a comprehensive spiritual path for the actualization of divine mode of life. Sufism plays a very important role in contemporary world to establish the peaceful society. Furthermore, Sufism flourished all over Muslim world but it met with massive triumph in the Sindhi society because its attitudes were nearer to the basic temperament of the social affiliations in the Sindhi society.

Sindh is civilized seat of the ancient Indus Valley Civilization since the third millennium BC as shown by Mohen-jo-Daro excavations. The Arab caravans used to come to Sindh and other areas of this region since more than two thousand years ago for trading purposes, after the coming of Islam in subcontinent, they also moved to these areas.[3] According to the historical sources i.e., Al-Balādhurī stated that, the first Muslim conquest movements against the Sindh region coincided during the time of pious Caliph Umar bin Khattab in 15 A.H.[4] During the period of Caliph Walid bin Abdul Malik, The governor of Iraq, Hajjaj bin Yusuf appointed Mohammed bin Qasim to the commander of Sindh, and in result sovereignty in the region was completely taken over by the Muslim.[5]

Sindh is a land of Sufis, mystics, mysteries and shrines. Sindh's rich cultural and religious diversity makes it distinctive in Pakistan. No doubt, Sufism is a spiritual phenomenon. It has deep rooted in Sindhi society in its various dimensions. Indeed, Sindhi society has traditionally been influenced by ideology of Sufi saints who taught the lessons of peace, harmony, tolerance and co-existence. Undoubtedly, the positive efforts of Sufism in Sindhi society are undeniable. People of Sindh are by nature Sufi, therefore, according to Sorley (1966) have never imposed military intellect, whether

[2] Rizvi, S, A History of Sufism in India, Delhi, Munshi Ram Manohar Lal publisher, 1975, Vol. 1,p 31

[3] Al-Nadwi: Sayyid Sulaiman Arab aur Hind kye ta'alluqat,: Mashaal, Lahore, Books, P: 31.

[4] Ahmed bin Yahya Baladari, Futuh al-Buldan, Cairo, Albayan al Arabi, vol 3, p 530

[5] Al-Kufi: Ali bin Hamid Al-Kufi Fatah Nama Sindh (Chach Nama), Jamshoro, Sindh, Sindhi Adabi Board, 1963 P 95-96.

they are immigrant or the indigenous. There is no land witnessed that could hand names of conquerors in history. Therefore, the inhabitants here are industrious and peaceful. People are industrious and peaceful; they intend to keep themselves updated with the affairs at local stage around lower part of Indus valley. [6]

Sindh has produced remarkable Sufis, according to the renowned writer; Richard Burton stated that the one of the remarkable standards of Sindh has been its great number of holy minded people. They intend to modify the ideology of Pantheism, that is Tasawwuf around the Islamic globe and spread amongst the physical and mental insights of people. (Burton 1851: 198). Sheikh Abu Turab, Abdullah Shah Ghazi, Sayid Usman Shah Marwandi, Abdullah Shah Ashabi, Sheikh Salamat, Pir Pathha, Makdoom Nooh, Qazi Qadan, Makhdoom Abdul Karim Bulri, Sachal Sarmast and Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai were the famous Sufis of Sindh.[6] Large scale of people was influenced by them and were attached to them that resulted to the massively embrace Islam. Qadriya, Suharwadiya, Naqshbandiya, Chistiya and Owaisiya are major schools of thought (Sufi orders) that spread numerous ways of Sufism to attain the will of Allah.[7]

Sufism not only has influenced the culture and society but also affected Sindhi literature. Undoubtedly, Sindhi culture, literature and society are mixed with Sufism and mysticism. Sufi poetry and Sufi customs are models in the contemporary era for religious harmony and peace. Sindh is familiar place where Sufis have preached widely for brotherhood and religious harmony. Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai was eminent poet and cultural icon of the Sindhi society. All shades of Sufism are shown through the poetry of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai. He highlighted the description of Sufism in his poetry, he said:

ساري سِک سبق، شريعتَ سَندو،سُهٹي
طريقَتان تِکو وَهي، حقيقَتَ جو حقُ؛
مَعرفَتَ مَرکُ، آصلُ عاشقنِ کي

Learn right the lesson of Shariat,

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[6] Madani, Abdul Ghaffar, Evolution of mysticism in Sindh, AlEhsan, GC University, Faisal Abad, vol 7, No 2, p, 45

[7] Qudusi, Eijaz ul Haqq, Tazkira e Sufiya e Sindh, Karachi, Urdu Academy, 1959, p 35.

Cross quickly the stage of tareeqat To reach the stage of Haqeqat

The stage of maarfat is the privilege of lovers[8]

In other place Shah Latif said:

ڪر طَريقَت تَڪِيو، شَريعتَ سڃاڻُ؛
هنئون حقيقَتَ هير ٿُون، ماڳُ مَعرفتَ ڄاڻُ؛
هوءِ ثابوتيء ساڻُ، تہ پُسڻان پالهو رهين.

Make tareeqat your mainstay and comprehend the shariat

Acquaint your heart with haqeeqat, and make marifat your goal.

Stand on all this firmly and you will be saved from wetting your cloths.[9]

The Fundamental aim of Sufism:

Sufism is an inevitable phenomenon of society. It produces a gigantic balance between spirituality and the material necessities of the individuals and society. It is due to this, the society becomes peaceful based on good morality. Sufism is the most vibrant dimension of Islam. The activities of the Sufis on the Sindh were according to teachings of Islam. They expounded the values of Islam in society very politely. They taught the people about basic principles of Islam; they were successful in their spiritual mission to bring the creation of Allah to the light of the Right from the darkness of the ignorance. The main objectives of these Sufis were promoting the harmony, tolerance, respect of the humanity and brotherhood amongst their followers.

The foundational object of Sufism is to get contentment and will of Allah. According to Yusuf Saleem, Sufism constitutes three foremost elements, first is Tauheed (Oneness of Allah), second is Taqwa (Piety), and the last is complete love of Allah. These elements are deduced from the Holy Qur'an. So, there will be no exaggeration to say that Sufism derives all its

[8] Bhittai, Shah lateef, Melodies of Shah Abdul Lateef Bhittai, Sur Sohani, Karachi, culture and tourism department Sindh, Chapter 3, verse 10.
[9] Sur Asa, chapter 4, verse 40

teachings from the Qur'an.[10] Furthermore, he added Tazkiya -e- nafs (self-purification) as main object of Sufism, Tazkiya-e- nafs which also constitutes an essential aspect of Islamic Sufism, has been deducted from the Qur'an; "He is the One who raised amidst the unlettered people a messenger from among themselves who recites to them His verses, and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the wisdom, while they were earlier in open error."[11]. Therefore, it explicitly reveals that the Sufis were real adherents of the Qur'an and Sunnah.[12]

The spiritual journey of Sufis has been the quest of centerm where everything originates and returns to. The journey starts from the heart, where the mysteries of divine are unfolded.

Sufism is a comprehensive way of imminent reality and calls into play the meditative, instinctive and mystical capabilities through strenuous training carried on under an *Peer e Kaamil* who guides the aspirant about the roadmap that veils lying between the self and the real in order to that the aspirant may be able to behold reality, absorb and interiorize the epiphanies and attain divine contentment (رضا) or achieve love (محبت)and gnosis (معرفة), or realize servitude (عبدیت) , as the final object.[13] Sheikh Saadi wrote about Sufism:

طریقت به جز خدمت خلق نیست

به تسبیح و سجاده و دلق نیست

Sufism is nothing but service of humanity, It is not in the rosaries, carpet, nor wearing wool dress.[14]

Shah latif says in his words as:

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[10] Cheshti, Yusuf Saleem, Tareekh e Tasawwuf, New Delhi, Areeb Publications, 2015, p 119.
[11] (Jumu'h 62:02)
[12] Cheshti, Yusuf Saleem, Tareekh e Tasawwuf, New Delhi, Areeb Publications, 2015, p 122
[13] Javed Ansari, Sufi thought of Muhibbullah Allahabadi, (PhD thesis) Aligarh, Aligarh Muslim university, 2006, p 1
[14] Saadi, Muslih udddin Abdullah, Garden of Fragrance (A Complete Translation of the Bustan of Saadi by Hamid Eslamian), p 85

صوفيِء صاف ڪيو، ڏوئي ورق وجود جو
تهان پوءِ ٿيو، جيئري پسڻ پرينء جو

Sufi washed the parchment of my being.
It is only then that beloved`s vision was seen in life.[15]

Therefore, the revival of Sufism is the utmost necessity to impose it as a spiritual mechanism of the religion in society. Sufism acts as a remedy to the ethical degradation of society. It pacifies society on religious, social, and ethical grounds. Shah latif says:

صوفي لاڪوفي، ڪون پاڻئيس ڪير
منجهيان ئي مَنجهہ وڃهي، پڌر ناهس پيڙُ
جنين ساڻس ويڙُ، ٿئي تنين جو واهرو

Sufi has no sect, and no one knows his creed.

Inside he is at war with himself, but never lets on,

He is path finder even for those who bear him malice.[16]

He also said:

ڪوڙُ ڪمايءِ ڪَچ، اُٿي اور اَللّٰهَ سين
ڪَيِ تون دَغا دل مان، صاحِب وٽي سَچ
مُحبت سندو مَن ۾، ماڻِڪ! ٻارج مَچُ
اِن پَرِ اُٿي آڇ، تہ سَودو ٿئيئي سَفرو

Stop trading in fakes, remember God

Cleanse your mind of all perfidy, for God loves truth

Kindle o pearl, a blaze of love in your heart

Doing so may prove to be gain to you.[17]

A natural development within Islam and firmly rooted in the Qur'an and the Prophetic precept, Tasawwuf aims at attaining direct experience of

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[15] Sur Aeman, chapter 5, verse 5,
[16] Sur Aeman, chapter 5, verse 4,
[17] Sur Sarang, chapter 1, verse 9

communion with Allah ensuring that Islam was neither confined to a legalistic directive nor to a systematic theology, nor to institutionalized forms of religion, nor to a formal codes of ethics. It did receive radiations from the mystic life and thought of other religions, yet the Qur'anic spirit of God-consciousness (تقوی), self-purification (تزکیه) , self-surrender (تسلیم), truthfulness (صدق), rectitude (استقامت), permanent remembrance and recollection (ذکر), stimulative reflection (فکر), disinterested love (محبت) constant struggle (جهاد) and strife for excellence (احسان) flowed into the lives and modes of expression of the Sufi devotees and ascetics.[18]

Someone asked to Shaikh Ali Hijwari about the Sufi. Who is he? He said: He who is pure through love is pure and he who is immersed in love is a Sufi. The meaning of Sufi is that whosoever loves Allah and His creatures.[19] Hazrat Abu Al-Hassan Hasari has mentioned the condition of a Sufi that a Sufi will be the one who does not have malice, envy, opposition, and vengeance in his heart but gives the charity of love.[20]

The education of Sufism supports population to extend the human efforts and create an environment of harmony and tolerance in Society. Hence Bayazid Bistami said, Sufism is giving up comforts and trying to carry out efforts. That is the practice of the Sufis.[21] The foundational principle of the Sufi approach was to adopt the way of Allah. It means that the aim of human life is to reflect in one's own thought and the activities towards the attributes of God. Sufism from the Islamic perspective has its own significance because of the nature and modes; it is usually exercised by the people that are more inclined towards religion. These all efforts are exerted on the night prayers and Zikr when the soul is free and mind can be

[18] Javed Ansari, Sufi thought of Muhibbullah Allahabadi, (PhD thesis) Aligarh, Aligarh Muslim university, 2006, p 2
[19] Hujwiri, Ali bin Usman, Kashf ul Mahjub, Lahore, Maktaba Shams o Qamar, ,2012, P 124,
[20] Ibid, P 129
[21] Idrees Shah, The Way of the Sufi, London, 1975, p 203

concentrated with least deviation and distraction. Sufism makes strong relationship between creation and his creature.

History of Sufism in Sindh

Sufism started appearing in the 9th century, one century after the Arab conquest (712) in subcontinent. The earliest Sufi who visited Sindh was Hasan Basari (d.728), then Husain bin Mansur Hallaj (858-921). He is said to have travelled in Sindh in 896-97.[22] Sheikh Abu Turab was regarded as first sufi of Sindh. He was Taba tabeein.[23] It is observed that most Sufis has immigrated to Sindh by various ways.

1. One who had immigrated to Sindh with traders for preaching the Islam.

2. Immigration with conquerors.

5. Visiting purpose.

3. Immigrated on ruler's invitation.

4. Immigrated for securing their life.

The Spiritual Orders of Sufism/ Tasawwuf

Tasawwuf and spiritual orders of Tasawwuf commenced properly from the second century. There are a lot of spiritual orders of Tasawwuf in Islam. However, the spiritual orders which became popular in Sindh include Qadriya, Suharwadiya, Naqshbandiya, Chistiya and Owaisiya. On the other hand, the Owaisiya spiritual order was also popular in that region.

The Suharwadiya spiritual order: The foundation of this order was laid down by Sheikh Ziauddin Abu Najib Suhrwardi (d. 543 H), and Sheikh Shahabuddin Suhrwardi raised this order. The Suharwadiya order received

[22] Soomro, Abdul Ghaffar, Shah Abdul Latif and his Sufi thought, Sindh university, 1998, p92
[23] Qudusi, Eijaz ul Haqq, Tazkira e Sufiya e Sindh, Karachi, Urdu Academy, 1959, p 35.

massive popularity in Sindh because of Bahauddin Zakariya. According to famous historian of Sindh Mir Ali Sher Qani': The majority of people were his disciples. Similarly, there were also many Islamic saints who were associated with this order, due to which the Suharwadiya spiritual order got the opportunity to become immensely popular in Sindh.[24]

The Chistiya spiritual order: Abu Ishaq Shami (d. 379 H) laid down the foundation of this order. Khwajah Moenuddin Chishti (d. 33 H) introduced this order in the subcontinent, and Khwajah Moenuddin Chishti, Khwajah Nizamuddin Auliya and Baba Farid Ganj Shakr took this order to every corner of the subcontinent. It is said about Khwajah Moenuddin that he also stayed in Multan and Sehwan.

The Qadriya spiritual order: The founder of this order is Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (d. 541 H). This order started from Iraq, becoming massively popular in Syria, Turkey, Marrakesh, Jordan, India and Pakistan, etc. According to some scholars, it began in the seventh century, and Dr. Abdul Ghaffar Soomro has written in the preface of Minhaj-ul-Ma'rfat: In Sindh Hind, the inception of the Qadriya spiritual order took place at the end of the ninth century.[25]

The Naqshbandiya spiritual order: In the beginning, this order was famous by the name of Khwajgaan; its founders were Yusuf Hamdani (d. 535 H) and Abdul Khaliq Ghajadwani (d. 575 H). Khwajah Bahauddin Naqshband (d. 739 H) promoted this order a lot. Later on, this order was

[24] Qani, Mir Ali Sher, Tuhfat ul Kiram, Jamshoro, Sindhi Adbai Board, 2006, p 359
[25] Somro, Abdul Ghaffar, Minhaj ul Marifat, (preface) Institute of Sindhology, University of Sindh, Jamshoro, 2009, p 4.

known as Naqshbandiya. Regarding the introduction of the Naqshbandiya spiritual order in Sindh, Dr. Zubair, in the Sindh history stated that the first of all, the saints of the ‘Aliyah Qadriya and Suhrwardiyah spiritual orders are found. Regarding the inception of the ‘Aliyah Naqshbandiya spiritual order in Sindh, Ejaz-ul-Haq Quddusi stated that, Hazrat Makhdoom Adam Thatvi is the first-ever Naqshbandi saint. However, Dr. Ghulam Mustafa Khan’s research states that Hazrat Makhdoom Bilal Talthi (d. 939 H) also had the permission of Naqshbandiya from Hazrat Khwajah Bahauddin Naqshband through some chains.[26]

The Owaisiya spiritual order: In reply to a question from Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, Makhdoom Moenuddin Thatvi has written in the Risal e Owaisiya: It is related to Hazrat Owais Qarni, and anyone who acquires reality from the Ghaib (unseen) is called Owaisi.[27] In Sindh, Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, Makhdoom Moenuddin Thatvi, Makhdoom Nooh and many more were associated with this order.

Sheikh Abu Turab, Abdullah Shah Ghazi, Sayid Usman Shah Marwandi, Abdullah Shah Ashabi, Sheikh Salamat Mughal, Sheikh Jalal, Makhdoom Bilal, Pir Pathha, Makdoom Nooh, Qazi Qadan, Abdul Karim Bulri, Sachal Sarmast and Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai were the famous Sufis from Sindh. Qadriya, Suharwadiya, Naqshbandiya, Chistiya and Owaisiya are major schools of thought (Sufi orders) that spread numerous ways of Sufism to attain the will of Allah.[28]

The famous Sufi poet Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai was keen promoter of mutual harmony and respect. His poetry and teachings were fulfilled

[26] Abu al Khair, Dr Zubair, Sindh kye Sufiya Naqshband, Lahore, Zia ul Quran, 2007, vol 1, p 33
[27] Makhdoom Muhammad Moin, Risal e Owaisiya, Bhit Shah, Shah Abdul Latif Saqafati Markaz, 2005, p 26
[28] Qudusi, Eijaz ul Haqq, Tazkira e Sufiya e Sindh, Karachi, Urdu Academy, 1959, p 35

with religious harmony and tolerance. He exemplified that like the flock of the birds, human beings also live together with love and harmony. He says:

وَڳَر ڪيو وتَنِ، پِرتِ نہ ڇِنَن پاڻ ۾
پَسو پکِيڙنِ، ماڙُهنئان ميٺُ گَهڻو

Cranes fly in folks, they never break bonds of love,

Behold birds; they are more affectionate than human.[29]

They in convoys travel ever, their connections never cut not like men their kinship sever; Oh, behold the loving birds.

ڌڻ ڌارڻ، ڌار رهڻ ايءَ نه سنگهارن سِٽ،
ڪاهي ايندا ڪڏهين. مٿي وانڍِ وهَٽَ،
جي هاڻو هونئي مِٽ ته به اُڊو لاههِ مَ انجو

Keeping herds and living separately is not the way of the herds' men.

When would they bring their animals to the lonely place

Even if your relatives be strong enough, do not stop being anxious from them.[30]

Another Sufi poet of Sindh and grandfather of Sachal Sarmast Hafiz Muhammad said:

ڪن جو نينهن نهر سان ڪنين دٻايا دريا
صاحبڏني جي ساھ سارا سمنڊ سمايا

"Prides, treasures, some people maintain; through worship a few tricks some attain;

But such supreme stage of Union I did gain; my each breath, the Beloved, did contain.[31]

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[29] Sur Dahar chapter 4, verse 5.
[30] Sur Dahar chapter 4, verse 27
[31] Faruqi Qabool Muhammad, study of mysticism in Darazi school of Sufi thought, PhD thesis, Khairpur, Shah Abdul Latif university, p 74

Conclusion

Conclusion From the above discussion we can say that Sufism has a considerable role in Sindh to promote religious tolerance and harmony. The impact of Sufism in Islamic societies especially in Sindhi society is much more appreciated. Sufism was adaptable in its dimensions. It is for that reason; people could carry out it along with their social and professional lives. Sufism possesses all those essential qualities for profound and productive interfaith dialogue like generosity, patience, gratitude, humility, and tolerance. It is not partial to morality and ethnic behaviors because it is obvious in our daily life from the home to market. The Sufis enlightened the humankind in religious values and doctrine; they facilitated the deprived and needy people, appealed the local community, converted them into Islam and occupied a reverential position in the socio-religious aspect of Sindh.