

Sufi and Ulemas in Sub-Continent

What is Sufism:

- Sufi is a word derived from Persian language; its plural word Sofia is commonly used in Urdu and other regional languages of Pakistan. According to sources Sufi is an Arabic word derived from Sufa which means wool and it refers to the woollen garment worn by some pious people. It refers to the purity of heart and soul of human. However, the most similar term 'Tasawwuf' is also derived from the word Sauf.

Origin of Sufism:

- A large number of authors are not agreeing on the point from where and when the Sufism originated. In other words, the exact derivation of Sufism is undecided and disputed.
- the term Sufism is the internal dimensions of the teachings of Last Prophet of Islam.
- Some authors are of the opinion that that Sufism developed during the golden age of Islamic period which was 9th to 10th centuries.
- However, some of the Islamic scholars told that the Sufism was promoted earlier to the golden era as various Sufis were present like Hassan of Basra.
- The prominent Muslim thinker, Allama Ibn-i- Khaldun said that Sufism was previously experienced by the Sahaba, however, the Sahaba were those Sufis.

Chains of Sufis:

- Generally, the Muslim Sufis are belonged to several chains.
- Sufi chains are sketched back to the Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (SAW).
- Most of the chains of Sufis such as the Qadaria, Chishtia and Suhrawardia orders belonged to the fourth caliph of Muslims Hazrat Ali, the beloved cousin and son-in-law of Hazrat Muhammad.
- However, other chains of Sufis attached themselves to other caliphs; such as the Naqshbandia Order connects itself with the First Caliph Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique.

THE ROLE OF SUFIA` IN PROMOTION OF ISLAM IN THE SOUTH ASIA:

- The role of Sufia for the promotion of teachings of Islam cannot be neglected. They have performed their services almost in all the world and largely in Central Asian and South Asian states and regions. No doubt, Sufism had played significant role in the construction of Muslim society and culture. They did it through mentoring the spiritual concerns of the Muslims.
- The Muslim saints or Sufis accomplished an imperative role regarding the promotion of Islam in the Indian sub-continent; but the main credit for Sufis is that they did it without using any force and authority

The Role of Sufis Towards Tolerance

- The term Sufism or Tasawwuf mentions the mystical aspect of human life and the best world religion for human being is Islam; instituted by Hazrat Muhammad the beloved prophet of Allah Almighty. Islam had taught the various lessons of spending life in the world. Islam called this world temporary for the human being and told that the permanent life shall be started after the death and Qiamat (the Day of Judgment). The most important tradition accomplished by Muslim Sufis was the message of devotion.

HAZRAT ALI HAJVERI

- The real name of Data Ganj Bakhsh is Ali but he is known as Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh. He is also famous as Hazrat Ali Hajveri. His complete name was Sayed Abul Hassan Ali Ibn Usman bin Ali Aljalabi Sam-ul Hajveri. Ali Hajveri was son of Usman ibn-i-Ali.
- Born at Hajver, a town near Ghazni in Afghanistan.
- He belonged to the Sayed family and descendant of Hazrat Ali.

HAZRAT KHAWJA MOINUDDIN CHISHTI

- Moinuddin Chishti is famous as Hazrat Khawja Moinuddin Chishti Ajmeri. He was born at Sanjar, a town in the Seistan Province of Iran in 1141 A.D.
- He was the son of Khawja Ghayasuddin who was descendant of Hazrat Ali.
- Khawja Ghayasuddin was the fearful, pious and noble personality. He was wealthy man and mostly used to travel to Isphahan, Nishapur and Baghdad; but the purpose of his travelling is also unknown; he may used to travel for preaching, trading or government job. However, his tomb is located in Baghdad.

SHAH ABDUL LATIF BHITTAI

- Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai is a famous mystic poet of Sindhi Language. Shah Latif belonged to late 17th and early 18th century A.D.
- He was born in Sindh in a noble Sayed family at a village named Hala Haveli, District Hyderabad. Shah Latif spent his early days of life in his village where his father Sayed Habibulah Shah lived.
- birthday was 18th November 1689. He died at the age of 63 on 1st January 1752 in the Islamic month of Safar.

RAHMAN BABA

- The real name of Rahman Baba was Abdur Rahman.
- He was born at a village Bahadur Kallay near Peshawar.
- He belonged to a famous Pathan family of Mohamand tribe.
- Pata Khazana is the well recognized book of the history of Pashto which reveals that 1632
- A.D. and 1708 A.D. were the birth and death years of Rahman Baba respectively.

SHAH WALI ULLAH

- Shah Wali Ullah was born in Delhi on 21 February 1703.
- His grandfather Sheikh Wajihuddin was an influential officer in the military force of Shah Jahan.
- Real name of Shah Wali Ullah was Sayed Qutb-ad-Din Ahmed but he was famous as Wali Ullah due to his goodness.
- His father Shah Abdul Rahim was a great Sufi and well known scholar of Islam.
- He established a great Madrasa name Madrasa-i-Rahimia where he taught the Holy Quran. The Madrasa became the institute of learning for the teachings of Quran and Sunnah.

SAYED AHMAD SHAHEED

- Sayed Ahmad was born at the small town of Rai Bareli near Lucknow on 24 October
- 1786 A.D. or 1st Muharram 1201 A.H.
- He was the grandson of Maulvi Ilm Ullah who was highly appreciated due to his Purity, Taqwa and devotion to Allah Almighty.
- His father died while he was still a young boy. Sayed Ahmad registered in the Madrasa Rahimia of Shah Wali Ullah in Delhi in 1806 A.D. Here, under the sons of Shah Wali Ullah, he learned the Quran and the Hadith for two years.