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Sufism

The word sufi originated from Arabic word Shafa, which means piousness i.e, the person who is spiritually as well as morally can be considered as sufi. The word sufi was not famous during the time of Prophet Muhommad but it became famous worldwide during the second Hijri century with the rise of Abbasid Cliphate. Sufism was mainly the path adopted by Prophet Muhhammad on his practical life as per the lessons of Quran. According to which a person sheds all his materialistic greed and tension and devotes himself to God. Sufism worked as a bridge between hindu and muslim religion. Though it got famous as a religion in 9th century. The two main aim of Sufism was-spiritual prosperity and welfare of people.

The Sufi Silsilas:

➤ **Chishtiya Silsila:**

➤ **Khwaja Muinnuddin Chisti:**

This Silsila was established by Khwaja Muinnuddin Chisti in India. They gave importance to music and considered it to be a medium of getting connected to God. They established an organization called 'Vilayat' which was a spiritual area free from political control. The sufi saints of this silsila also followed Shariyat. Khwaja chisti the pioeer of this silsila came to India in 1192 A.D along with Muhommad Ghor. He initially stayed in Lahore, then went to Delhi and then to Ajmer. His contemporary ruler in Ajmer was

Prithviraj Chauhan. Khwaja Chishti propagated sufism among all the people regardless of any religion. He died in 1236 A.D. His shrine was built in Ajmer which was visited by Muhommad Bin Tughlaq and Akbar.

➤ **Qutubuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki:**

Another great saint of Chisti Silsila was Khwaja Qutubuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki. He came to India from Baghdad during the reign of Iltutmish. The famous monument Qutub Minar was built on his name.

➤ **Sheikh Fariduddin Ganj Shakar:**

Sheikh Fariduddin Ganj Shakar was another prominent sufi saint of Chisti Silsila. He was the student of Qutubuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki. He kept a distance with the rulers and the aristocrats. Sikh Guru Gurunanak also followed the philosophies of Sheikh Fariduddin Ganj Shakar and Guru Arjun Dev compiled his philosophies in Guru Grantha sahib. He died in 1265 A.D.

➤ **Nizamuddin Auliya:**

The greatest of all sufi saints in the Chisti silsila was Nizamuddin Auliya. He was the follower of Fariduddin Ganj Shakar. He was the only sufi saint of Chisti Silsila who remained unmarried for his entire life. He witnessed the period of seven sultans of Delhi sultanate but never visited their court. He did not share good bond with Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq as Ghisyasuddin ordered him to return the grants given by Nassiruddin Khusro Shah the last ruler of Khilji dynasty. Nizamuddin Auliya was bestowed with various titles such as- Mahboo-i-ilahi(favorite of God), Sultan-ul-Auliya(king of the saints). He believed in the policy of Sulah-i-kul. He adopted the policy of Yoga to such a great extent that he became famous by the name of Siddha Purusha or the Yogi Siddha.

➤ **Sheik Salim Chisti:**

He lived and died in Fatehpur Sikri. He was bestowed by the title of Sheikh-ul-Hind. He was the contemporary saint of Akbar. It is

believed that due to the blessing of Sheikh Salim Chisti the son of Akbar, Salim was born who ascended the throne in the name of Jahangir.

The saints of Chisti silsila believed in simplicity and poverty. They considered personal property to be the greatest obstacle in the path of spirituality. They starved themselves to the minimum desires. They wore simple clothes. Maximum of the sufi saints led a married life except Nizamuddin Auliya. They condemned religious rituals, believed in the welfare of people kept themselves away from politics. Despite following Islam they respected all religion. They were active towards lower section of the society and also participated in musical ceremonies as they believed music to be a way to connect with God.

➤ **Suhravardi Silsila:**

This sect was mainly famous in North west frontier area. The pioneer of this silsila was Sheikh Shihabuddin Suhravardi. But the credit of organization of this Silsila in India goes to Bahauddin Jakaria. The saints of this Silsila maintained a close relation with the rulers and believed in living a happy life. They also believed in collection and preservation of wealth. They shed the culture and ideology of Chisti silsila. They also participated in political activities. The social base of this silsila was the upper class. They paid stress on the importance of change of religion. Bahauddin Jakaria was born as well as his Khankah was located in Multan. Iltutmish bestowed him the title of Sheikh-ul-Islam. Another important sufi saint of Suhravardi Silsila was Saiyyed Jallaluddin. He was granted the title of Sheikh-ul-islam by Firoz Shah Tughlaq. He Visited to Makka 36 times thus, was entitled as Jahaniya Jahangasht.

➤ **Firdausiya Silsila:**

It was a branch of Suhrawardi Silsila. The main area of impact was Bihar. The founder of this silsila was Sheikh Saddruddin Smarkandi. It was spread in Bihar by Sheikh Sarffuddin Yahiya Maneri. His shrine is located in Bihar. He left behind a large number of letters after his death which were known as Makhtubat. His father was Kamalludddin Yahiya Maner. His shrine is located in Manersharif.

➤ **Kadiri Silsila:**

This silsila was established in Baghdad in 12th century A.D by Abdul Kadir Jilani. The first saint of this silsila in India was St. Shah Niyamattullah and Nassiruddin Mohommad Jilani. The followers of this silsila were against music. They wore green coloured clothes. Abdul Kadir Jilani was bestowed with numerous titles such as- Piran-i-pirani(head of saints), Mahbbob-i-shubhani(lover of god), Peer-i-dastgir(helpful saint). Lodi sultan Sikandar Lodi was the student of one of the sufi saint named Makhdum Jilani. The elder son of Shah Jahan, Dara Shikoh was the follower of Kadiri Silsila. He was the student of Miyan Mir and Mullah Shah Bakshi respectively. Dara Shikoh compiled the biographies of various sufi saint in a book entitled Safunat-ul-Auliya, Sakinat-ul-Auliya. He also translated 52 upnishadas in Persian language under the title of Sir-i-Akbar.

➤ **Nakshbandi Silsila:**

This silsila was established in the world by Khwaja Bahauddin Nakshbandi in 14th century. In India it was established by Khwaja Baki Billah. They were extremely close to the Islamic Shariya. They were the staunch opponent of music. They believed that the relationship between God and human being was of a lover and his beloved. The eminent disciples of Khwaja Baki Billah was, Sheikh Ahmad Sarhindi. He replaced the philosophy of Wahdat-ul-Wajood with Wahdat-ul-Suhud. The compilation of his letters was named as Makhtubat-i-Rabbani. He criticized Din-i-Ilahi and Shiya sect. The last prominent saint of this silsila was Khwaja Mir Dard. He was an eminent poet of Urdu and Persian.

Besides these silsila other branches of Sufism are Shataria sect, Kalandira sect and Madaria sect , Mangal sect, etc. The pioneer of Shataria sect was

Sheikh Abdul Shatar. Another prominent saint of this sect was Shah Muhimmad Gaus. The last eminent saint of this sect was Saint Shah Wajiuddin. The first saint of Kalandaria sect was Abdul Ajj Macci. His follower was Khijrarumi Kalandar due to him a Chistiya-Kalandaria sub branch was established. The last saint of this sect was Qutub-uddin-kalandar. He received the title of Sarandaj. The pioneer of Madaria sect was Sheikh Bahauddin Shah Madar.

Influence of Hinduism on Sufism:

According to Alberuni the philosophy of Atma was adopted by sufis from Yogsutra of Patanjali. He has connected the concept of spiritual worship and value of atma with the concept of Bhawatgita. Amritkunda the book of Hathyoga had a great influence on Sufism as the practices of yoga and meditation practiced by the saints of Chistiya silsila was adopted from this book. The philosophy of Wahdat-ul-wajood was similar to the philosophies of the hindu yogi gurus. In the Haikak-i-hind of Mir Abdul Wahid consists of names and examples of various Hindu deities and Gods such as Krishna, Radha, Gopi, Braja, Gokul, Yamuna, Ganga, Mathura and Krishna, etc. which depicts its close relation with Hinduism. A few sufi saints used Hindi language as well as Hindi poetries to influence people and spread their philosophies. Thus Hinduism had its great impact on Sufism, and Sufism acted as a link between Hinduism and Islamic religion.