

NAUSHAHI ORDER OF SUFISM

AN INTRODUCTORY STUDY

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Abstract

Though the light of Islam reached the Subcontinent in the first century of al-Hijra but preaching of Islam gained momentum only when the Sufis and Saints embraced this Subcontinent with their arrival from parts of Arab, Iran and Central Asia. A large number of local populace embraced Islam of their own free will in result of preaching of the pious Sufis and Saints. Thus spread of Islam in the Subcontinent is very much due to the relentless efforts of these people. Islam's four main Sufi Orders are practiced in the Subcontinent. But Qadri Order is largely followed of whose Naushahi is a sub branch. Founder of this order, his followers and affiliates rendered great services regarding preaching the peaceful message of Islam to the people of the Subcontinent. This article reviews the services of the Naushahi Order and relevance of their teachings in today's changed scenario of the world.

Keywords:

Universe, Subcontinent, Materialism, Sufism, Islam, Qadri, Chishti, Suharverdi, Naqshbandi, Haji Muhammad Nausha Ganj Bakhsh, Naushahi

God had sent His messengers for the guidance of human beings since the beginning of the universe. After the messengers, the responsibility of human guidance and welfare is placed on the shoulders of Aulya, Saints and Sufis. It is why no period of human history is void of these God-fearing people. The Subcontinent has too never been deprived of this blessing.

Every religion has its sacred and centrally venerated personalities. Their followers deem essential to practise their teachings for peaceful coexistence, spiritual purification and contentment. These very personalities stand for negation of all untrue and unreal temptations and rear high morals, service of humanity and finally a peaceful atmosphere where all may live in a brotherhood.

Alas, most of the human societies today are suffering from materialism. Materialism has caused serious damage to human relation so much so a person feels lonely even staying with other under one roof. This loneliness has made him mechanical in feelings. It is true that machines do play vital role in the development of a society but they fail to foster feelings for mankind. Whereas the pious Sufis make their followers realize these feelings. Resultantly, they lead them to the right path instead of fulfilling their unbridled aspirations. The pious people who have been serving the human beings for centuries are named as Sufis.

Presence of different religions in the Subcontinent is a vivid sign of existence of several orders of guidance. Like other religions, Islam is a peaceful religion. There are many Sufi orders in Islam who have been and still are active in service of humanity. It is pertinent to mention, even if we do not go into detail, that four main orders of Sufism have left great impact on the life of the people of the Subcontinent. They are: Qadri(1), Chishti(2), Suharverdi(3) and Naqshbandi(4). All these orders have further branches and acknowledgment of their services is quite important. However, influence of Qadiri order supersedes all other orders in this regard.

Naushahi order is a famous sub branch of the Qadiri order of Sufism. It is named after the great spiritual personality of the Subcontinent Haji Muhammad Nausha Ganj Bukhsh.

Followers of this order are not confined to the Indo-Pak Subcontinent only but they are found across the globe. Basically, this order is based on principles laid down by the holy Prophet (PBUH) and then by Khawja Hasan Basri (110 AH). Author of *Al-Luma* Khawja Abual Nasr Siraj(370AH), author of *Al-Ta'rruf* Imam Abu Bakr bin Abu Ishaq(384 AH), author of *Tabaqaat al-Sufia* Sheikh Abu Abdul Rehman al-Silmi (412 AH), author of *Rasala Qusheria* Imam Abu al-Qasim Qusheri, author of *Kashf al-Mahjub* Ali Hujveri Dataa Ganj Bukhsh (465 AH) author of *Ihyaul Uloom* Imam Gazali (505 AH), author of *Fatuhul Gaib and Gunyatul Talibeen* Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani(561 AH), author of *Tazkiratul Auliya* Sheikh Farid al-Din Attar (620 AH), author of *Awarif al-Ma'rif* Sheikh Shahabuddin Suharverdi (623AH), author of *Fususulhikam* Sheikh Muhayuddin ibne Arabi (628AH), Fariduddin Ganj-e-Shakr(1173-1266 AH), author of *Fuadul favayd* Khawja Nizamuddin Aulya(735AH), author of *Lavaih* and *Nafhaatul Uns* Abdul Rehman Jami (898AH), Syed Shah Muhammad Ghous Uchi, Syed Mubarak Haqqani, Shah Ma'ruf Khoshabi, Hazrat Sakhi Shah Sulaiman Nori Huzuri (1065 AH) and Hazrat Nausha Ganj Bakhsh (1103 AH) all had rendered great services to promote and popularize the Qadri order in the Subcontinent.

Hazrat Nausha Ganj Bukhsh(1014-1103) laid down the foundation of this order complying with his mentor Sakhi Sulaiman Nori in a village of district Gujrat Noshehra Tariran in province of the Punjab. Later on, this order shifted to Ranmal Sharif where his tomb is situated. The record at the Revenue Department of Gujrat also testifies this statement which goes as: Nausha Sahib of Jalap caste, a sub caste of Rajpoot, came here as a visitor. He built a house and a mosque on the bank of the river. They were ruined in a flood. After his sad demise, his progeny built the house and the mosque anew. (5) He

undertook writing books side by side preaching and addressing the peaceful message of Islam. He left behind him great treatise of Punjabi language and literature both in prose and verse. He was also the founding father of Punjabi prose---a language spoken by more than eighty million people. Besides, a diwan comprising four thousand couplets in Urdu language (Intikhab Ganj Sharif) and two thousand couplets in Punjabi language (Ganj Sharif Punjabi) is attributed to him. His five sermons in prose were available but sixth one was hitherto unavailable and was brought to light for the first time by the author of this article. This sermon belongs to the reign of Shah Jehan. (6) His sayings with the name of Chahar Bihar were compiled in Persian language by the renowned Punjabi poet Hashim Shah Tharpalvi. Hashim said: He had seen these sermons in authentic books and heard too from his elders. These sermons reached us through Nausha's close disciple Pir Muhammad Suchyar, had they been collected at one place a book house would have been established, but I had collected some of them in a book namely CCHAR BAAGH. This book is short but comprehensive. The book is named after the topics discussed in it: Shariat, Tariqat, Haqiqat and Marfat. This book is a great treatise on Tasawwuf. (7)

Mehfal-e Sama (Qawwali) has special importance in Naushahi order in addition to sermons. Sama is considered as the best way for self-recognition and not for lustful purposes. Human service, consoling mankind, negation of self, humbleness and hatred for snobbery are the salient features of the Naushahi order. Moreover, qualities like modesty, love of knowledge and geniality are the pillars of the Naushahi teachings.

This order has enjoyed a special relation with art and literature in every period. The founder of the order himself was a man of pen. Men of letters like Hafiz Barkhurdar, Bahr al-Ishq, Qazi Khush Muhammad Kunjahi, Mirza Ahmad Baig Lahori, Maulana Ghanimat Kunjahi, Sadaqat Kunjahi, Hashim Shah Tharpalvi, Ahmad Yar Maralvi, Faqir Norul Din Baqandazi, Ghulam MuhyudDin Nausha Sani, Maulana Ashraf Manchri,

Umar Bukhsh Rasolnagri, Mian Ghulam Murtaza, KamaludDin Kamal, Syed Abrar Shah, Sain Maula Shah, Hakeem Qul Ahmad Manchri, NajamudDin Faiz, Ghulam Qadir Shah, Asr Jalandhri, Umar al-Din Faruqi, Maulvi Muhammad Din, Diwan Mast Umar, Sain Nizam, Mian Naik Muhammad, Sain Haider Shah, Ma'soom Shah Naushahi,, Mian Muhammad Hayat, Ilahi Bukhsh, Maulana Muhammad Azam Mirwali, Sharafat Naushahi, Abdul Karim Abbasi, Barq Naushahi, Sufi Mubarak Ali Azmat, Sain Fateh Khan, Hakeem Sardar Muhammad Sardar and Sain Muhammad Sharif had been associated to this order in the past and presently some great names like Abdul Ghani, Shakir, AbdurRahim, Dilshad, Sahibzada Mehboob Husain, Sahibzada Nusrat Naushahi, Syed Waqar Ali Shah Hamdani, Hanif Hanfi belong to this great order. Author of this article is also pleased to have affiliation with this spiritual order.

The pious people of Naushahi order are of the view that good deeds are the demand of spirit and bad deeds are in fact unlawful aspirations. They firmly believe that the Sufism is the only way which may prevent mankind from going astray, bigotry, prejudice and war. Sufism is but patience, prevention, sincerity, human service side by side respect of humanity. This principle is so effective that it helps purify the inner self, calmness of mind in addition to reformation of both inner self and outer self and harshness in the name of religions and debate of ours and yours die down. Such people believe in peace and reconciliation. They take paradise as a reward of Allah Almighty and hell as a punishment for bad deeds. But they strictly believe that a Sufi must not aspire for paradise and afraid not of hell. His objective should be the recognition of the Real Worshipped which can be attained through being in service and welfare of mankind. The same was the base of Khanqahi system laid down by Naushahis in the Subcontinent. The Sufis have been following the strong tradition of serving food to people free of cost [commonly known as Langer] and this tradition has both social and societal relevance too.

This tradition has direct link to the Qua'anic injunctions mentioned in Chapter 29, Al-Dahr which was revealed appreciating the good deed of Hazrat Ali (RA), the final source of all the orders. One evening when he was near to break his fast, a beggar asked him for food. He gave him the food in the way of Allah. He himself resorted to some draughts of water. The same was happened on the second and the third day. He remained hungry for many days but could feel no weakness physically instead he was pleased to save one of God's servants from starvation. Allah Almighty was so pleased upon his act that He revealed the verses of the Holy Qur'an on the holy Prophet (PBUH) that those who feed other are the pious ones and successful in the Hereafter. Large food courts at the Khanqahs established by the Sufis were to provide accommodation and food free of cost to the common man whereas religious seminaries were there to cater religious education and spiritual training. This system is intact today where nobody asks one's caste, creed, clan or origin. Instead everybody is welcomed wholeheartedly. Every pleasure or displeasure is taken to be from God. Bearing hardships and remaining contented are considered far better than complaining of bad conditions. Hence such people stand by the oppressed ones against the tyrants.

Once Hazrat Nausha travelled to Lahore in the reign of Shah Jehan to watch royal wrestling. The wrestler took him to be another wrestler. He said addressing to him that if he wanted to wrestle with him, first he should wrestle with his pupils. He replied to him, no I would wrestle with you. He held his hand and twisted it tightly that it began bleeding badly. The wrestler held back his hand with a jerk.

He said: O wrestler! Listen to me. A wrestler is not he who overcomes his opponent but the one who overcomes one's anger. If you want to become great person, overcome your anger and think of other better than yourself. Do not think other inferior to you mistakenly.

Here an interesting incident of Hazrat Nausha's life is quite relevant. It goes as: a jogi metamorphosed himself in three different forms: a child, a young man and an old man. He said that it took him thirty long years to master this art. He was expecting appreciation from him. Instead he said: O my dear! You have spoiled thirty years of your precious life. Neither you nor anybody else benefitted from this art. Then he chanted the slogan of Allah Hoo and this voice echoed every nook and corner. He said: Lo and behold! I have negated myself for all my life, worshipped the Creator and served the mankind that in reward Allah Almighty has made everything in accordance with me and everything is praising Him along with me. Had you negated yourself, served the humanity, you would have been pious in the eyes of God and the creatures would be in your service and not vice versa. The jogi along his family embraced Islam. (8)

The history of the Subcontinent bears witness that the amalgamation of different religions in shape of political religion Deen-e-Ilahi introduced by the Mughal Empror Akbar –e Azam(9) was failed totally because it created hatred among the followers of different religions instead of creating harmony among them. This innovation ended the identity of each religion and resulted into a political religion which was against the fundamental teachings of these religions. Moreover, it proved to be fatal for the very existence of these religions. It is why this political religion began vanishing with the passing away of Akbar and today no sign of this religion is found anywhere in the world. After the death of Akbar, his politically expedient religion could be more harmful publically had not been the efforts of the likes of Hazrat Nausha Ganj Bukhsh in the reign of Shah Jehan. Hazrat Nausha and his disciples travelled to every nook and corner of the Subcontinent to preach the real message of Islam. This message has love for all and hatred for none. Renowned orientalists Garsan Datasi(10) in his lectures and Thomas Arnold(11) in his book Preaching of Islam acknowledged his service and confirmed that more than 200,000 Hindus embraced

Islam of their own free will in result of Haji Muhammad Nausha Ganj Bakksh's efforts. Certainly, it was the result of the teachings based on respect of humanity regardless of caste and creed, colour and origin.

Today, we are again in need of such teachings. It is all the more important to revive the golden tradition of pure Sufism to counter the newly emerged monster of terrorism, bloodshed and harassment. Truly, the Naushahi order of Sufism is characterized with such noble teachings that may guarantee of harmony and peaceful co-existence in the world. The article is concluded with a beautiful couplet of Hazrat Nausha Ganj Bukhsh:

درویشی کل خیر پیارے ، درویشی کل خیر

نہ درویشاں بغض بخیلی، نہ درویشاں ویر (12)

Durweshi is but love and peace,
Dear it none but love and peace,
A Durwesh is neither a miserly,
And nor he believes in hostility.

References

- (1) The Qadiriyya: This derives its name from Syed Abdul Qader Gilani. (1077–1166). The order relies strongly upon adherence to the fundamentals of Islam. The order, with its many offshoots, is widespread, particularly in the Arabic-speaking world, and can also be found in Turkey, Indonesia, Afghanistan, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, the Balkans, Palestine, China, East and West Africa.
- (2) The Chishti Order is known for its emphasis on love, tolerance, and openness. Moinuddin Chishti introduced the Chishti Order in Lahore (Punjab) and Ajmer (Rajasthan), sometime in the middle of the 12th century CE.

- (3) The Suhrawardiyya is a Sufi order founded by the Sufi Ziya al-din Abu 'n-Najib as-Suhrawardi (1097 – 1168 CE). It is guided by the Shafi'i school of Islamic law, and, like many such orders, traces its spiritual genealogy (silsila) to Hazrat Ali ibn Abi Talib through Junayd Baghdadi and al-Ghazali.
- (4) Naqshbandi is a major spiritual order of Sufism. It is the only Sufi way that traces its spiritual lineage through Abu Bakr(R.A). Some Naqshbandi orders trace their lineage through Ali (R.A), in keeping with most other Sufi paths.
- (5) Misl Haqqayit, Revenue Department, Phalia, Gujrat.
- (6) Shahabuddin Muhammad Shah Jahan (1592 – 1666) was the fifth Mughal Emperor of India. He is also known as Shah Jahan . He ruled from 1628 until 1658. Like Akbar, he was eager to expand his vast empire. In 1658, he fell ill and was confined by his son Aurangzeb in Agra Fort until his death in 1666.
- (7) Hashim Shah Tharpalvi: Chahar Baagh, Center for Research in Persian Pakistan and Iran. Islamabad, 198. p20
- (8) Hafiz Muhammad Hayat: Tazkira Naushahi (Manuscript1733/1148) Punjab University Library, Shirani Collection No. 6188, p 160
- (9) Akbar(1542 –1605) He is also known as Akbar the Great or Akbar I. He was a Mughal Emperor from 1556 until his death. He was the third and one of the greatest rulers of the Mughal Dynasty in India. Akbar succeeded his father, Humayun. He established a centralised system of administration throughout his empire and adopted a policy of conciliating conquered rulers through marriage and diplomacy.
- (10) Garcin de Tassy(1794- 1878): Garcin was a French orientalist. He first received prominence through general works on Islam and translations from Arabic. Later, he devoted himself to the study of the Urdu language. His major works include: *Mémoires sur les particularités de la religion musulmane dans l'Inde* (1832); *Les aventures de Kamrup* (translation, 1834); translations of works by the poet Wali (1834); the *Histoire de la littérature hindoue e hindoustani* (2. Ed. 1871, 3 Vols.); *Rudiments de la langue hindouie* (1847); *Rhétorique et prosodie des langues de l'Orient musulman* (1848, 2. Ed.

1873); *Chrestomathie hindie et hindouie* (1849); *La doctrine de l'amour* (translation from Hindi, 1859); *Cours d'hindoustani* (1870) and *La langue et la littérature hindoustanies 1850-69* (2. Ed. 1874).

- (11) Thomas Arnold (1795 –1842) was an English educator and historian. Arnold was an early supporter of the Broad Church Anglican movement. He was the headmaster of Rugby School from 1828 to 1841, where he introduced a number of reforms.
- (12) 12-Nausha Ganj Bakhsh: Ganj Sharif, Maaraf-e-Naushahia, Sahanpal, Gujrat, 1980, p320

