

SUFI SAINTS IN ADIL SHAHIS OF BIJAPUR

DR. CHANDRAKANT NILAPPA KOLIGUDDE*

*Assistant Professor, Dept of History & Archaeology, Rani Channamma University PG Centre, Torvi, Vijayapur, India

Abstract

Bijapur is one of the most important City in the southern India It has gained prominence politically, socio-economically, philosophically and in many other ways. It is a meeting place of many religious philosophies and a melting point helping to achieve the synthesis of the teaching of many religious reforms. Sufism is a mystic religion. It is an offshoot of Islam. Sufi saints are the followers of ALLAH and the practice of peace, benevolence and tolerance. They promulgated a religion based on the concept of oneness, brotherhood and love, the love with the fellow being and the love with the ultimate or the creator. Sufi saints and Sufism are an existing reality in Indian socio-religious fold and it has contributed for a healthy and amicable social order.

Keywords: Sufis, Sufism, Meaning of Sufism, Sufi Saints, Male and Female Teachings and Philosophy, Social Harmony, Tombs and Darghas, Contributions

Introduction:

The main aim of the paper is to trace the advent of Sufism in Bijapur, the role including language, literature, music, art and architecture, their Teaching and Philosophy. Archaeological and Literary Sources helps to reconstruct the history of Sufi saints in Karnataka in general and Bijapur is Particular. The middles ages witnessed the rise and development of a very large number of Muslim religious Movements, Mystic organization, religious and attitudes. There is a Controversy among the Scholars regarding the Origin of Sufism. According to Yusuf Husain Sufism was born form the bosom of Islam .whereas A. L. Srivastva quoted that it was influenced by Hindu thoughts, beliefs and Practices. According to Professor Nizami, Many Customs and Traditions were adopted by Sufis from Hinduism. It is the the esoteric school of Islam, founded on the pursuit of spiritual truth as a definite goal to attain: the truth of understanding reality as it truly is, as knowledge, we refer to that perfect self-understanding that leads to the understanding of the Divine. Sufism can be described broadly as the intensification of Islamic faith and practice. The term Sufism as “Islamic mysticism” or “Islamic esotericism.” The original sense of *Sufi* seems to have been “one who

wears wool (*ṣūf*).” In the eighth century the word was sometimes being applied to Muslims whose ascetic inclinations led them to wear coarse and uncomfortable woolen garments. ¹

Earliest Sufi Saints in Karnataka

According to Lings (2008-5) Sufism is nothing other than Islamic mysticism. The saints who preached the principles of Sufism are called Sufi saints. Karnataka is one of the most important southern states of India. At present in Karnataka there are thirty districts and in these districts, According to Rehamant Tarikere, four hundred and twenty five references to Sufi saints’ *darghas* are found ¹.The paper concentrates on the Sufi saints of the Adil Shahi periods as Sufism spread and flourished during their reign. The advent of Sufi saints would have been from the very inception of Islam in the beginning of the 7th century A.D. in South India. Trade and commerce carried out by the Arabs paved out a way for Islam and later for Sufism to enter Karnataka. Shrinivas said that Sufism first entered in the Western Coast along with the Arab merchants who have been mentioned in the inscriptions as *Tajjikas*. ² The earliest reference to a Sufi saint in Karnataka can be traced back to 1301 A.D. Hazrat Sayyid Shah Hisamud-din-Teighbarana was the first saint to come to Gulbarga. At present his tomb is located in the fort near Jagath talab in Gulbarga.(Munshi, 1997:349)³ Another reference is to Nurulla Qadiri during the Vijayanagar period (1336 A.D.to 1565 A.D.). The tomb at Kadi Ramapuram in Hospet of Bellary district was erected in honour of him (Konduri, 1990:47). Karnataka was ruled by many Muslim dynasties. In North Karnataka, fourteenth century, happens to be a period that gave space for the first Muslim dynasty to flourish i.e., The Bahamanisⁱⁱ (1347 A.D. to 1538 A.D.), and later the Adil Shahis (1489-1686 A.D.) After them, North Karnataka was under the rule of Nawabs of Savanur, the Mughals, the Barid Shahis of Bidar and the Nizams of Hyderabad. The southern part of Karnataka was under the reign of Haider Ali and his son Tippu Sultan (1761 A.D. to 1799 A.D.). During the Muslim reign, the Sufis had found an amicable geographical and cultural abode in Karnataka for Sufi flourishing and popularity. The kings and queens of Karnataka like the common people promoted Sufism. The Sufi saints who came from North India as well as from Persia, Arabia and Baghdad settled here because of its amicability and great concern of the people.

¹ A J Arberry- 1975-History of Sufism –Oxford University Press

2.R M Eaton-1996-Sufis of Bijapur(1300-1700), MM Publication New Delhi

3. Rahamath Tarikere -2001-Karnatakad Sufigallu-Kannada University Hampi

According to Shrinivas, There were different types of Sufis living in Karnataka, like the landed elites, warriors, reformists, literates and *dervishes*. Sufism has been variedly ordered and institutionalized. It has the practice of taking the pupil into the order (*Silsilah*) and the concept of *peer* (master) and *perzad* (pupil). In India, there were six orders Prevalled and in Karnataka, four orders, namely Chisti, Qadiri, Sattariya and Shurawardia thrived.³

Sufi orders represent one of the most important forms of personal piety and social organization in the Islamic world The Arabic word for “path” or “way. The term *Tarīqahs* is used for both the social organization and the special devotional exercises that are the basis of the order's ritual and structure. As a result, the Sufi orders or *tarīqahs* include a broad spectrum of activities in Muslim history and society. There were pious mystics who developed their personal spiritual paths involving devotional practices, recitations, and literature of piety. These mystics, or Sufis, sometimes came into conflict with authorities in the Islamic community and provided an alternative to the more legalistic orientation of many of the scholars. Sufis gradually became important figures in the religious life of the general population and began to gather around themselves groups of followers who were identified and bound together by the special mystic path of the teacher. Sufi orders emerged as major social organizations in the Islamic community.⁴

Sufi Saints of Adil Shahi period

According to Eaton Sufi saints migrated to Bijapur from Baghdad, Arabia, Persia Sindh, and from other places in North and South India like Daulatabad, Ahmadabad, Gujarat, Broach, Bidar and Gulbarga. About twenty-seven Sufi saints were living during the period of King Ibrahim II, about eleven of them were in the period of King Muhammad and four were in the period of King Ali II. Single references to the Sufi saints are recorded in the period of Kings Yusuf, Ibrahim I and Ali I. Bijapur remained relatively barren as a centre for Sufism prior to the reign of Ibrahim II but after 1583 Sufism flourish in Bijapur and reached its Heightsⁱⁱⁱ

Dargahs and tombs of Sufi saints in Bijapur

The number of *dargahs* and tombs of Sufi saints in Bijapur vary from large to small in size with almost three hundred. Thousands of pilgrims from all over the Deccan plateau throng to Bijapur and join local devotees in the celebration of *urus* that have made such *dargahs* the focus of popular Islam throughout India. (Eaton, 1985: Intro., xxiii-xxiv) A reference to twenty-two famous Sufi saints of Bijapur during the Adil Shahi period are found. (1) Sayyid Chanda Husaini migrated from Arabia to Bidar in the late 15th century and joined

the cavalry of King Yusuf Adil Khan and accompanied him to Gogi, seven miles from Shahapur of Gulbarga district. At present his tomb is located in Gogi. (2) Shaikh Shamsal-Din Zinda Dil was the only Sufi saint of the Shattari order, who came from Shiraz (Persia) to Ahmedabad and then to Bijapur during the period of King Ali I. (3) Shah Miranji Shamsal-Ushashaq of the Chisti order came from Mecca. He lived in Bijapur along with his descendants on Shahapur hillock called Manauwarpur (City of Light). Throughout the sixteenth century, when the Adil Shahi kingdom was ruled by Shias and the city of Bijapur remained virtually empty of Sufis, the two persons namely Shah Miranji and his son Burhan al-Din Janam kept Chisti order of Sufism alive at Shahapur hillock. In Shahapur hillock, they established a *khanqah* wherein many devotees from diverse parts of the Indian subcontinent were studying. (4) Shah Nur al-Din Safawi was the only Shattari Sufi saint to have come directly from Iran (Persia) to Bijapur. He bears the name of the order of Ismail Safawi, the founder of the Safawi dynasty of Iran. (5) Shah Abul-Hasan Qadiri lived during the period of Ibrahim II and Muhammad. (6) Shah Sibghat Allah of the Shattari order was born in Gujarat seaport of Broach. After coming to Bijapur he learnt that King Ibrahim II enamoured to Hindu singing and playing, had cultivated deviate skills. Sibghat Allah was the only Sufi saint who questioned against the worldly pursuits of the King Ibrahim II and declared that the selling of wine and the practice of the prostitution must be prohibited in Bijapur. He opened a *khanqah* in Bijapur. Later he left for Arabia because of the non-cooperation by the king Ibrahim II. (7) Shah Hashim Alawi, popularly remembered as Hashim Gujarati, or Hashim Pir, was a Gujarati Sufi of the Shattari order. Muhammad Ibrahim Zubairi, the historian wrote that both Kings Ibrahim II and Muhammad had a great deal of belief in Hashim's spiritual power and that Muhammad declared him to be superior to all other Sufis of Bijapur,⁵ even depending on Hashim's council on important matters of State. Hashim was very much attached with the Adil Shahi king Muhammad and his court. Every day hundreds, because of their poverty to seek relief, came to him. He was perhaps the only Sufi saint of Bijapur to employ his good favour with the court for truly constructive social ends. (8) Abul Hasan, (9) Shah Mustafa Qadiri and (10) Shah Qasim Qadiri, all the three were brothers who came from Bidar to Bijapur during the period of Ibrahim II to spread the Qadiri order. (11).

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5..R M Eaton-1996-Sufis of Bijapur(1300-1700), MM Publication New Delhi

Shaikh Abd Allah Aidarus (1631-32 A.D.) was a Sufi of the eminent Aidarus family of Yemen who came to Bijapur during the period of Ibrahim II. He induced the king to wear Arab cloths and propagated the Holy Law of Muhammad in Bijapur. (Eaton, 1985: 69-128)

In the reign of Sultan Muhammad(1627-1656 A.D.), majority of Sufis came directly from Arabia, Egypt, Baghdad, and other parts of India like Bidar, Gulbarga, Burhanpur, and Gujarat to Bijapur. They are., (12) Abd al-Samad Kanani (from Egypt), (13) Ismail Qadiri bin Hasan (from Baghdad), (14) Abu Bakrbal-Faqih (from Arabia), (15) Ahmad Nazir, Saiyid (from Arabia), (16) Jafar Saqqaf, (17) Saiyid (from Arabia), (18) Zain Muqbil, Saiyid (from Arabia), (19) Naim Allah, Shah (from Burhanpur), (20) Zubairi Qazi Ibrahim (from Gujarat), (21) Abd al- Latif Qadiri, Shah (from Bidar), and (22) Siraj al-Din Junaidi III (from Gulbarga).(Eaton,1985:126) Sufi saints arriving directly from Arabia tended to retain Arab habits and customs in Bijapur. For example writing in Arabic, conducting initiation ceremonies in Arabic, making frequent pilgrimages to Mecca, and sending gifts of money back to the holy places of Arabia were all Widely practiced by the Sufis.

Female Sufi Saints

From fourteenth century onwards references are found to female Sufi saints in Bijapur. These female Sufi saints not only involved themselves in spiritual teachings but also their main role in the society as mothers, sisters, wives are really noteworthy. They were also supporting their husbands in spreading Sufi principles.. The earliest happens to be of Hazrat Masaheba Ashrafe Dojahan (Kamath,1987: 912) who came from Arabia or Baghdad about 800 years ago to Kudchi in Raibag taluk of Belgaum district near Bijapur, and second Kunja Maa Bee, the daughter of king Muhammad Shah I (1358 A.D. to 1375 A.D.(Munshi,1977:356-365)

Contribution of the Sufi Saints

The Sufi saints who professed mysticism made contribution in their own way to the social, political, religious, and cultural life of Karnataka. Sufi Services to Society - One of the ideals of the Sufi saints was to strive for the abolition of all discriminations, and inequalities from contemporary society. They received all men, rich and poor, Hindu and Muslim, free born and slaves in the same way. They served as socio-religious reformers in Karnataka. One of their great achievements was that they brought the Muslim aristocracy into touch with the Hindus. The Sufis could attract large masses towards them in Karnataka because of their simple life. They served the poor, the distressed and the down-trodden. As Sufism was based

on liberal principle it attained fame among the Hindu religionists and Sufi saints became equally respectable to the Hindus and the Muslims. They established *khanqhas* (monasteries) which played a key role in maintaining the moral balance of the society in Karnataka.

Philosophy of Sufis

They remove Sternness and fanaticism of Islam and made Liberal, established Love, Equality and tolerance. They were the True Humanitarian; Conducted work for public Welfare.. Sufi organizations and leadership from this period remain significant in setting the discourse and defining the issues of Islamic piety in the modern era. Some modern scholars argue that a number of new initiatives can be seen in the development of the Sufi organizations and thought of the early modern era. Sufi teachers made efforts to remove the more ecstatic and pantheistic elements of the Sufi tradition and to create more reform-oriented Sufi organizations and practices.. They provided vehicles for the expression of the faith of urban elites, served as networks for interregional interaction and travel, acted as an effective inclusive structure for the missionary expansion of Islam, and in some ways shaped the context within which movements of puritanical reform or spiritual revival developed.⁸

CONCLUSION:

Sufis established Equality brotherhood Unity among the People. There was no discrimination among high and low. All are worked together, dinned together and slept together. They showed a Spirit of toleration towards all religions and Creeds. They were instrumental in Maintain the Social Equilibrium of the Medieval Society. They imbibed a love for humanity and believed in Poverty, Pacifism and Non-Violence. Sufis believes in theory of Oneness of God. Sufism based on the Liberal Principles .Sufi saints made Islam quite popular in Karnataka. They tried to remove fanaticism between the Hindus and the Muslims and enhanced the feelings of humanity of love, tolerance and equality. They criticized and condemned the evil practices prevalent among the Hindus and Muslims and tried to purify the society of Karnataka. Sufi saints have been a legacy to the rich diverse culture of Karnataka.

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