

CHISTIYAORDER IN BROADER PERSPECTIVE

Abstract:

This article examines the cultural function of ChishtiKhanqahs in molding the Hindu socio-religious temperament of Medieval Indian Society. Writing is an attempt of historical investigation which draws attention towards the significant and historic role of the Chishtiya Sufism which left enduring impact on subcontinent. In other words the article tries to trace ChishtiKhanqahs' syncretistic tendencies that very well synthesize Indian art and culture with Muslim traditions. The article highlights how local techniques and apparatuses, which Indian society was accustomed, were used by Chishti Sufis in molding the Hindu public temperament and social structure on which it was based on such as, language and music. Emphasize is given on Chishti Sufi masters' spiritual mission that was, to break the blockade which stood between man and man and interweave them together in common bond of sorority, respect and love apart from of their religion, caste or faith associations.

Introduction

Sufism is a manifestly Islamic phenomenon, a reliable appearance of the Islamic character i.e., the most genuine look of the inner aspect of Islam and the most perfect consciousness of its divine values. The dearth and abstinence that the *Sufis* put into practice are stimulated by the life of the Prophet and his companions.¹ The Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H, by his philosophy, by his persona, by the intrinsic worth he demonstrated, was the first Sufi; the model that would instigate mystics for all the generations to appear.² The different schools of Islamic regulation that came into observation in the early centuries after the death of Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H were intended to describe a comprehensible course for the function of that law, so the Sufi Orders that materialized for the duration of the same epoch also proposed to characterize a straightforward course for the practice of internal decontamination.³ After the strengthening of the main Sufi Orders in the central provinces of Islam, the full contact of Sufism, started to be felt in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.

History knows Muin-ud-Din Chishti as the most exceptional envoy of this spiritual advancement.⁴ The Chishtiya Order was initiated by KhwajwMuin-ud-din Chishti who launched the first Sufi Order in Indian subcontinent.⁵ He founded its center in Ajmer where the Order extended throughout. And today, the Chishti Order is one of the most accepted Sufi Orders of Islam in Indian subcontinent.⁶ It is beyond any doubt, that it has been the most dominant Sufi Order of India and Pakistan.⁷ KhwajwMuin-ud-din Chishti as the founder of the Order, has his reverence not just in Muslims' hearts rather we find Hindu accounts equally

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occupied with his praise as, RaiBahadurHarbilasSarda writes in his book on Ajmer that "... He never preached aggression, was a man of peace and goodwill towards all God's creatures."⁸

The subsequent Islamic history of Indian subcontinent experienced KhwajwMuin-ud-din Chishti's great persuasion. It was his character and personality which gave immense boom to the Chishtiya School of Thought and the Sufis associated with it took great part as missionaries in creating religious fervor among the Muslims and it was indeed a momentous function of that time. Credit goes to those Sufis by them Islam preserved its global and sophisticated spirit.⁹ KhwajwMuin-ud-Din's virtuous and simple life made him striking for those who looked for comfort and peace. For him the utmost form of worship was, to assist the weak, to pay attention to the complaints of the oppressed and to offer bread to the hungry.¹⁰ He summarized his spiritual philosophy to **three principles** that Sufi should have "a generosity like that of the ocean, mildness like that of the sun, and modesty like that of the earth." The Chishtiya Order broadened quickly due to Chishti Sufis' simple and determined doings which were purely based on love of God and affection to humanity. It highly impressed many Hindus in particular those from the lower castes, it was a big socio-religious change during that period that clearly led to the transposition in India. The fact is that the Chishti monasteries kept away from any intolerance between the disciples and carried out a classless society that involved huge number of people into their fold. If truth be told "the Islamization of the country was achieved largely by the preaching of the dervishes, not by the sword."¹¹ In the cast-ridden social set up, those were the sayings and actions of the great Chishti Sufis that disclosed the true spirit of their wisdom that facilitated to put down the basis of Islamic Humanism.¹² The Order acquired a highly integrated social organization that was effectively controlled by the center and directed the actions and behaviors of those who were connected with it.¹³

Now we shall see how Chishti Sufis' teachings and actions influenced or created impact on different fields of deed in different way.

1—Political Aspect OfChishtia Order

Chishti Sufis and State affairs

In its best days, the Order shunned from politics and Chishti Sufis strictly kept themselves away from the majestic and the sphere of the nobles. Even they turned down all favors through land grants.¹⁴ No donation of land or any other support by the rulers was allowed in ChishtiKhanqahs. Chishti Sufis were strictly used to reject any dealing with the worldly government. One of their poets said:

How long will you go to the doors of Amirs and sultans?

This is nothing else than walking in the traces of Satan.

As said by the Chishti Sufis, everything in the hands of the kings is to be illegitimate.¹⁵ The Order's principle to safeguard their freedom from state power was mainly a sound one. What chaos state intrusion could play can be seen in the post-Gesudraz period in the Chishtiya of the Deccan, and in the post-Rukn-ud-din-

Multani's phase in the Suharawardiya Order of Multan.¹⁶ Baba Farid regardless of extreme poverty, strictly and strongly stick to this code throughout his long life. He advised his pupils: "If you desire to attain the position of great Sufis do not pay any attention to the princes."

Once he said:

"Bear in mind my one advice. Do not associate with kings and nobles. Regard their visits to your house as calamities. Every dervish who opens the door of association with kings and nobles is doomed."¹⁷

Of all Chishti Sufis, none kept up the principle of aloofness and liberty from the state with such commitment as Nizam-ud-din Awliya did. Princes, ministers, and aristocrats were received at his monastery just like common visitors; even he considered their visits as "ruining his time". For him, what have the dervishes to do with affairs of ruler? Even under the most demanding conditions, he struggled hard throughout his life to maintain the autonomy of the Order from the state power and intrusion yet he his monastery was opened for princes, ministers and government servants since they were equally treated as lay men not as the elite. Only a dynamic Sufi having inspirational personality could merge these two unlike attitudes in the finest proportion.¹⁸ Nasirud-din Chiragh also pursued the same tradition of the Chishties, but he did admit among his followers those who received their income from government at a clerical level.¹⁹

Rather he was placed in such circumstances where he had to participate with much more dynamic responsibility in public dealings. His first participation in politics came as consequence of Muhammad bin Tughluq's policy of pushing Sufis and Ulama into public dealings. This policy led a direct clash between state and mystic sphere attitude. Nasir-ud-din struggled to keep up Order's practice but a divergence with a king, therefore became inevitable. He symbolized the time of changeover from the high age of Chishti mysticism to the days when the saint's descendants would use the monastery of their ancestors as a way of flourishing livelihood, and for the fulfillment of this intention they would keep themselves on the right side of the kings. He himself was conscious of the transformation which was approaching the mystic way of life by the inherited string and by the emerging reposing attitude of discipline.²⁰ One can easily understand the varying temperament of Chishti Sufis, their approach and response towards the state affairs by keeping in mind their major administrative code i.e., defending their sovereignty and protecting it against state intrusion.²¹

2—Social Aspect

The impact of Chishti teachings on Indian Hindu society

Islam advocates the equality of human beings. The Sufis, with their liberal and compassionate methodology and style, were hot believers in the notion of human self-esteem and human fairness. And of the diverse Sufis Orders, the Chishtiya, because of its distinctive character, was closest to the general community. They ate less, dressed simply, and made no difference between the rich and poor, they treated equally who came to seek guidance and assistance from

them irrespectively their high and low status.²² Visitors were always reception well and if there was any food available or not sudden guests always enjoyed their warm and generous hospitality.²³ Hindu notion of segregation has strong dissimilarity with the notion Islamic brotherhood which provides equal spiritual opportunity for all that exists within itself.²⁴ The Chishties made themselves accessible to all parts of society. For the most part, the rulers and upper class by their activities proved to be disloyal to the spirit of Islam.

While in the Chishti monasteries, noble and beggar were looked after with the similar reverence and benevolence. Those were the Chishti monasteries that equally benefited the Hindu community. Latter experienced so well the Muhammadan Law through its contact with the former.²⁵ To truly help the poor one must live as the poor and Chishties by executing this reality devoted themselves to helping the needy and deprived souls.²⁶ By retaining its truthfulness to the traditions of Islam and by integrating a little Hindu performance, Chishtiya Order developed a unique school of Sufism. It was a great fusion of Islamic and some local Hindu practices. This made possible for the Chishties not only to create a center of attention and attraction for Hindus to their gatherings rather to build a spiritual connection between the two groups as well.²⁷ Chishties were always ready to facilitate any seeker that came to them to attain their full potential. Chishti Sufis were great psychiatrist that they knew well what environment they were living in and by what method they had to satisfy the askers. Keeping in mind the satisfaction level of the community ChishtiSifis were quite open and exact in using their spiritual techniques to soothing the tired souls. Hindu's inflexible cast structure was seriously lacking in love and self respect. The Chishties had love and respect they brought to Indian soil where deteriorating humanity welcomed it. New era of delight was waiting for its detonation where Chishti monasteries would supply a nourishing food for hungry hearts and souls. Their doors were opened all the time and everyone could meet there with his or her lost self pleasure.²⁸ This notion of submission through assisting humanity i.e., the real practice of Islamic teachings was the real essence of Chishties wisdom in India. It established a strong model which attracted many to Chishti monasteries.²⁹

Sufism became a mass movement in northwestern India during Nizam-ud-din Auliya's time, and the ethical principles of the Order indeed gave shape to the ideals of Muslim civilization in that part of the Indian subcontinent. Strong inclination was found by most of the Muslims of Delhi towards mysticism and its credit goes to Nizam-ud-Din Auliya whose spiritual charisma inspired and influenced many. No wagering and wine was to be recovered in Delhi and public was found restrained from speaking lie.³⁰ It is beyond any debate that the Chishti Sufis performed imperative responsibility in solidification the moral character of native people, in smashing obstructions of sectional disgust and preconceptions, in establishing benevolent and welfare accomplishments, and in indorsing love and affection for human beings.³¹

3—Cultural Aspects

The Chishties influence on Indian Literature, Music, and Architecture.

God can be experienced in every aspect of life

Right through its history surrounded by the strength of all its genuine demonstration Islam has put emphasis on beauty in fact both are indivisible realities. The Sufis by acting on the Quranic message i.e.,

God loves those who do what is beautiful

They actualize the spirit of Islam. Islamic Sufi influence not just inspired the atmosphere of respect and tolerance for other faiths rather the Indian literature, music, architecture and even dance (under Mughal period) were influenced by Sufi thought. Indian Cultural transformation was the clear manifestation that how indigenous forms of art mingled with mystic thought of that time. They not only extended the humanistic message of Islam, rather they were also an instrument for circulating Mughal high culture and polishing the awareness of the common man. Local languages were frequently utilized in mystical poetry and this was another talent which straight away came from the Sufi realm. Likewise, the musical genre, Qawwali (Sama), as a great artistic blend of spiritual poetry and blissful music, was an essential activity in gatherings at the Chishti Monasteries. Qawwali being the finest classical music tradition appreciably put in to the growth of classical forms of music.³²

(i)—Contribution in Literature:

The verbal communication skills of poetic Sufism continued to offer poets a possibility to articulate feelings that were quite hard to express openly in prose. Even the ghazal expression of the poetry could not shun itself from being affected by the mystic element and absorbed Sufism to the large extent. It was an epoch when ruling class paid huge reverence to the masters of the Orders, and royal princes were sent for their education to the Sufi masters.³³ Every Sufi masters of Chishtiya Order was man of knowledge and highly involved in wide literary recital. Chishti Sufis had great taste of philosophical and intellectual discussions which were the sign of their best and refined literary experience.³⁴ As said by Chishti traditions, Muin-ud-din Chishti studied for six years among the Sanskrit academia of Multan and personalized himself with their language and values.³⁵ The residents at Chishties monasteries, not just had to attendant the sheikh and the people but learning the books and the biographies of Sufis with devotion was one of the main tasks too. **Poetry:** Baba Farid and his fellow Sufism the Order recommended a good education for the pupils and were quite attracted to poetry and music. Jamal Hanswi, Baba Farid's Khalifa (deputy), was a poet, he wrote rousing and fascinating mystical songs in Persian.³⁶ Baba Farid himself was not just a scholar but a poet as well. He wrote in three languages, local Hindavi, Persian and Arabic. "The Urdu language with its blend of Hindavi with Persian is said to have had its poetic debut at his monastery." Undoubtedly he had the heart

of poet and like his master Qutb-ud-din, spent hours narrating Persian verse in a condition of spiritual rapture when he is alone.³⁷ Nizam-ud-din was one of the well-known theologians of Delhi, he appreciated and admired the knowledge of Suhrawardi's *Awarif al-maarif* which acknowledged as the guidebook for approximately all the Indo-Muslim mystic in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.³⁸ He was an outstanding scholar and had an enormous religious and literary knowledge not just in his mind rather at his fingertips. He was a highly cultured Sufi with exceptional memory and superior taste. He was deeply involved in extensive literary studies.

His great literary contribution, his malfuzat, the *Fawa'id-ul-Fuwad* clearly demonstrates his polished sense of literary beauty and balance. It was no accident that more or less all the primary literary figures of his age like, Amir Khusrau, Amir HasanSijzi and the historian Zia-ud-din Barani were attracted to him as faithful disciples and frequently used to pay visit to his monastery. Nizam-ud-din's understanding of poetic styles is revealed in the instruction he gave to Amir Khusrau in his early years of writings.³⁹ Nizamud-din loved to narrate rhyme and used to compile some lines by him. He liked Amir Khusrau to that level that he said about him as; "Khusrau ...certainly the king of poesy's realm....., and Allah Himself is The Helper of our Khusrau."⁴⁰

But he was not a Sufi poet (as many scholars claimed). It is certainly true that the Chishti Sufi had a particular regard for him, yet the difference between the life of the poet and the saint is too palpable to be ignored.⁴¹ Nizamud-din not just stimulated Amir Khusrau, but also influenced his brother poet, Amir HasanSijzi, who recorded the Chishti master's conversations. He was much distracted by worldly pleasure until he decided to pledge himself fully to pursue the master.⁴² As contrast to his brother, he was indubitably a Sufi poet. Despite the fact that he is not a renowned poet but his verses communicate more of the actual mystical spirit than Khusrau's. Nasir-ud-din brought into being a group of intellectual adherents who collected Arabic poetry in such a way that it won praise and recognition even outside the Indian borders.⁴³ One more poet of the Chishtiya was, Bu Ali QalanderPanipati who created a very beautiful poem as a tribute to the Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H and his verses were the first of the many acclamations for the Prophet written in the subcontinent. Chishti saint Gesudraz Persian poetry gracefully translated his feelings of divine love.⁴⁴ This poetic genre contributed a lot; their ghazals provided magnificent singing material for gatherings, not just on spiritual but on everyday occasions as well.⁴⁵ **Prose:** *Fawa'id-ul-Fuwad*, a selection of Nizam-ud-din's conversation on diverse subject matters for the duration of his life time, though compiled by Amir Hasan, they were edited by the saint himself and may be said to reveal his understated and pure quality. It illustrates the high caliber of Persian prose as a straightforward yet effective device for corresponding assorted thoughts, situations, and moods.⁴⁶ In prose the genre of malfuzat was the most distinctive contribution of Indian Sufism. After *Fawa'id ul- Fuwad*, the other Chishties well-known collections are, the "*Khair-ul-Majalis* of Nasirud-din Chiragh, *Jawami-ul-Kalam* of SayyidGesudraz. There are also some Sufi tadhkiras, and the most remarkable is the Amir Khurd's *Siyarul-Awliya*.

It covers up the old Chishti Sufis in India and beyond India. The two tadhkiras by SayyidGesudraz, namely, the *Siyar-i Muhammadi and Tarikh-I Habibi*, are also worth able to mention.⁴⁷ Like poetry, in prose history also uncovers the Chishti saint Nizam-ud-din's literary intellect disciples such as, the most renowned historian of the Mughal period, Zia ud-din Barani and Fakhr-ad-dinZardari, who wrote an remarkable discourse *Risalatusul as-sama*. It was written in the defense of Sama. It wraps all the contentious feature of musical gatherings among Sufi sphere.⁴⁸ Likewise, Muhammad Gesudraz was a prolific writer of both prose and poetry in Persian and Arabic. He composed a book *Mirj al-asiqin* in Dakhni, the southern branch of Urdu, on the Prophet of Islam.

It provides direction to the masses. He was the first Sufi who used this dialect that later on involved many other Sufis in southern India in the next two centuries. And most probably he was the first author in the subcontinent who tried to familiarize the classical work of Sufism on a broad scale. Because of his fundamental work on IbnArbi and his *Aynu l-Qudat's Tamhidat*, Indian Sufi sphere got influence moreover his mystical work's accessibility strengthen the growth of mystical thought in later centuries.⁴⁹ Another major disciple of Muin-ud-din was Hamid-ud-din Nagauri, whose literary contributions are many and have their own worth. Among them *Usul at-tariqha*, a question/answer booklet was the most important and functioned as a type of "catechism" for his supporters. It was the first instructional treaties formed by Indo-Muslim saint.⁵⁰ *Siyarul-Arifin*, another master piece, a biography, written by JamaliDihlawi is devoted to the lives of fourteen Chishti Sufis.⁵¹ This Chishti genre of literature afterward became very important for all the approaching Sufi Orders in the subcontinent.

(ii)—**Contribution in Music:**

Spiritual poetry being a most pleasant expression of spiritual advancement has no match in the world. It is the poetry that makes available the most fascinating songs for Qawwali (Sama) gatherings.⁵² The Sama is the most widely known manifestation of mystical life in Islam. It is known as Sufi Music. It is a great mystical tradition which has attained immense sacred status all over the subcontinent.⁵³ For centuries the Sufi community of the Indian subcontinent has hold up this musical tradition, and it remains the central custom of Sufism to this day.⁵⁴

Dr. Carl W. Ernst quotes *RuzbihanBaqli* in his book *Teachings of Sufism* on music as, "Listening to music is of three kinds: there is one kind for the common people, one kind for the elite, and one kind for the elite of the elite." He elaborates, first kind listen with their physical nature, that is begging, second listen with their hearts, that is seeking, and third listen with their souls, that is loving.⁵⁵ So the Sufi, by the act of listening Sama, "seeks to activate his link with his living spiritual guidance, with Sufis departed, and ultimately with God."⁵⁶ In India the Chishti Sufis were so much occupied with Sama. All the Sufis of the Order had great passion for it. Their observations and writings also are the sign of a superb insightful understanding of Sama and problems related to it.⁵⁷ In fact, bringing music into play to sing devotional text was the hallmark of the Chishtiya Order in Indo-Pak subcontinent.⁵⁸

The Chishties' specialized methodologies soon became definite and regarded as an affection and simple devotion for music.⁵⁹ For Muin-ud-din practicing Sama as a technique of spiritual consciousness, for him, "song is the sustenance and the support of the soul."⁶⁰ Music has always played a prominent part in the social and religious life of India, and stood as a mean of spiritual awakening.⁶¹ When Muin-ud-din first came into Ajmer he found that the Hindus used many musical instruments, therefore he composed spiritual verses and utilize them as devotionally delightful music. It left an eternal impact on native Hindus, who were deeply fascinated by this form of devotion. It indeed stimulated Muin-ud-din to integrate music into his teachings with the intention of bringing Hindus toward Islam. To utilize the medium of music for devotional objectives inspired many Hindu families to that extent, that they converted Islam. And amongst those families many belonged to the elite class of the Hindu society.⁶² Nizam-ud-din was a strict follower of the Prophetic Sunna, and at the same time, a pal of poets and musicians.⁶³ His disciple Amir Khusrau was the founder of the rich Indo-Muslim musical tradition. He was a theoretician and composer, and certainly this talent of his developed in connection with his Chishti affiliation. Chishti Sufis greatly contributed to the development of the subcontinent's musical tradition, of which Amir Khusrau, was the first representative.⁶⁴ Today the Qawwali singers recognize him as the father of their art. He is given immense credit not just originating the new techniques in musical verses' composition rather also inventing new types of instrument such as the sitar.⁶⁵

S. M. Ikram writes in his book *A History of Muslim Civilization in India and Pakistan: A Political and Cultural History* that,

"Amir Khusrau started the process of synthesis, and raised the prestige of the art in the eyes of local Muslims, [and] the interest of the Chishti Sufis in the art and its practical cultivation by them further ensured its popularity."⁶⁶

King Akbar's visit to the shrine of Muin-ud-din Chishti, recorded by Badauni, where he used to listen music in form of Qawwali, and money was showered down, like raindrops, on musicians and singers on his behalf.⁶⁷

"Music is the bringer of joy and happiness.
Music is the giver of clarity and light.
Like the soul, music is near the lords of virtue,
But it is very far from the corrupt."⁶⁸

What is most noticeable facet of Qawwali is, the strong and sharp effect that the music emerges to generate in those who pay attention to it and, together, its extraordinary changeability in response to diverse spiritually ecstatic state of affairs, possibly considered as performance. "Clearly, the music is at the core of all that happens in Qawwali. Experiencing Qawwali means above all hearing music..."⁶⁹ And the most appropriate and best example of it which we have in history, belongs to great Chishti saint, Qutab-ud-din Bakhtiar of Delhi. Saint had such a great passion for Sama that he died while listening to it. The following is the verse on that he gave his life in extreme ecstasy after an intense ecstatic dance, which lasting for four days:

“Those slaughtered by the sword
Of submission to the Lord,
Hay a life newer again,
Every moment, every moment.”⁷⁰

The Chishties brought together Indian classical music with Sama permitting forgetfulness of the material world, and its presentation creates an exciting form of spirit through rousing music.⁷¹ The function of the Chishti Sufis in protecting the Islamic and Indian legacy of music is extremely obvious. Unlike other Sufi Orders only provided casual references to Sama. They were quite open and liberal in dealing humanity since they very well aware of not just the human nature but the Hindu culture as well.⁷² The credit of today’s classical music of Indo-Pak subcontinent undoubtedly goes to the input of the great Chishti masters who brought up a number of Islamic ingredients into Indian classical music.⁷³ So, the Chishtiya Sufism made its most enduring impact upon Indian culture. Their musicians, for the past nine hundred years, have been revered all over the subcontinent.⁷⁴

(iii)—Influence on Mughal Architecture:

King Akbar, for about the first thirty years of his time in power, showed a great reverence for Chishti Sufis. Certain aspects of his architectural patronage reflected his respect for Chishties. The use of white marble at that time was reserved for Sufis’ shrines alone. Akbar’s first monumental architectural undertaking, a tomb for his father Humayun to be found across from the tomb of Delhi’s most important saint Nizam-ud-din Chishti. Likewise, the Akbari mosque positioned at the most imperative Chishti Sufi shrine in all South Asia i.e., the *dargha* of Muin-ud-din Chishti in Ajmer. This was Akbar’s personal and special wish that mosque should be put up around this important shrine. Akbar also constructed a complete city and palace at Sikri, the habitat of Chishti Sufi Salim, to pay tribute to Salim Chishti, who had envisaged the birth of his son and heir. One focal point of the palace was the *thekhankha* built for Salim Chishti. King Shahjahan constructed lots of mosques during his dominion. Among these is a mosque he offered at the *dargha* of Muin-ud-din Chishti in Ajmer. He considered this of all his projects in Ajmer to be the most important, completely built with white marble.⁷⁵ Shahjahan’s eldest daughter Jahanara’s grave is situated in the *dargha* of Nizam-ud-din in Delhi. The simple grave is a beautifully adorned marble slab announcing her pious attachment to the Chishti Sufi. King Aurangzeb, too, was buried in a similar grave at a Chishti shrine in Deccan.⁷⁶

4—Indian Woman Of Chishtiya Orders:

Nizamud-din said; “When the lion has come out of the forest, nobody asks if it is male or female; the children of Adam must obey and show respect, whether it is male or female....”⁷⁷

Today’s woman seems to seek and interested in finding out about the spiritual woman of the earlier period. By keeping in mind the differentiation between the natures of women and men, then in historical context, it turns out to be logical that the spiritually eminent females do not come into view as

significantly as male teachers. It is the temperament of woman to carry out her work in a more invisible manner.⁷⁸ Woman are just judged as mother or sisters or spouses of the members of a Sufi order, but women have done much more to educate and train the distinguished male Sufis throughout the history.⁷⁹ But the area in that woman Sufis most grew is probably the Muslim Indian subcontinent.⁸⁰

A Sufi Princess, Jahanara;

She was very much inclined to Sufism and is the creator of biographical works on historical and existing Sufi Sufis of her age. She was a devotee of Muin-ud-din Chishti, and wrote his biography. Her biography is highly appreciated and regarded for its literary excellence and opinion. The addendum and final endings of the writing communicate the author's personal involvement in Sufi performances. She paid her great tribute to Muin-ud-din Chishti by openly regarding him as the highest Sufi saint of India, and also as the master who instigated her even more than four centuries after his passing away. We locate the word *faqira* (the feminine form of *faqir*) in her biographical work that she makes use of for her own self to denote her spiritual talent as a Sufi woman. She is buried in a small white marble tomb, outside the shrine of the Chishti saint Nizam-ud-din Awliya in Delhi. The inscription on grave read as follows:

“He is the Living, the Sustaining.
Let no one cover my grave except with greenery,
For this very grass suffices as a tomb for the poor.
The annihilated faqir Lady Jahanara,
Disciple of the Lords of Chishti.”⁸¹

She writes about her attendance at saint's shrine and expresses her feelings in this biography *Munis-ul- Arwah*, “My sincerity and love demand that after having come to such a place of sanctity and a corner of safety, I stay here, but I must return to my house.” Princes' writing asserts that how Chishti Sufi shrines provided the source of protection for a woman by giving them strong emotional strength.⁸²

Bibi Fatima Sam;

She is one of the modest and devout woman disciples of the period. She is revealed many times in the conversations of Nizam-ud-din Awliya and his disciples. Even Nizam-ud-din was used to mediate at her shrine regularly. Once Baba Farid said, “Fatima Sam is a man sent in the form of woman.”⁸³ She was the contemporary of Baba Farid's. It is said of her that she used to teach that offering water to the thirsty and providing food for the hungry “was more meritorious than hundreds and thousands of prayers and many days spent in fasting.” Nizam-ud-din had great esteem and care for that woman saint of his time and he accustomed to offer his prayers on a regular basis at her final place of rest. Her shrine was a well-liked visiting location for the Delhi's Sufis.⁸⁴

5—Chishtiya Order In Modern Times:

Beyond Subcontinent i.e., in Europe, South Africa, USA and Australia.

Sufism has affected other mystical structures worldwide. Walter Stace writes in his book *Teachings of the Mystics*, “that in all, there are about a hundred Christian mystics in Europe, while Islam has produced millions...”⁸⁵ Near the mid of the 20th century, we discovered fairly a number of Sufi activities and related organizations ascending in North America and Europe.⁸⁶ Chishtiya Sufism’s doctrine of compassion and respect for all was not only embraced wholeheartedly in the subcontinent rather it was equally welcomed in other parts of the world.

Hazrat Inayat Khan (July 5, 1882- February 5, 1927) originator of the Chishti Sufi Order and Sufi Movement in the Western World (particularly in **France and America**). He moved toward to the West as an envoy of numerous musical mores which he inherited from his aboriginal Indian soil. As a Sufi master he had an inventive attitude which enabled him to balancing the Western and Eastern mystical rituals. He devoted his initial life to the mastery of the workings of classical Indian music.

On 1910 Inayat Khan inaugurated a mystical mission over three continents. He in the long run established himself in Suresnes, a district of **Paris**. Throughout his sixteen years in the West, he shaped a school of mystical teaching consisted the long-established traditions and wisdom of the Chishti Order.

His family is sustained performing their father's teaching function. Contemporary Sufi intellectuals and educators maintain that he was one of the first personalities who conveyed the Sufi wisdom of the East to a Western audience imbedding a seed for its more development in future generations, like a function which had also been performed by spiritual teachers such as G. I. Gurdjieff, the Greek-Armenian spiritualist.⁸⁷

In present times the famous Sufi of Chishtiya Order is Shah Shahid Ullah Faridi of the scholarly family of **England** who accompanied by his family accepted Islam in 1937, stimulated by “Kashf al-Mahjub” of Ali Hujwari. They were ultimately began their spiritual journey in the Chishtiya Order. He worked hard for eighteen years, accomplished the Chishti spiritual course and was hired in 1955 as a Deputy (Khalifa) of his master to direct others. He founded spiritual foundations in many foreign states. He conveyed his task of spreading Chishti Philosophy for twenty three years. He was the writer of several research papers and books on Sufism.⁸⁸

About 1895, Nasirud-din Chiragh Delhi, ordered Shaykh Habib Ali Shah to send his pupil Shah Gulam Muhammad Habib, to impart the embryonic Muslim population in **Natal, South Africa**. It had long and permanent aftermaths for the Muslims of that area. This transported the traditions and wisdom of Chishti masters to a place quite remote from its original native country. Shah Gulam Muhammad Habib became recognized in South Africa as Hazrat Soofi Saheb. He continuously worked hard to a sequence of Islamic schools and mosques, mainly in Natal and, in less than fourteen years he built ten mosques there, one in nearby Lesoto, and one in Cape Town. He laid great stress on the upkeep of the orphans, so apart from schools, he founded orphanages. He had been liable for the upkeep of more than 1000 orphans throughout his life time in South Africa. He initiated religious schooling for Muslims in penitentiaries. His devoted work made him very respectable and loveable amongst the public at large and, there were members

of the black community who adopted Islam because of his teachings. Mahatma Gandhi is said to have been a recurrent visitor to his cloister. Notwithstanding all the disturbances in South Africa since his death in 1910, most of the schools and mosques he originated are still operational. Today, his offspring, maintain advocating the family practice of providing service to the public around. Muslims and non-Muslims pay a visit to his shrine to pursue spiritual revitalization and peace from the mystical ambiance around the tomb.⁸⁹

Similarly, *And The Sky is not the Limit* (1993) by Amatullah Armstrong Chishti, is An Australian Woman's Spiritual Journey contained by the mystical traditions. The account is an autobiography which unfolds a Western woman's hunt for the truth, from her childhood in **Australia**, through many nations and along many tracks up until her happenstance with Islam and finally embracing it. She preferred to follow the Chishtiya Sufi School of thought to understand the inner dimension of Islam. That reflects her admiration and understanding of Chishti's teachings of love. 1999-2000, after a brief visit to Australia she returned to Pakistan for an lengthy period of research where she got direct knowledge of the lives of the great Chishti Sufis and their shrines in India and Pakistan.⁹⁰

She has recently produced *Sufi Terminology (Al-Qamus Al-Sufi): The Mystical Language of Islam*⁹¹ which is a unique book of its own kind. Basically it is a dictionary compiled by her. It gives a detail definitions and meaning of terminologies which are used in Islamic mysticism. This Sufi dictionary (Qamus) indeed helps in comprehending the Sufi terms or expressions well. Because of this helping glossary researchers of Islamic Sufism can easily preserve the originality of the subject matter by keeping particular Sufi terms in their writings as it is with their nearer meanings.

Today, the leading Sufi Order in Indian subcontinent is the Chishtiya Order which is renowned for winning the hearts of spiritually hungry people through their divine insight and a message of love and peace. All the great Chishti Sufis were men of extensive learning. Their monasteries were often filled by distinguished scholars, occasionally even foreigners. They were men of wide culture, lover of music and poetry, and poet themselves. All this marks them out as a grand figure of liberal culture. Their teachings were quite basic and simple and that were preached with such approach that was universal in nature. The evidence of the universality of their message and their role as teachers is that, that throughout all the centuries since their death, their shrines in Indo-Pakistan soil are visited by inestimable Muslims and numerous thousands of Hindus who recognize their high spiritual position. All the year around, every day, as in their life time, gifts of food from the prosperous, flood into the hands of their descendants, only to be cooked in giant cauldrons, and redistributed to the poor before the end of the day. Today, in the age of globalization mankind is starving for spiritual food that is in the hands of mysticism. The entire mechanism of human endeavour has been geared to supply food for the body, but nothing is done to feed the soul that is starving and hence restless. This explains the phenomena of universal stress, agitation, confrontations and conflicts that have ragged the world into various segments.

End Notes

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- ²⁰Islam, *Sufism in South Asia*, 252-54 and 266.
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- ²²*Ibid.*, 198.
- ²³Schimmel, *Mystical Dimension*, 346.
- ²⁴Haeri, *TheChishtis*, 30.
- ²⁵*Ibid.*, 93.
- ²⁶*Ibid.*, 118.
- ²⁷*Ibid.*, 21-22.
- ²⁸*Ibid.*, 32 and 22.
- ²⁹*Ibid.*, 33.

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