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SHADES OF SUFISM IN MEDIEVAL INDIA: EXPLORING QĀDĪ HAMĪD AL-DĪN NAGAWRĪ AS A SUHRAWARDIYYAH SUFI WITH CHISHTIYYAH OUTLOOK

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Abstract

The Sufis or the institution of the Sufism, with its multiple shades, has indisputably made a profound impact on the society, culture and politics of the medieval Indian subcontinent. The sustenance of the religious, cultural and ethnic diversity with a peaceful ambience and the maintenance of the pluralistic makeup, brotherhood and tolerance owe significantly a debt to the Sufis and their doctrines of egalitarianism, love, exhibition of sublime moral behaviour and unconditional service to the humanity. Embracing over a millennium, the historical development of *Taṣawwuf*/Sufism, in the Indian subcontinent offers a fascinating and varied range of expressions from Sufi spiritual rituals/practices through expression of ideas/experiences by means of exhaustive prose and subtle poetry to the relation (aversion as well as affiliation) with the society and politics. Pertinently, exploring the biographies and contributions of the prominent Sufis of regional or national importance with a focus on their interrelationships, ideas, thoughts and outlook toward the society and politics accrue considerable significance in relation to a holistic understanding of the impact of *Taṣawwuf*/Sufism on the Indian society.

Of the important themes, pertaining Sufis, Sufism or Sufi discipline, is the interconnectedness and interrelation between the subscribers or representatives of the different Sufi Orders. Initiation or subscription of a Sufi in a particular Sufi Order or a multitude of Orders simultaneously or nature of the relation of Sufis belonging to diverse Orders or changing of one's outlook or affiliation in relation to a specific Sufi Order, count to some important themes that help in understanding the different shades of Sufism in medieval India. With this backdrop, the current study humbly endeavours to bring forward the biography of an eminent Sufi of medieval India, belonging to the *Suhrawardiyyah* fraternity, namely, Qāḍī Ḥamīd al-Dīn Nagawrī (d. 1246 C.E) –a disciple of Shaykh Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī. The study will make an attempt to explain the plausible reasons for his inclination toward the *Chishtiyyah* fraternity and its practices despite his being a *Suhrawardiyyah* Sufi thereby, displaying the varied shades of Medieval Indian Sufism.

Introduction

With Multan as its first stronghold during the thirteenth century, the *Suhrawardiyyah* Sufi fraternity was copiously propounded in the Indian subcontinent by Shaykh Bahā' al-Dīn Zakariyya Multānī, his progeny and spiritual descendants or successors, of whom the Uch branch, under the guidance of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Bukhārī (Makhdūm Jahāniyān), gained unparalleled prominence during fourteenth century. Later on, this order spread to various other parts of the subcontinent embracing many prominent states, towns and cities like Gujarat, Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Kashmir and Delhi.

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