

## Religio- Spiritual Ethos of Kashmir: An Assessment of the Links from Central Asia and Iran, its Impact and Competence

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**Abstract:** The Valley of Kashmir shares its immaculate religio-cultural ethos with Central Asia and Iran since beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> Century A.D. With The expansion of Islam beyond Arabia in 712 A.D, it was the territory of *Mawara al-Nahr* (Transoxiana) including *Faras* (Persia or Iran) that came in contact with Islam immediately during the Umayyad rule in Arabia (661-750 A.D). From Central Asia and Iran, Islam entered Kashmir in around 1320 A.D, although some evidences of Muslim entrance are being traced earlier before. Hence, Islam's contact with Kashmir has been possible through the links maintained through Central Asia and Persia. The efforts of the eminent Sufis and Scholars, whose mission of introducing Islam has been through love and with the message of peaceful-coexistence, played a significant role for the cultivation of the religio-spiritual ethos in this land. The scholarly treatises on Quranic '*Ulum, Hadith and Fiqh* compiled by Central Asian and Persian scholars, *Aurad –o- Wazaif* transmitted by eminent mystics like Sheikh'Abd al-Rehman Bulbul (d.1326 A.D), Mir Syed 'Ali Hamadhani (1314-84 A.D) and galaxy of Sufis and scholars along with the poetic expressions of Jalal-u-din Rumi (1207-73 A.D), 'Abd al-Rahman Jama'i (1414-92A.D), Sheikh Sa'adi Shirazi (1210-91 A.D) have deep penetration into both Kashmir's soil as well as in to the Souls. The Central Asian and Persian influence could be seen even today in various aspects of social, cultural and religious aspects. As a matter of fact, Central Asia and Iran, that way, have enormously contributed to establish a much wider and secure base for the cultivation of the Islamic Sufic cum Mystic tradition in Kashmir. The efforts and Sufi expressions of Sheikh Nur Din Wali (1377-1440 A.D) as well as of local renowned Sufis, Rishis and Scholars since 14<sup>th</sup> century A.D had been undoubtedly significant. This chain of pious souls from and within paved the way for the academic and mystic relationship of Kashmir worldwide. These links and unrelenting impact from Central Asia and Iran is a tremendous academic debate that needs fresh research and concentration. The present paper, as such, will highlight the significance of these scholarly and mystic links and explore the possibilities of further advanced research in this direction.

**Keywords:** Mystic expressions, *Aurad*, Transoxiana, Influx, Interwoven culture, *Wazaif*, Ethos, Treatises

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### I. TASAWUF (MYSTICISM): ETYMOLOGY

The term mysticism is often taken up in accord with the term *Tasawuf*. '*Tasawuf*' is an Arabic term and, as it is affirmed, has its origin in the 'wearing of the rough wool' (*suf*).<sup>1</sup> It is also narrated to be a derivative from '*Safa*' which means piety. In the given context, The Sufis are also known as '*Faqirs*' and '*Dervishes*' in the Indo-Pak subcontinent, Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey and Central Asia.<sup>2</sup> Both the words, '*Suf*' and '*Safa*' originally denote the concept of divinely ordained people who gave up the worldly material tastes to attain the salvation. The Prophet Muhammad's (S.A.W) Companions who are known as the *Ashab-i-Suffa* (The people of Veranda) are also believed to be the first Sufis who took a particular sitting in Masjid al-Nabawi at Medina for offering the service towards the righteous path (*Sirat al-Mustaqim*). All the above references denote character of a God fearing group of people who lived a simple virtuous life for attainment of the eternal salvation (*Najah*). These people believed in being pure (*Mutaqi*), patient (*Sabir*) and poor (*Faqir*), having less involvement in the matters of worldly importance and having a passion for collective good in this life and hereafter (*Falah-i-Daren*). They always considered this world as the prison (*Sijn*) and tried to set together all the possible efforts to move towards the eternal solace (*Na'yiem*). Sufis do not constitute a separate sect in Islam, but can be found within both the *Sunni* and *Shi'a* sects throughout the Islamic history. The following Quranic verse, therefore, facilitates the evolution of the Sufi concept: "The day on which property will not avail, nor sons; except him who comes to Allah with a sound heart (*Qalb- i- Saliem*)".<sup>3</sup> Making this and other relevant Quranic verses and

*Ahadith* as the base for this path, Sufism, could be identified as a course for the attainment of Allaha's pleasure and immortal association (*Baqa bi Allah*) with Him.<sup>4</sup>

Historically speaking, Sufism has encompassed a wide gradation, ranging from devoutly orthodox Muslims to mystics who viewed their connection with Islam as little more than incidental. The Sufis stress the supreme importance of religious experience, and distinguish themselves among Muslims by their insistence that experience of God (*Ma'rifah*) can be achieved in this life through extreme devotion and love. Sheikh Ahmad Zarruq, a 15<sup>th</sup> century *Shadhili* Sufi master, wrote in his major work " *Qawa'id al-Tasawwuf* (Principles of Tasawuf):

"Sufism is a science ('*Ilm*) whose objective is the reparation of the heart (*Qalb*) and turning it away from all else but God."<sup>5</sup>

Sheikh Ahmad bin Abija a famous Moroccan Sufi in the Darqawi lineage, defined Sufism as:

"A Science through which one can know how to travel into the presence of the Divine, purify one's inner self from filth, and beautify it with a variety of praiseworthy traits."<sup>6</sup>

## II. GENESIS AND GRADUAL EXPANSION

During the Islam's first century A.H, the Muslims found themselves in possession of a vast empire, and, living off tribute money from the conquered, they "surrounded themselves with captive concubines and slaves, and lived on a scale of luxury unknown to their ancestors."<sup>7</sup> The movement of protest against this worldliness ultimately resulted in both the legalistic and mystical/philosophical schools of thought in Islam. For early Islamic ascetics, fear of eternal punishment in hell, was the primary incentive to piety (*Taqwa*). Eventually, however, a fervent love for God, displayed by such early Islamic saints as Rabbi'a al-Adawiya (d.801 A.D) became a central theme, and provided a basis for emerging Islamic mysticism. Professor E.G. Browne notes that early Sufism was characterized by ... ascetism, quietism, intimate and personal love of God, and disparagement of mere lip service or formal worship.<sup>8</sup>

The gnostic influences began to appear in some expressions of Islamic spirituality after at least two centuries after Prophet Muhammad's (S.A.W) demise. Junayd Baghdadi, (d. 910), was especially instrumental in the shaping of Sufism into a pantheistic system (*Wahdah*). He wrote: "Whatever attains to True Being is absorbed into God and becomes God."<sup>9</sup> Another Persian, Mansur al-Hallaj (d. 922 A.D), executed for blasphemy, became celebrated as *Shaheed* (martyr) among medieval Sufis, particularly Persian poets. Al-Hallaj, who traveled extensively and developed quite a following, scandalized the orthodox with statements like "*An al-Haq*" (I am the Truth). Quietism(*Tark al-Duniya*), with its emphasis that God is all that matters and man is merely an instrument in His hands ('*Aqidah al-Jabr*), provided fertile ground for the pantheistic beliefs that God is all there is, and man and the phenomenal world are merely shadows or emanations of His being(*Wujud*).<sup>10</sup>

### 2.1 Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali

The most important figure in the history of Sufism is Imam al-Ghazali (d. 1111 A.D). Prior to his appearance, Sufism's success had been partial.<sup>11</sup> To be sure, it had become a powerful force among the common people, as it offered a more personal and emotionally satisfying approach to religion than that exhibited and prescribed by the orthodox interpreters of the Qur'an.<sup>12</sup> However, it had not won acceptance from the religious establishment. The theologians ('*Ulama*) and legalists (*Fuqaha*) had gone to great pains to develop an orthodox interpretation of the faith that would protect it from heretical innovation.<sup>13</sup> They perceived that the Sufi's emphasis on experience as a superior source of truth, and their tendency to neglect legal prescriptions, could lead to the corruption of Islam."<sup>14</sup> Al-Ghazali, by the age of 33 was appointed a professor in Nizamiyah of Baghdad, where he became recognized as an authority '*Hujjat al-Islam*'. In spite of his success, al-Ghazali entered a period of spiritual crisis and concerning this he wrote in his autobiography, *Al-Munqz min al-dhalal* (Deliverance from Error):

"I examined my motive in my work of teaching, and realized that it was not a pure desire for the things of God, but that the impulse moving me was the desire for an influential position and public recognition."<sup>15</sup>

In 1095 A.D, al- Ghazali became a wandering ascetic, returning to the Sufism of his youth.<sup>16</sup> He spent 11 years in meditation and retirement, until a Sultan persuaded him to teach again. In the public teachings and writings which followed his retirement, al-Ghazali set forth a synthesis of orthodox theology and mysticism.<sup>17</sup> His greatest work, *Ahya al-'Ulum al-Din* (*The Revivification of the Religious Sciences*), argues that only the Sufi emphasis on inner devotion can fulfill the strict demands of the Qur'an.<sup>18</sup> Al-Ghazali's arguments did much to relieve the hostility and suspicion that had developed between the '*Ulama* and the *Sufis*.<sup>19</sup> His synthesis resulted in a large measure of tolerance between the legalists and the mystics. The two traditions came to regard each other as having necessary roles to fulfill within the larger Islamic community.<sup>20</sup>

## 2.2 Muhyudin Ibn al-‘Arabi

Another significant Sufi from the same era is Ibn al-‘Arabi (d.1240 A.D).<sup>21</sup> Raised by a Sufi family in Spain that had been under Muslim control for more than 400 years, Ibn al-‘Arabi studied law and Islamic theology before establishing himself as one of Sufism’s greatest poets and esoteric philosophers.<sup>22</sup> He created a Sufi literature which did much to promote the cause of Islamic mysticism in many world cultures.<sup>23</sup> While al- Ghazali stayed within an outwardly orthodox framework, Ibn al-Arabi offered a clearly monistic, Gnostic system.<sup>24</sup> His commentary on the Quran is a *tour de force* of esoteric interpretation.<sup>25</sup> With Ibn al-‘Arabi the emphasis on the Sufi path got “shifted from moral self-control to metaphysical knowledge” with its sequence of psychological ascent to the ‘Perfect Man’ (*Insan al-Kamil*) the microcosm in whom the One is manifested to Himself.” In his treatise, *Fusus al-Hikm (Bezels of Wisdom)* Ibn al- ‘Arabi explains:

“When you know yourself, your ‘I’ness vanishes and you know that you and God are one and the same.”<sup>27</sup>

Ibn al-‘Arabi’s poetic usage of erotic language to signify the relationship of the soul with God set the tone for much of medieval Sufism. Poetry became a favorite medium of expression, the imagery sometimes becoming so sensuous that it is difficult to distinguish whether the “*Beloved*” being referred to is heavenly or earthly.”<sup>28</sup> The influence of Ibn al-‘Arabi could be seen in Kashmiri Mystic poets of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century including Shamas Faqir, Rahim Sopori, Such Kral, Wahab Khaar and Ahad Zargar.

## 2.3 Jalal- u- Din Rumi

The most important of the Sufi poets is Jalaluddin Rumi (d. 1273 A.D).<sup>29</sup> During his youth, he settled in Asia Minor where he taught, and wrote his expressions of poetry in Persian. Jalal-u-Din Rumi was as much an esotericist as Ibn al-‘Arabi.<sup>30</sup> He held that the teachings of the Qur’an are allegorical, having seven different meanings. The description of his search for God, which he gives in the following excerpt from one of his poems, reveals his gnostic and pantheistic convictions:

“Cross and Christian, from end to end I surveyed, He was not on the cross. I went to the idol temple, to the ancient pagoda, No trace was visible there. I bent the reins of search to the *Kabah*, He is not in that resort of old and young. I gazed into my own heart; there I saw him, he was nowhere else, in the whirl of its transport my spirit was tossed, till each atom of separate being I lost”.<sup>31</sup>

As a matter of fact, the impact of these philosophies could be seen in the Sufi and poetic expressions of Central Asian, Persian as well as in the esoteric personalities.<sup>32</sup>

## III. FROM CENTRAL ASIA AND IRAN TO KASHMIR

The role of *Tasawuf* in the expansion of Islam is meticulous and flexible in terms of religious materiality. This characteristic of Sufism attracted the *Bedawi* (nomadic people) of mid-western Asia (mainly the current Iranic and Turkic republics of Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kashmir, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan).<sup>33</sup> Sufism also spread quickly among the Anatolian and Azerbaijani Turkmen and among the Balkan peoples of modern Albania, Bosnia, Macedonia, and Bulgaria.<sup>34</sup> With this context and historicity, Islamic Mysticism (*Tassawuf*) entered Kashmir through the missionaries and influx from Central Asia and Iran during the 14<sup>th</sup> century A.D. The history of Sufism in Kashmir is spread over a long period of time starting from Bulbul Shah (d.1326 A.D) to the Sufi poets. Sufi saints are still inspiring people of Kashmir by their subtle mystical insights indicated the teachings of the medieval Sufi masters. The Suhrawardi, Naqashbandi and Qadri Sufi Orders have also played a great role in the process of Islamisation in Kashmir from 14<sup>th</sup> century onwards. Islam came to Kashmir via Central Asia and later on was accommodated within the Kashmiri ethos, which shaped the diverse factors of Sufism here over a large period of time. The Sufism appeared in Kashmir with the emergence of *Khanqahs* and *Silsilahs* had taken form for the spiritual enlightenment. Simultaneously, with the foundation of Muslim rule in Kashmir (720 A.H/1320 A.D), Sufism was introduced within the Islamic teachings without any separate identity. Still, there are evidences that Islam had made its inroads long before the establishment of Muslim rule in Kashmir. But there is no doubt that the systematic and well-organized Sufi activities began only towards the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Hence forward, Sufis like Syed ‘Ali Hamadani (1314-84 A.D), among his renowned works, *Aurad-i-Fatahiyah* is still intoning in almost all the mosques of the Kashmir valley. His son, Mir Muhammad Hamadhani (1372-1450 A.D), Syed Jamal-u-Din Bukhâri and Syed Ismai‘l Shami began to enter Kashmir in quick succession during 16<sup>th</sup> century. Under instructions of his father, Mir Mumammad Hamadhani did not sever his relations from Kashmir but entered into two marriages to strengthen them, and thus set up two links, spiritual as well as material. He completed work of his father and stayed here for eleven years. Like his father, he took great pains in sinking down the Islamic faith and the removal of un-Islamic practices, rites, and beliefs from the Kashmiri Muslims. His efforts resulted in the blooming of Islamic mysticism, based on Sunni tradition. He observed *Shariah* more than the *Tariqah* (Intrinsic).<sup>35</sup>

The mystic experiences of the Central Asian and Persian masters have been highly a motivating factor in Kashmiri Sufism. One important ideological framework, which can be discerned running through the all activities of foreign and local Sufis and mystics in Kashmir, was based mainly on the works of Ibn ‘Arabi (d.1240 A.D ), Junayd al-Baghdadi (d.910 A.D), Bayazid Bistami (804-74 A.D ) and Farid Din ‘Attar’s (1145-1220 A.D ) explanation of the Sufi expressions.<sup>36</sup> In the given context, the Kashmiri Sufis seem to have taken little notice of Sheikh ‘Alaud-Din Simnani’s (1436 A.D) criticism of *Wahdat-al-Wajud* (Unity of Being) of Ibn al-‘Arabi. A different trend, which emerged after the coming of the Sufis from Persia and Central Asia, was the crude synchronized form of it, which came to force with the development of an indigenous Sufi order known as the *Rishism*.<sup>37</sup> The *Wahdat-al-Wajud* (Unity of Being) philosophy was advocated by almost all Sufis in Kashmir, including the famous ‘Kubrawi, Sufi Mir Syed ‘Ali Hamadani (1314-1384), who was an adherent advocate of the same philosophy. Although, Mir Syed ‘Ali’s teacher ‘Alaudin Simnani was fiercely opposed to the theory of *Wahdat-al-Wajud*. He wrote a tract in opposition of the *Wajudi* doctrine, entitled as *Risala-i-Wujudiyya*, in which he refuted this doctrine as a religious scholar. He also wrote two commentaries on Ibn al-‘Arabi’s acclaimed *Fusus-al-Hikam* (Bezels of Wisdom).<sup>38</sup> The *Rishi Silsilas* depict the typical local Sufi tradition that popularized the lore of Islam in Kashmir.<sup>39</sup> In the words of Sheikh Nur Din Wali (1377-1440 A.D), often known as ‘*Alamdār-i-Kashmir*, The Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) was the first *Rishi* and Owais al-Qarni the second one, then a series of *Rishi*’s from time to time including Sheikh Nur Din himself.<sup>40</sup> In this way Sheikh Nur Din traces the origin of *Rishism* from early days of Islam, with a proper scheme of succession of ‘Master’ and ‘Disciple’; *Pir* and *Murid*.

### 3.1 Systematic Efforts of Sufis for Islamization in Kashmir

The systematic efforts for mass conversion towards Islam took place during 14<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Here in Kashmir, The Turkish Scholar and Sufi Syed Sharf-u-Din ‘Abdur Rahman, (d.1326 A.D), popularly known as Bulbul Shah, was given the title of Bilal, because his extreme love of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W).<sup>41</sup> He was the disciple of the Suharwardi Sufi, Shah Nimatullah Wali Farsi. Bulbul Shah succeeded in attracting to Islam Rinchen Shah (1324 A.D), who was instrumental in popularizing Islam in Kashmir.<sup>42</sup> Parimu Says: “By sheer accident or manipulation, it so happened that Rinchana’s eyes fell on Bulbul Shah, a Muslim *Fakir*, so he became a Muslim and by the entitlement of Bulbul Shah, adopted the name Sultan Sadrudin”.<sup>43</sup> It is also affirmed that after Rinchen Shah came to the throne, he held discussions with both Hindu and Buddhist priests in order to ascertain truth but none could satisfy him. Finally, he decided to accept the religion of the first person that he should see the next morning. That person was Syed Sharf- u- Din, commonly known as Bulbul Shah, a Suharwardi Saint, who at that time was offering prayers near the royal palace. Rinchen keenly watched him offering prayers and was highly impressed. He immediately went to him, and after inquiring about his religion, accepted Islam. Thus Bulbul Shah, the first Suharwardi Sufi, was able to convert Rinchana to Islam apart from some 10,000 converts, including Rawanchandra, the brother-in-law of Rinchana. Rinchana, in turn, granted the revenues of certain villages to Bulbul Shah for his maintenance and also built a *Khanqah* for him near his own palace.<sup>44</sup> Attached to the *Khanqah* was a large *Langer-Khanah* (kitchen) known as *Bulbul Lankar*, where the poor were fed free of cost twice a day. A mosque was also built near the hospice by Rinchen Shah, and now onwards got the title Sultan Sadr-u-Din, the name given to him by Bulbul Shah.<sup>45</sup> Though Prof. Rafiqui attributes Rinchen’s conversion to Islam, to “political reasons”, but the real motive behind the conversion seems to be spiritual yearning of the king rather the “political expediency.”<sup>46</sup> Thus the first Suharwardi Sufi, of whom we have any record to have entered Kashmir, was Bulbul Shah, who by converting the king to Islam increased the prestige of Islam and led to the acceptance of the new faith by some of the nobles and, according to one tradition, by 10,000 inhabitants of the Valley. Bulbul Shah led a life of complete self-abnegation and preached against superstitious and charlatans widely prevalent amongst the Kashmir’s of that period. As part of the missionary activities here, he helped the poor, and showed immense love towards the down trodden. With the result the hearts of the common people got the momentum as well as an exciting chance to went over to Islam.<sup>47</sup>

### 3.2 Sufi Missionaries and their activities

Henceforth, During the reign of Sultan Zain al- ‘Abidin, (1420-70 A.D), commonly known in Kashmir as *Budshah* (The Great King), another Suharwardi saint, Saiyid Muhammad Isfahani, (or Rifai, b. 735 / 840) arrived in Kashmir from Central Asia.<sup>48</sup> He was the disciple of Syed Jalāluddin Bukhârî of Uch, popularly called Makhdum Jahaniyan (1308-84 A.D). Syed Muhammad lived a life of retirement. He first took up his residence in Srinagar and later on entered the village of Khanpur in Baramullah. Since he applied himself to the most austere spiritual exercises, he is known as *Janbaz* (one who stakes his life). It is said that he came to Kashmir with about 150 saints and entered into Kashmir, from Shopian in 827A.H/1421 A.D. He was very fond of providing food to the poor from his *Langar*; the place where he stayed was called Khanpur, originally ‘*Khawanpur*’ meaning “a place of eating”. He established a preaching centre in Baramullah and constructed a

mosque and an *Eid-gah* as well. The other Suharwardi Sufi who came to Kashmir is Syed Ahmad Kirmani who came to Kashmir during the reign of Sultan Nazuk Shah (1529-30, 1540-52 A.D). A *Khanqah* was built for him at Narwara, in Srinagar and an annual grant was assigned to it from the State revenue for the maintenance of his *Langar*. Among his disciples was Baba Mas'ud, popularly known as "*Narwar Sahib*". Another important Suharwardi Sufi was Syed Jamaludin Bukhâri, who arrived in Kashmir in the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and carried the message of Islam to far off areas of Kashmir.<sup>49</sup>

Among his disciples, was Sheikh Hamzah Makhdum, born in (900/1494 A.D) at Tujar, a village near Sopore. Syed Jamaluddin, before his departure from Kashmir, gave the Sheikh authority to enroll disciples into the Suharwardi order. Syed Jamaluddin Bukhari's memorial is still in Mohalla Shalpora Sopore along with some other prominent memorials of Sheikh Bilal and *Saadat-i- Gilaniyah* both in Mohalla Kralteng Sopore. The land for the Construction of the Mosque in Mohalla Kralteng and *Khanqah* was provided and arranged by Khawja Ab.Gaffar Dar on advice of his father Khawja Ab.Razaq Dar, whose ancestry and genealogy is traced from Zabarvan area of Srinagar. The Tombs of Syed Sultan in Mohalla Arampora and Baba Yusuf Bukhari in Mohalla Baba Yusuf Sopore also exhibit evidence of the missionary activities in this area. In addition to this, the *Khanqahas* of the famous Sufi's, Mir Syed 'Ali Hamadhani, Mir Muhammad Hamadhani, Sheikh 'Abd al-Qadir Jilani and Mir Syed Ahmad Kirmani have been constructed here for the spiritual enlightenment alongside with the river Jhelum. The tomb of Syed Mir Hassan Qumi at Saidapora Sopore, the memorial of Khawja Hassan Qari and his brother Khawja Ishaq Qari, the disciples of Sheikh Hamzah Makhdum at Hardshiva Sopore is also an evidence of the Sufi missionary zeal during the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Baba Payam-u-Din Rishi's spiritual instructor, Baba Shakur-u-Din Wali at Watlab also remained a source of inspiration for the attainment of enlightenment. The missionary zeal of these people has resulted in strengthening the process of enlightenment in Sopore, Zainagir and Khoihama (Bandipora) areas.<sup>49</sup>

Sheikh Hamzah considered the *Zikr* (Remembrance of the name of Allah) to be medicine for the ailment of the heart on the one hand and strongly disapproved of *Sama*' (music) on the other. Sheikh Hamza is popularly known in Kashmir as *Mahbulul Alam* (beloved of the world). He died in 984 A.H/1576 A.D. He was buried on the slope of *Koh-i-Maran* in Srinagar, where in his lifetime he used to spend hours in meditation. Sheikh Hamzah Makhdum called upon people to lead a virtuous life, pay the religious taxes and acquire knowledge. Among the disciplines of Sheikh Hamzah are Sufi's like, Baba Dawud Khaki, Maulana Shamsu-din Pal, Khawaja Ishaq Qari, Khawaja Hasan Qari and Baba Haidar Tulmuli.<sup>50</sup>

Sheikh Yaqoub Sarfi (d.1594 A.D) was a great '*Alim* and Sufi who delivered lectures on Hadith and Arabic language in Makkah and wrote in abundance during this era. His mausoleum is in Zaina Kadal, Srinagar, also known as *Ziyarat-i-Ieshan*. Another distinguished figure was Baba Dawud Khaki (d.1585A.D). He is author of a number of books like *Dastur-u- Salikin*, *Vird al-Murdidin*, *Qasida-i-Jalaliyyah* etc. Baba Dawud was an outstanding poet as well. His Persian Sufi poetry and exoteric expressions are still intone across the valley. Baba Dawud approved the *Sama* (Music), which was denounced by his teacher Sheikh Hamza and the other Suhrawardi Sufis. He argued that *Sama*, stimulates love when heard within the limits prescribed by the Sufi masters. He upheld *Zikr-i-Qalbi* (inward remembrance of God), and believed that the latter was meant for beginners alone. Like, the Suharwardi Sufis, he believed that the renouncement of the world did not mean that one should go naked or wear a *Longota*, (the narrow strip of cloth). Renunciation in fact demands nothing but sincerity on the part of the devotee; wealth in itself was no obstacle to the mystical path.<sup>51</sup>

#### IV. PROMINENT ORDERS (*SILSILAS*) AND THEIR EFFORTS

Although, there has been involvement and generous efforts of so many people behind the Islamization of Kashmir, but the role of organized Sufi Orders could not be underestimated. These activities paved the way for an abundant successful result and also strengthened the course of Sufi *Silsilas* in Kashmir. The Naqashbandi order was introduced in Kashmir during the reign of Sultan Sikander (1389-1413A.D). It made its presence felt with the advent of Khawaja Mahmud towards the close of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>52</sup> Syed Hilal (d.861A.H/1457A.D) introduced Naqashbandi order in Kashmir. Syed Hilal left only one disciple, named Mir Syed Amin, popularly known in Kashmir as "*Wusi-Sahib*". He led a life of retirement at Asham (Sonawari/Bandipora). After the death of Saiyid Hilal, Saiyid Amin moved to Srinagar and confined himself to a room near *Koh-i-Maran*. Saiyid Amin seems to be an ardent advocate of the doctrine of *Wahdat ul-Wujud* (Unity of Being).<sup>53</sup> Some of his verses seem very pertinent to be quoted. For example, "The world and the man of the world one endowed with the essence of the Eternal, if you look deeply (you) look deeply (you) will find everything in the human being". He says further, "The entire Universe is with me. My abode is beyond *lamakan* (space-less world). O '*alim* (religious scholar)! My body is (itself) a universe. Know! The soul of universe is my soul."<sup>54</sup> He was a broad-minded Sufi, above all religious prejudices. He says, "Do not scorn infidelity to those who have found out truth, it is not different from faith". Again he says, "To an *arif* (Gnostic) the difference between the mosque and temple are meaningless. Men endowed with spiritual eminence, find both good and even identical". About the mystical union with God, he says, "I want *visal*, (union). I do not want either this world or the other. I

worship God; I do not worship houses or walls". He was killed in 1484 A.D along with the fifteen members of the family and was later buried at 'Aalikadal, a vicinity in Srinagar.<sup>55</sup>

Another Naqashbandi saint was Khawaja Khawand Mahmud (d.1642 A.D). He did not stay in Kashmir for a long period and soon left for Agra. However, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, he made several visits to Kashmir, and helped in the popularization of Naqashbandi order in Kashmir.<sup>56</sup>

The impact of Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi was reflected on the Sufis of Kashmir also. For example, Sheikh Murad Tang was the disciple of Sheikh 'Abdul Ahad Sarhindi Faruqi, who was the son of Sheikh Ahmad Sarhindi. Apart from this influence, he imbibed impact from Muhammad Yousuf Kawsa, Mulla Abdullah, Khawaja Muhammad Naqashbandi etc. Sheikh 'Ahad Sarhindi came to Kashmir and Sheikh Murad went to Sirhind along with his peer in 1081 AH and returned back to Kashmir after getting complete Sufi training and the latter of authority to initiate others in the order of the Sufis he belonged to. Among his illustrious disciples was Khawaja A'zam Deedah Mari, a famous Kashmiri historian. He remained in the company of his Sheikh for twelve years. Among the novices of Sheikh Murad were other people like Khawaja Sayyid Sharif, who died in 1114 A.H.<sup>57</sup>

Syed Nimatullah Shah Qadri (1587 A.D) introduced the Qadiri order in Kashmir in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Before coming to Kashmir, he was living in India, where he was a disciple of Sheikh Muhammad Dervish Qadiri. **Syed** Nimatullah did not stay long in Kashmir and soon left for India for the spiritual enlightenmen.<sup>58</sup> Among his disciples in Kashmir was Shaykh Mirk Mir. He was the son of one Saiyid Shamsud-din Andrabi, whose ancestors had migrated to Kashmir from Andrab, Khurasan Iran, in the reign of Sultan Sikander (1394 A.D). Shayk Mirak Mir spent most of his time in meditation at a *Khanqah* in Srinagar, known as Khanqah-i-Andrabiyyah. He died in 1582 A.D, and was buried at Mallaratta in Srinagar.<sup>59</sup> Another Qadri saint, who came to Kashmir in 1581 A.D from somewhere in India, was Syed Ismai'l Shami. He did not stay long in Kashmir and also returned to India, but during his brief stay there, he firmly laid the foundation of the *Qadiri Silsilah*.<sup>60</sup> His disciple, Mir Nazuk Niyazi did not approve of the practice of Sama, unlike the first Qadiri saint in Kashmir, Sayyid Nimatullah. He died in 1614 A.D and was buried at Qazi Kadal in Srinagar. His eldest son took up Mir Nazuk's *Khanqah* at Khanyar, in Srinagar and started further efforts for Sufi mission. Mir Yousuf (d. 1617 A.D) who was initiated to the *Qadiri Silsilah* by his father, Mir Muhammad 'Ali (d. 1660 A.D), the third son of Mir Nazuk, popularized the Qadiri order in Kashmir.<sup>61</sup>

Apart from the above Qadri Sufis, mention may be made of Mulla Shah Badakhshani, who stayed in Kashmir for more than 22 years during second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. He was among the disciples of Mian Mir Qadri (1607 A.D).<sup>62</sup> The *Chesti Silsilah* founded by Khawja Mo'in-u- Din Chesti (d. 1236 A.D) got the momentum in Kashmir during the 17<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>63</sup> The '*Ulama* and Sufis of Kashmir considered him a spiritual reference and established spiritual relations with the founder since 17<sup>th</sup> century. The Kashmiri Muslims even today, visit the mausoleum of Khawja Mo'in-u-Din Chesti at Ajmer round the year for spiritual pursuits. In this way the efforts of Suharwardi, (f. Abdul-Wahir Abu Najib as-Suhrawardi (d. 1168), Naqashbandi (f. Baha-u-Din Naqshband (1318–1389 A.D) and Qadri (f. 'Abd al-Qadir Gilini (d. 1166 A.D) Sufis were significant in the matters of religio-social and cultural importance. The interpretation of faith and philosophy in a much broader perspective has been the hallmark of the Sufi and *Rishi Silsilas* (orders) of Kashmir and this faith oriented system has enormously contributed to the enlargement of links across the world on the both spiritual and universal grounds.

## V. CONCLUSION

Islam came to Kashmir by the sincere efforts of '*Ulama* and Sufis who entered to this valley from Central Asia and Persia. Henceforth, the mission of Islamization was further strengthened by *Rishis* belonging to Kashmir. They travelled to far-off regions and popularized the faith of Islam into the local costume. In the given context, Kashmir owns one of the predominant Muslim cultures of the south-Asian region that has a prestigious legacy and an unavoidable religio-spiritual contribution. The Sources and chronicles of the Kashmir history mention and narrate this legacy that has been a part of socio-religious setting from 14th century onwards. This religio- spiritual legacy has been progressive, besides a vibrant force for restructuring demography, society and political scenario in this region. One of the significant aspects of this social evolution is its inevitable impact on academic institutions forming entire structure of seminary education in Kashmir at that time. This change didn't occurred abruptly rather through a gradual process that worked at different levels resulting in the conversion of the then ruling class, elite section and the common people. The sources and writings from times to now differ to trace and treat the impact and influence of Muslim influx upon the Kashmir society. But one thing is stressed by all, that the Sufi missionaries from Central Asia and Persia enormously contributed to the development of a variety of institutions which cultivated for the religio-spiritual growth. The mystical tendencies and transmission of Islamic tradition prevailing in Central Asia and Persia got introduced here due to the migration and the influx of Muslim missionaries during 14<sup>th</sup> century connecting the valley with the Muslim world. In addition to the then prevailing circumstances in Persia and Central Asia, Islam in Kashmir has much to owe to the effort and zeal of

Muslim missionaries who migrated here due to plentiful reasons, settled here and introduced diverse socio-religious institutions alien to the Kashmir society since centuries. This cultural synthesis formed the basis for broadening the canvas of socio-religious and cultural understanding between Kashmir and other dominant cultures especially of Central Asia and Persia. These links, in the contemporary times, as well, can play a vital role for attainment of the peaceful co-existence in a region where a huge population of diverse cultures and ethnicities live together.

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