

Role of Sufism in Personality Development

Thesis for M.Phil Degree in Islamic Thought & Civilization



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Dedication

Dedicated with highest and profoundest respect and deference to **‘SARKAR SYED MUHAMMAD HABIB IRFANI’, THE VENERABLE SAJJADA NASHEEN OF SUNDAR SHARIF** who is a living beacon of light and who, through his personal example & luminous personal qualities, is an epitome of the highest moral standards and who, like the north pole star, is a guide, and a sustainer of moral actions among his followers and disciples.

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ABSTRACT

In the course of nearly five millennia of recorded history, morality or moral values hardly featured in human affairs, at least not during the initial three thousand years. The relation between the ruler and the ruled and that between temple priests and worshippers was based on the unqualified submission of the populace to the demand that were frequently atrocious of the Kings and Priests.

The revealed religions with their inherent content of moral-living and accountability did slightly mitigate the suffering of the masses, but it was not until the advent of the Rasool Allah (SAWW) and his message Islam. That human rights as ensconced in the Charter/Message of Hajja-tul-wida were placed center-stage and given lynch pin status in communal life of Muslims.

Reverting to the scheme of my thesis I have attempted to define orthodox Islam. As a system that radiates round the fear of Almighty Allah. But there was another aspect of Rasool Allah's (SAWW) life and message that was suffused with the love of Almighty Allah and inbuilt in this radiant concept was the righteous/moral way of life quite simply to please Almighty Allah, The Creator.

Sufism/Tariqat or Khanqahi system is founded on this bedrock of love for Almighty Allah and an incessant endeavor to please Him Sufism/Tariqat aims to bring about a positivist change in the motivation, sensibility and thinking of its adherents and transform

them into moral beings. This, Then, is the crux of personality development (Character Building) as envisaged in the context of Sufism which is my present thesis.

The layout of my Thesis is as follows:-

In Chapter one I proceed from an initial discussion of Sufi doctrine and Sufism to presenting its various definitions, history, philosophy and contribution made thereto.

In Chapter two I have tried to establish what constitutes personality development and discuss it within the parameters of both current psychological discourse and in the light of Quranic injunctions, Hadith/Sunna.

In the concluding third chapter I have taken up the role of Sufism in personality development and have attempted to identify key components from the Sufi doctrine that have been adjudged as being indispensable elements in this regard.

Finally, I want to add that I have tried to make my study as comprehensive as possible, but the dearth of relevant material remained a hurdle and any deficiencies here in can be attributed to this factor alone.