



MUSLIM Institute

Mission of Unity, Stability & Leadership In Muslims

Sufism & Peace: Case Study of Indonesia and Pakistan



Round Table Discussion

Sufism & Peace: Case Study of Indonesia & Pakistan

Organised By
MUSLIM Institute

MUSLIM Institute organized a Round Table Discussion “Sufism & Peace: Case Study of Indonesia & Pakistan” on Tuesday, February 27, 2018 at a local hotel in Islamabad. Ambassador (R) Ms. Fauzia Nasreen (Head, CPS, COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Islamabad) chaired the session whereas Mr. Musurifun Lajawa (DHM, Embassy of Indonesia, Islamabad) was chief guest on the occasion. Speakers of the discussion included Mr. Sofiudin (Researcher, Nahdlatul Ulema, Indonesia), Mr. Fathoni Riza (Superintendent, Indonesian National Police), Dr. Tughral Yamin (Associate Dean, CIPS, National University of Science & Technology, Islamabad) and Dr. Mujeeb Ahmad (Chairman, History Dept, International Islamic University, Islamabad). Mr. Ahmad AlQadri (Research Associate MUSLIM Institute) made an introductory presentation whereas Mr. Tahir Mehmood (Public Relations Coordinator, MUSLIM Institute) gave welcome remarks and vote of thanks. Mr. Asif Tanveer Awan Advocate (Research Associate, MUSLIM Institute) moderated the proceedings. Researchers, academicians, students and people from different walks of life participated in the discussion.

Speakers observed as following:



Row 01 (Left to Right): Ms. Fauzia Nasreen, Mr. Musurifun Lajawa, Dr. Tughral Yamin, Dr. Mujeeb Ahmad
Row 02 (Left to Right): Mr. Fathoni Riza, Mr. Sofiudin, Mr. Tahir Mehmood, Mr. Ahmad AlQadri

Tasawuf (Sufism) is an attempt to purify the inner self from shirk stains such as envy, jealousy, falsehood, ostentation and all acts of immorality. Pluralistic vision of Islam manifested by great Sufi saints like Sultan Bahoo holds the key to bridging differences amongst human beings. Sufism negates sectarianism and spreads the message of unity and peace based on the Oneness of God. Iqbal's Message of Peace (Muhabat Fateh-e-Alam) is a testament to Sufism's message of peace and how to rule with love and kindness. Universal faithfulness is a key doctrine of Islam. Countering hate with kindness is the way forward and the necessity of time. Sufis have played a significant and pivotal role in spreading Islam in the Subcontinent as well as Far East. Data Ali Al-Hijweri, Moeen-u-din Ajmeri, Hazrat Sultan Bahoo and Muhammad Iqbal are some of the most dynamic and influential personalities to have taught Sufism and its ideals. Sultan Bahoo, like other Sufis, has always taught a message of unity, peace, harmony, equality and inner peace. Khankahi system is a continuation of such teachings in Pakistan.

Sufis teachings are enshrined with the following principles as described by Iqbal in his presidential address in 1930;

“A community which is inspired by feelings of ill-will towards other communities is low and ignoble. I entertain the highest respect for custom, laws, religious and social institutions of other communities. Nay, It is my duty according to the teaching of Quran, even to defend their places of worship if need be.”

Sufis from Middle East and subcontinent also migrated to Far East countries like Indonesia, playing a big role in spreading Islam and its message of peace, unity and harmony. Among known personalities, Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Ali Al-Reenary and Sheikh Hamza Al-Fansuri are two most influential Sufis in Indonesia. They used the language of love and passion for the local community – becoming a moral force in the society. The spread of Islam in Indonesia is largely credited to Sufism due to their understanding, respect and tolerance of the indigenous local culture.



Hall View of Round Table Discussion

Sufis and peace are interlinked in our society. There is need to highlight the role of Sufis in the spread of Islam throughout the South Asia. Unfortunately, in Pakistan, there are some quacks in the name of Sufis who are not real. The bigger question is how to introduce and promote the real concept of Sufism in our new generation. The real Islam and Sufism started right from the cave of Hira and there is no difference between Shariat and Tariqat. Although Ulema are involved in electoral politics in the name of Islam, most of the Sufis in Pakistan are not playing active role in the politics. Iqbal said that without religion, politics will be a tyranny. We have to demand the Sufis to come out of their Khanqahs and lead the nation as they did it centuries ago.

Chapters about the Sufis and their teachings should remain in the national curriculum, as Islam came to this area through the teachings of Sufis. teachings of Sufis are our true history and heritage as well. Purifying the ones inner self is the need of hour.

Tolerance is another feature of Sufis who tolerated their Muslim fellows as well as had good relations with non-Muslims. Teachings of saints is respect and honor for humanity.

In the current phase of challenges and turbulence in Muslim countries, culture of peace acquires great significance. Both in Pakistan and Indonesia, Sufi culture has been practiced for centuries. The discourse in contemporary scholarly work on peace and conflict studies and remedy for the conflicts are understood such as empathy, reconciliation, social and transitional justice the same values which have been propagated by Sufis for a very long time. Sufis communicated these ideas at the local level in the language, people of the soil would relate to. If poetry of Bullay Shah is assessed, he used a simple language with similes, metaphors and idioms which were of local origin and people could easily understand them. Of course, there were

references to folk stories as well which made it easier for the people to grasp, understand and comprehend the message conveyed by these saints. Sufis introduced peaceful coexistence, love for humanity, respect for fellow human being, human dignity and spirit of sharing. These aspects are significant in current era but unfortunately, are probably disappearing. Acceptance of plurality is perhaps we need the most in the

present situation. Challenge is how to revive the values of Sufi culture that existed in our part of the world. There is need to development of peace courses including Sufism and their introduction in educational institutions. The other issue is negation of quacks to show that Sufism is a serious thought which is not mundane and trivial.



Hall View of Round Table Discussion

Sufis spread Islam with power of their character who derived their religious thought from Quran and Sunnah and by the use of reasoning. Until today there is strong presence of Sufi orders in Indonesia such as Qadria, Naqshbandia, Shazlia and others. Today Indonesia is proud of largest Muslim population in the world. In Indonesia Muslim organizations are working hand in hands for peaching of Islam. Indonesia is also home to other religious minorities. Despite having diverse ethnicity, Indonesia is able to preserve its unity. Today radicalism and terrorism are rampant and not a single country is immune to it. Muslims are the largest in numbers as victims to terrorism. Seventy-six percent terrorist attacks took place in Muslim countries. When the shadow of violence become longer Sufism is the Noor (light) of hope so it is duty of all of us to spread the message of Sufism which is the true message of Islam.

Interactive Session:



Participants asking questions in interactive session

A fruitful discussion took place in interactive session it is summarized as follows:

Sufism can be very useful in de-radicalization of different factions. People are still hopeful for Sufis because spiritualism is need of everyone. Companions of Holy Prophet (Ashabay Sufa) should be the inspirations for the young generations who were Sufis as well as scholars. We need to understand that Sufism is core message of Islam. The beauty of Quran is that more you read it more it reveals to you. Holy Quran commands us on Human rights in this way 'O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness'. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what you do (Surah Al-Ma'idah, 8). Concept of society in Islam is to be just even to your enemies.

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