

{ History of Indo-Pak }

Question #1

Asses the role of sufism in shaping cultural and social life of delhi sultanate

1) Introduction

Sufism had deeply effected the cultural and social life of Delhi sultanate. It amalgated Hindu and Islamic tradition. It resulted in large number of converts. The main aim of sufism was to spread love and peace throughout the society. Thegt became a symbol of hope for low caste of the society.

2) Sufism in India

Sufism spread in India from the time of Aibak. It consisted of two

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major orders i.e Chishtia and Suhwardya. In the opinion of Dr Tara Chand, Sufism was influence by Hinduism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism and other religions. However, Dr Yousaf denied this statement and claimed

Sufism was born in the bosom of Islam and foreign practices and ideas had no influence on it.

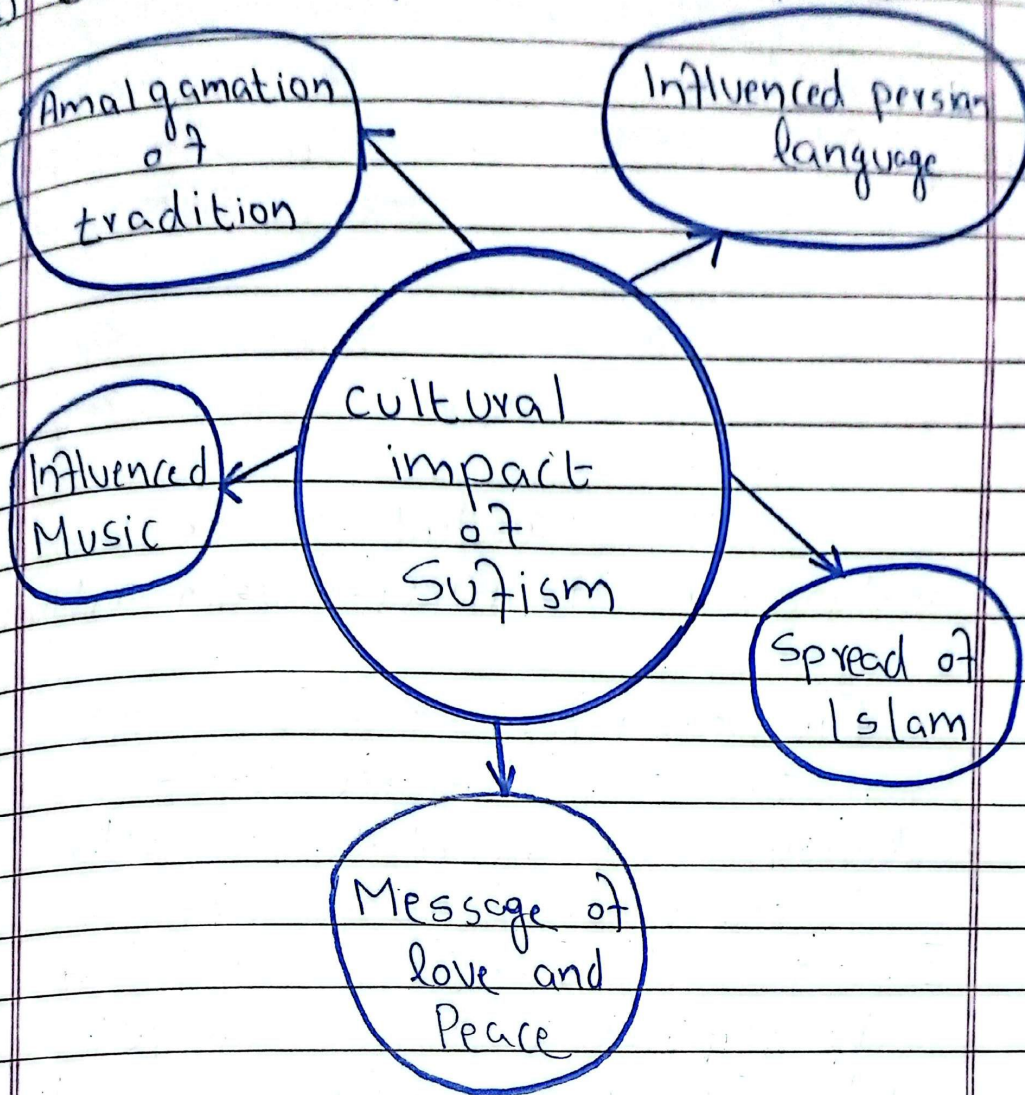
Although sufism had adopted certain Hindu traditions but proponents of sufism claim that it was done in order to gain the trust of Hindu population and in facilitating the spread of Islam.

Impacts of Sufism

Sufism deeply impacted the social and cultural life of Delhi sultanate.

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a) Cultural impacts of Sufism



(i) Sufism influenced persian language

Persian language was influenced by sufism. It gave birth to Qawallis. Amir Khusrau was deeply influenced by Nizam-ud-Din Auliya. He used to write Qawallis which were sung in Khanqas. According

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to Amir Khusrau

Agr Firdous bur ru-yi Zaman ast
Hameen ast Hameen Ast

If there was a heaven on Earth
It would be here, It would be here

ii) It resulted in the
amalgamation of Hindu-Muslim traditions

The Khanqas of sufis were open to all irrespective of religion, caste, creed etc. In order to facilitate the spread of Islam and gain the trust of Hindu population sufis adopted Hindu traditions. Sufism blended Islamic and Hindu traditions. For example shaving of head, Pan-e-Nafas, Chilla and other bodily tortures were adopted from Hinduism.

iii) Spread love and peace in society

Sufism tried to remove the cultural barriers between

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Hindus and Muslims. Their aim was to spread the message of love and peace throughout the society. According to Khawaja, Moinuddin Chishti

Love all, hate none
Let your heart be as
vast as ocean

iv) Sufism won a large number of converts in society

- Islam did not spread in the sub-continent on the tip of sword, rather it was spread by the efforts of sufis. The universal message of love and peace influenced a large number of low caste Hindu who readily accepted Islam.

v) Sufism also influenced Music

Sufism introduced the element of Music in Islam. They believed that spiritual Music was essential in order

to reach God. Sufis were strictly criticized by Ulema because of it. However, Sufism led to the development of Raman, Sarang, and Qawali in Music. In the words of Nizam-ud-Din Auliya

Music is the food
for lover

b) Social impacts of Sufism

Following were the social impact of Sufism on the life of Delhi Sultanate

(i) Sufism aided in the spread of knowledge

The Khanqas of Sufis was a place of public gathering. Number of people used to attend Sufi sermons. A number of disciples would also obtain education at their Khanqas. It aided in the spread of knowledge

ii) Provided shelter to poor

Sufis used to hold langar and free meals at their Khanqas. Their Khanqas became a source of shelter for the poor people.

iii) Sufism acted as a bridge between sovereign and his subjects

The sufis have a large following. They also influenced a number of nobles in the court. They act as a bridge between rulers and people. For example when Ala-ud-Din Khilji imposed heavy tax on people Nizam-ud-Din Aulia advised the people to be patient and hope for divine justice

iv) Rulers often sought the blessing of Sufi saints

The rulers used to seek blessing from the sufi saints. Ala-ud-din Khilji used to seek sufi blessing before any conquest

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Similarly Akbar also used to seek blessings from Mirza Saleem Fatehpuri.

(iv) It led to enhancement in charity.

Sufi saints used to give a lot in charity. They also used to advise nobles to give more in charity. Nizam-ud-Din Aulia gave away all the royal patronage in charity.

Conclusion

Sufism provided a new social and cultural way of life to the population of the sub-continent. It abolished Caste system and resulted in the spread of peace and love in society.