Contextualising Multiculturalism in The Ideology of Sufism

Suraiya Nazeer

Ph. D Student, Deptt. Central of Central Asian Studies, University of Kashmir,

Abstract

    The world is entering into a new phase, and intellectuals have not been hesitant to proliferate visions of what it will be 'End of History', the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great division among the man kind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural identities as was formulated earlier by great philosopher Huntington in his theory 'Clash of Civilization' Which seems to be relevant after 9/11. Also in 1793, as R.R Palmar put it, the wars of the kings were over, and the wars of people begin. In the present times of the clash of civilizations seems imminent, which resulted in the communal riots. The ideologies operating in the name of religion as Jihad as well as the radical element of other religious ideologies as Christian, Hindu and Jewish also start stimulating. That emergence of radical elements in the religion ideologies is threat to multiculturalism. However, Sufism offers a path of perfect solace and makes us to understand the value of Humanism. That is the basis of multiculturalism. There has always been interaction and dialogue between Muslims and people of other faiths in Sufism as ideologies. They put more emphasis on communal harmony between different religious beliefs as Hindus and Muslims?

    In this context the study would study that the concept of multiculturalism can be developed best in the context of Sufism. From this perspective the article is most relevant in the present context where the world is passing through stages of turmoil on the cultural grounds, and religious lines. The study also wants to establish that humanism can be brought about by the teachings of great charismatic suffi leader Rumi. It will examine the humanistic teachings of Mulana Rumi.

Key Words: 'Culture', 'Existentialism', 'Philosophy', 'Religion', 'Secularism', 'Shruks', 'Vision', 'Ulema', 'Multiculturalism',

'Pluralism', 'Fault Lines'. 'Mulana Rumi',

Significance

Although liberalism is seen its astonishing triumph in the age of Globalisation, however its critics have hit at its inadequate by throwing light on certain new related themes to the 'politics of identity or recognition'. Multiculturalism is one of them, continuous treat the Multiculturalism which the world is watching today one of them is Extremism and its ideologies operating in the name of Jihad as Mujahidin, Taliban, Al-Quada and other ideologies in the name of Other religions. These problems if not addressed will turn into an international crisis of unprecedented gravity? These problems affect not only political, economic, and social development of world, but also the state's relationship with its neighbors and the wider International Community. The emergence of radical elements in the religion ideologies is threat to multiculturalism. However, Sufism offers a path of perfect solace and makes us to understand the value of Humanism. That is the basis of multiculturalism. There has always been interaction and dialogue between Muslims and people of other faiths in Sufism as ideologies. They put more emphasis on communal harmony between different religious beliefs as Hindus and Muslims?

Methodology

The study relies on Secondary data including books, research journals, newspapers and opinions generated therein by the relevant experts and officials. The study is also based on the conceptual and theoretical framework regarding different issues and aspects including Extremism, Multiculturalism, Liberalism, and Socialism. Also, historical, analytical, interpretative and descriptive methods have been followed to reach to the conclusion.

Introduction

The world is in which we are living is entering into a new phase, and intellectuals have not been hesitant to proliferate visions of what it will be 'End of History',[1]the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great division among the man kind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural identities as was formulated earlier by great philosopher Huntington in his theory 'Clash of Civilization' [2]Which seems to be relevant after 9/11[3].Also in 1793, as R.R Palmar put it, the wars of the kings were over, and the wars of people begin. The word jihad has appeared widely in the Western news media following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon.[4] The structural changes in the jihad ideology occurred after 9/11 has altered the way the world combats terrorism and its way forward. The ideologies operating in the name of religion as Jihad as well as the radical element of other religious ideologies as Christian, Hindu and Jewish also start stimulating.

That emergence of radical elements in the religion ideologies is threat to multiculturalism.[5] However, Sufism offers a path of perfect solace and makes us to understand the value of Humanism. That is the basis of multiculturalism. There has always been interaction and dialogue between Muslims and people of other faiths in Sufism as ideologies. They put more emphasis on communal harmony between different religious beliefs as Hindus and Muslims? [6]

Multiculturalism

The ardent advocates of multiculturalism as Charles Taylor, Will Kymlica and Biku Parek lay stress on the fact that the cultures have the unique essence. As such the liberal and social order should be based upon guaranteed basic freedoms having their source in the cultural contexts. The cultural pluralism is found in almost all the countries of the world.[7]Multiculturalism therefore attaches importance to the separate and distinct identity of certain neglected and stigmatised sections of society.[8] Culture is, according to the Collins dictionary, the sum of the ideas, customs, religion and art of a particular society. Multiculturalism, then, is the meeting of different societies and their cultures, ideas, customs, religions and art.[9]

Neoliberal ideology abstain state from interfering in various aspects of individuals as polity, economy etc. Over the past decade citizens in the world have become discontent against neoliberal policies. In this context social critics identify the problems in our societies are the cultural diversity poses a challenge not only to the makers of government policy, but also to the philosopher looking to understand how it might be possible-in principle-for people of different ways to live together. The challenge is posed because society's institutions have been challenged, as the members of different groups have demanded "recognition.".[10]

Sufism and Pluralism

Sufism specifically has, throughout their history, maintained the principle of living with the amazing diversity. This concept of mutual respect between religions has persisted in the development of Sufism. Sufi saints in India and world were viewed as protectors, even of the oppressed Hindus. Networks established by early Sufi saints in world demonstrated their fidelity to the Islamic concept of peace between differing systems of belief. More than anything, the networks of Sufi saints such as the 12th- and 13th-century CE figure Moinuddin Chishti contributed substantially to the growth of Islam in the country, supporting the Indian Sufi legacy. In the continuity of traditional Islam, the majority of Sunni scholars argued for coexistence with the other faith communities, while recognizing that fundamental disagreements could be dealt with through peace and understanding. This attitude found an Islamic context in the example of Muhammad, peace be upon him, who was asked about socially-

beneficial endeavors preceding his prophet hood, and who answered that if disbelievers were to ask for him to settle such matters, he would do so. As Muslims through India's history lived peacefully with other believers, we should carefully observe the vision of Sufi Islam as one of mercy, inherited from the prophet of Islam, Muhammad himself. It is often said that he forgave every personal attack he suffered from enemies and never became angry for personal reasons. When he conquered Mecca, the territory of disbelievers who constantly harassed him, he proclaimed, "Follow in your path, for you are free."[11]

Rum's Teachings and Pluralism

The thoughts of Jalalud'din Rumi, on religious tolerance, love and care for the soul can help bridge the ever-growing chasm between the different faiths. Rumi viewed all religious groups as equal before God. If they were still alive today, neither would have a problem praying in a house of worship outside of their own religious tradition. As we will see in their poetry, essays and lectures, Rumi encouraged people to search for their own personal connection with God through existential and wondrous ways. Their love for everyone and everything, regardless of whom or what they were, shows that non-Muslims and Muslims are not as different as many people imagine. Rumi conveyed his thoughts mainly through poems, many of which speak to infinite tolerance and compassion for people outside of Muslim circles. Despite his Muslim background, Rumi did not discriminate against Jews, Christians, Hindus or even atheists.[12]

> *I am neither Christian, nor Jewish, nor Muslim*
> *I am not of the East, nor of the West...*
> *I have put duality away, I have seen the two worlds as one;*
> *One I seek, One I know, One I see, One I call*
> *(Divan-I Shams-I Tabriz, II)*

Rumi did not judge people through a narrow interpretation of God. Instead he emphasized what we would today call pluralism, or the belief that there is not one consistent set of religious truths about the world and that all religions can work in harmony in a single society. Similarly, Rumi emphasized that there are many ways through which people can come into contact with God and that Islam is not the sole path to the hereafter. Rum's fondness for interfaith dialogue between people of different faiths is visible in one of his quatrains, in which he notes that

There is a path from me to you
that I am constantly looking for,
so I try to keep clear and still
as water does with the moon.

This moment this love comes to rest in me,
many beings in one being.
In one wheat grain a thousand sheaf stacks.
Inside the needles eye, a turning night of stars.[13]

Conclusion

        With the coming of the theory End of History and Collapse of Communism Liberal Democracy claim victory over other ideologies. But it has failed on certain related themes to the Politics of identity or recognition. Multiculturalism is one of them. Continuous treat to multiculturalism which the world is watching today is in the form of extremist ideology. However, the ideology of Sufism offers a path of solace. They put emphasis on communal Harmony. Sufism is the best anecdote to any type of religious extremism. The ideology is the most recognised as in west it is known by the name Gnosticism. There has always been interaction and dialogue between Muslims and people of other faiths in Sufism as ideologies.

References

[1] In his theory, 'End of History' Fransis Fukayama said there is remarkable consensus concerning the legitimacy of the liberal democracy as a system of government and as a world form of government. The liberal ideology conquered rival ideologies like hereditary Monarchy, Fascism and most recently Communism. The Fukayama argued that Liberal Democracy may constitute the "end point of mankind 's ideological evolution," and the "final form of government" and as such constitute "end of history."A. Blunden . *The End of History and the Last Man* . **Penguin: UK, 2005, p.99**.

[2] 'Clash of civilizations ' theory was put forward by Huntington's 1993 in Foreign Affairs article entitled 'The Clash of Civilizations? 'In this theory he argued that post-Cold War conflict would not be ideological or economic, but cultural. Identifying, "seven or eight major civilizations," he suggested that, "[t]he most important conflicts of the future will occur along the fault lines separating these civilizations from one another." Michael Dunn , The 'Clash of Civilizations ' and the 'War on Terror ' ,*49th Parallel* , Vol.20, 2007,p.1[3] In the sp., 2001 US was hit by plane to the world Trade Centre and Pentagon in Washington and other passenger's plane into the ground in Pennsylvania, Stephen Tanner, *The Wars of the Bushes*, **Manas Publication: India, 2006, p.157**

[4] Mahmood Mamdani, "Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism", *American Anthropologist* , **Vol. 104, No. 3, 2002**

[5] Challenges of Multiculturalism, Heinrich Ball Foundation, **Southern Europe,Belgrade,2012,P.7**

[6] Hassan Abu Henich, Sufism and Suffi Orders: God 's Spiritual Path Adaptation and Renewal in the Context of odernisation,**Friedrich-Ebert-Stifting,Jordan,2011,pp.9-11**

[7] .C. Johari, Contemporary Political Theory, **Sterling Publishers, India, 2013,p.751**

[8] J.C. Johari, Contemporary Political Theory, **Sterling Publishers,India,2013,p.752**

[9] Ingrid Stevens and Allan Munro, Meetings with Others: a critique of multiculturalism,2008 available athttps://repository.up.ac.za/handle/2263/10235,assesed *on 10-12-2017,*

[10] Chandran kukathas, Liberalism and Multiculturalism , The Politics of Indifference , **Australian   National University,p.686**

[11]Stephen Schwartz and Muhammad Ashraf, Sufism in India Today, The Huffington Post, 2016

[12] A.J. Arberry, Discourses of Rumi,Onphaloskepsis,**US,200, pp.vi-vii**

[13] Craig Considine**,** Rumi and Emerson: A Bridge Between the West and the **Muslim World, 2013**,available at *https://www.huffingtonpost.com/craig-considine/rumi-and-emerson_b_3748667.html,accesed* on 10-12-2017