

CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN TO SUFI MUSIC- AN INDEPTH STUDY

**Thesis submitted to University of Delhi for the award of the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (Ph.D.)**

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2016

CONCLUSION

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We all are aware of the fact that Man and Woman, both are two sides of the same coin and are incomplete without each other. Before starting my work, I was a bit apprehensive about the applicability of this fact in Sufism. But, as I proceeded further with my research, I found out that Man and woman, both have contributed equally for the welfare of mankind by showing them the spiritual path of attaining salvation and inner peace. Through my research work I have tried to highlight the role of women in spreading the spiritual message of peace and harmony taking on account the fundamental principles inherited in the Holy Quran and the life and words of Prophet Muhammad.

While doing research I found out that there is no concept of I, you, Man or woman in the eyes of God. It is merely a societal conception due to which females have been symbolized as profane, corporeal forms who are socially subjugated and taken for granted. Today, when we imagine a Muslim woman, a shy and hesitant woman with a veil on her face, kind of picture comes in our mind, which is actually opposite when we look outside into the real world. Women have started coming up irrespective of caste, culture or religion. The main reason for this perception is the portrayal of the Female Imagery in Sufism by Male authors and media.

Since the beginning of propagation of Islam by the last messenger of God, Prophet Muhammad, women have been active and supportive. Be it Prophet's first wife Hazrat Khadija who provided him with moral support before he claimed his Prophethood, or Hazrat Fatima, daughter of Prophet Muhammad, who cared for him and bestowed upon her father all her love and affection

when he was into his Prophethood. Woman in every form has been useful in popularizing Sufism. Women have been leaders of various Sufi Orders, they have been saints of high values and morality and they have also been musicians bringing about a revolution in the field of Sufi Music through their voices and dances. Today women are no less than men in any field.

Music, in any form, if touches the heart and has the words of saints, can be called as Sufi Music. The impact that this kind of music is making now-a-days is no less than a revolution. Its true that change is the law of life and it brings with itself many possibilities which may be positive for the society or might prove to be negative for humanity. The sayings and poetry of Sufi saints is beyond change because those thoughts form the roots of our existence. Their versatility and flexibility is such that they can be moulded according to the requirement and need of the moment, be it the beginning of consciousness or be it the 21st century we are living in. The only thing that changes is the kind of presentation these literary masterpieces are exposed to. Today we use different arrangements, sometimes Indian and sometime Western to present any Sufi poetry. The use of Sufi poetry has also increased in Films which has led to more and more people entering into this field. But somehow I feel that the basic knowledge which is the foundation of Sufi Music is lacking in the youth today. The history of Sufism, the life histories of Sufi saints whose compositions are sung even today and many other elements need to be taught to the people, so that they are able to understand that message of peace and harmony that the Sufi saints wanted to convey through their work. Many seminars, workshops need to be conducted for imparting the right knowledge of Sufism. So that everyone is able to understand that adding

Maula, Ali, Khuda etc. to the songs does not make it a Sufi song. The topic 'Sufism' should also be given a position in the higher education curriculum.

In the end I would like to conclude this research paper by adding that the divine presence of women in the mystical aspect of Islam has been there from the beginning and today also Sufi singers like Begum Abida Parveen, Begum Riffat Sultana, Smt. Manjari Chaturvedi, Ragini Naik, Harshdeep Kaur, Kavita Seth, Nooran Sisters, Dr. Mamta Joshi and many more are singing the poetry of our great Sufi saints and their collective efforts are contributing immensely in the transmission of the divine words to all.