

AREA OF META DATA	CONTENT
THEME	Sufism and its Practices
SUBJECT	History
LINKAGE OF THEME WITH CHAPTERS(NAME	Devotional Paths to the Divine
CLASS/LEVEL	VII
Target Audience	Students
OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop an understanding of Sufism and its practices. • To appreciate the contribution of Sufism in development of religious ideas and practices
DESCRIPTION	<p>India is known as the land of spirituality and philosophy and as birth place of some religions such as Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism, which exist even today. India has also embraced various cultures, religious ideas and philosophies; and beliefs and practices that have found their way through land and sea routes over different periods.</p> <p>One such religious idea/philosophy is Sufism. Sufism is a tradition or a way of life which originated centuries ago and continues being a part of our living heritage. The term Sufism' refers to mystical religious ideas in Islam. While it began to emerge in the eighth century, it evolved into a well developed movement by the 11th century. In India spread to Multan, Punjab, Kashmir, Bihar and Bengal by the 13th and 14th centuries.</p> <p>The Sufis laid emphasis upon free thought and liberal ideas. They were against formal worship and rigidity in religion. Like the</p>

	Bhakti saints, the Sufis too interpreted religion as ‘love of god’ and service of humanity. Sufis believe that there is only one God and that all people are the children of God. They also believe that to love one’s fellow men is to love God and that different religions are different ways to reach God. Therefore, one should respect all religions. There is no need for conversion. One should be a good Hindu or Muslim.
Key Words	Sufism, Pir, Dargah, Ziyarat, Sama, Qawwali, Urs, Zikhr.
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ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF SUFISM



- The Sufis were organized in to different *silsilahs* or orders- the Chishtitiya, Suhrawardiya, Qadiriya and Naqshbandiya
- Most of these orders were led by prominent sufi saint or Pir.
- The Sufis believed that for union with God one needs a spiritual guru or *Pir*.
- The Sufis organised *samas* (a recital of holy songs) to induce mystical trance
- Sufis played an important role in interpreting concepts like *Wahdat ul Wujud* (unity of being)
- Sufis encouraged the development of practices like *Ziyarat* (the practice of visiting tombs).

THE MAIN PRACTICES OF SUFISM

ASCETICISM



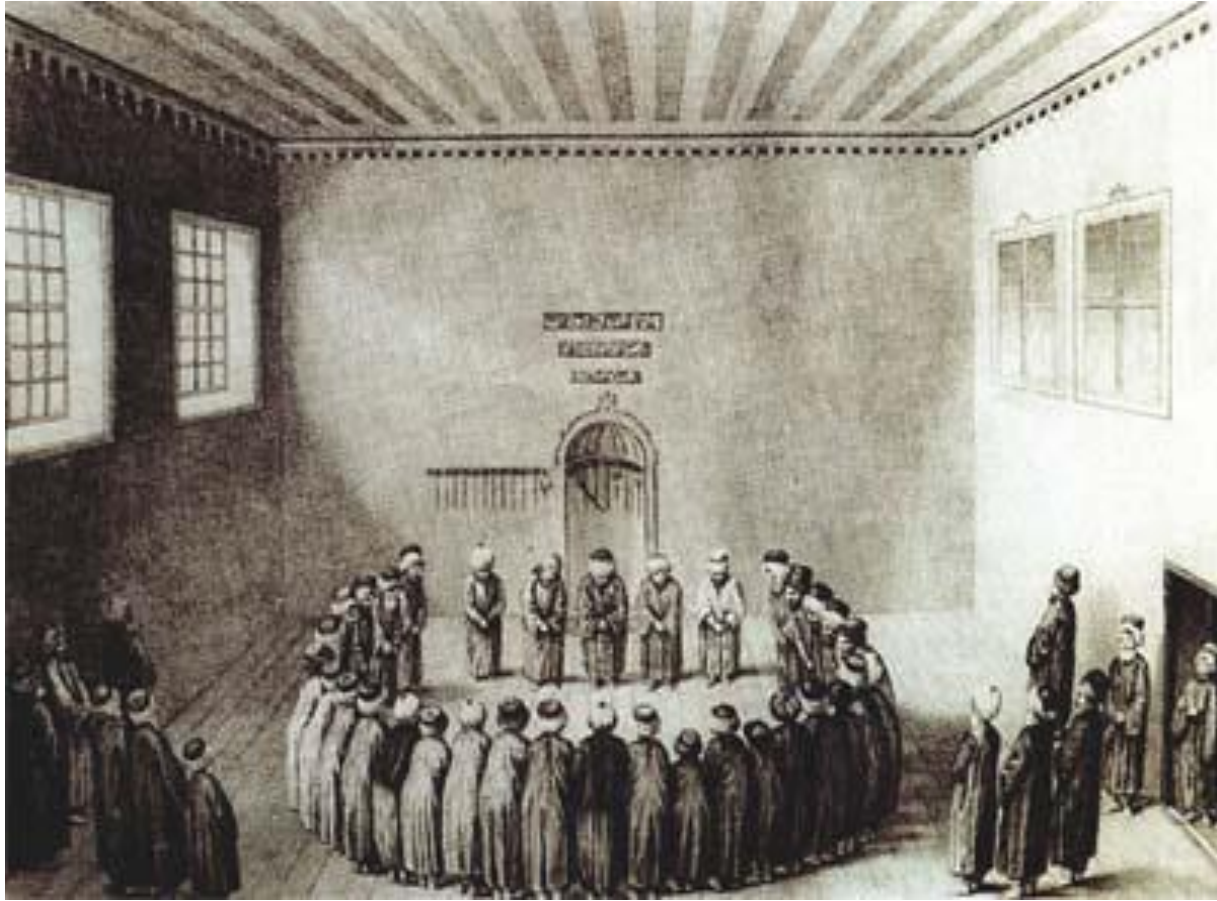
Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai



Data Ganj Baksh , one of the earliest Sufi saints

Asceticism implies following a simple lifestyle devoid of worldly pleasures, often for the purpose of pursuing spiritual goals. It is characterized by the renunciation of material possessions and physical pleasures, and time spent fasting while concentrating on the practice of religion or reflection upon spiritual matters.

ZIKR OR DHIKR



***Zikhr* means remembrance of God (Allah). An act of devotion in which short phrases or prayers are repeatedly recited silently within the mind or aloud. In Sufi devotions *zikhr* represents both a solemn ritual and a spiritual state of mind or heart, in which the devotee seeks to realise the presence of God. Thus there is *zikhr* of the mind and *zikhr* of the heart. *Hadhra* consists of various forms of *zikhr*, songs and dances that are used to appeal God and Angels.**

SAMA OR SUFI WHIRLING



***Sama* is the ritual of whirling dance , a medium through which the sufis aim to reach the Almighty. The right kind of music invokes the right kind of emotion which is elated when one does the whirl dance. The sufi conveys God's spiritual gift to those who are witnessing the Sama. Revolving from right to left around the heart, they embrace all humanity with love.**



QAWWALI



Qawwali is a form of Sufi devotional music popular in South Asia, particularly in Pakistan and India. The roots of *qawwali* began in the 11th Century with the tradition of *sama*. The central themes of *qawwali* are love, devotion and longing inspired by the works. It is generally accepted that Amir Khusru, the disciple of Nizamuddin Auliya promoted *qawwali* in its latest form. Belonging to the Chishti order of Sufis he experimented with different words and techniques in Persian, Arabic, Turkish languages , and in musical instruments in the late 13th century in India to create *qawwali* as we know it today.

POPULAR APPEAL OF QAWWALI



Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan



Abida Parveen

The *Qawwali* is known for its worldly appeal and transcends all bounds and limitations of countries and different regions. Some of the modern day exponents of qawwali are Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, Abida Parvin, Sabri Brothers, Wadali Brothers and Nizami Bandhu. The Nizami Bandhu perform Qawwali at the dargah of Nizamuddin Auliya in Delhi.



Wadali Brothers



Nizami Bandhu

ZIYARAT OR PILGRIMAGE



Inside the Dargah of Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya, Delhi.

Visit to the holy shrines of Sufi saints is referred to as *Ziyarat* and is a common practice amongst many. The saints often visited the shrines of their *Pir*. This practice is an occasion for seeking the saint's spiritual grace or *barakat*, to receive spiritual knowledge, guidance and blessings from the Saint who rests in the shrine. Another day that is considered auspicious is '*Wisal*' the day of death of a *Pir* and when *Urs* is celebrated. Death is considered an auspicious day when the *Pir* became one with God. *Urs Mubarak* of Muin al - Din Chishti is a very popular event when thousands of devotees throng Ajmer Sharif, where the saint's shrine exists.



Urs in Dargah of Muinuddin Chishti in Ajmer

ACTIVITY 1

Insert the appropriate option provided below.

CIET : DRAG AND DROP

QAWWALI

SAMA

ZIKHR

WISAL

ZIYARAT

URS

OPTIONS

The day of death of a *Pir*

Form of Sufi devotional music

Visit to the holy shrines of Sufi saints

Ritual of Whirling Dance

Celebration of the day of death of a *Pir*

Remembrance of God

CORRECT ANSWER

QAWWALI : Form of Sufi devotional music

SAMA : Ritual of Whirling Dance

ZIKHR : Remembrance of God

WISAL : Day of death of a *pir*

ZIYARAT : Visit to the holy shrines of Sufi saint

URS : Celebration of the day of death of a *pir*

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