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ABSTRACT

The culture of valley witnessed a scenario of new ways of changes with the reformative activities of Syed Qasim Ahmed Andrabi. He moved from place to place with his large number of followers with the concept of peace and development through Sufi ideology. His humanistic approach motivated people to adopt different technical modules. As a result he influenced the whole valley both materially and spiritually. His dynamic approach in preaching attracted people towards his Sufi message as a gateway towards the development. With the result the rural village of Puchal in district Pulwama became the center of peace and development. People used to come from their far of areas and accordingly a true and sincere concept of brotherhood got flourished.

KEYWORDS: Peace, Unity, Conversion, Morals, Skill, Economy, Puchal.

INTRODUCTION:

In the second half of sixteenth century the area of Puchal, Pulwama in the valley of Kashmir was poorly connected and backward in education and economic activities. The various social groups and classes were in regular conflict with each other. The condition of women was miserable and moral fabric of society was in tatters. The emergence and teaching of Syed Qasim Ahmad Andrabi influenced this region in an impressive way and transformed it to a healthy and peaceful society. Being spiritually efficacious, he succeeded in to edify the people and had a profound influence on the minds of people. He was born in (971/A.H./1563/A.D.) at Malaratta in Srinagar in an affluent family of Andrabi Syeds. The said family migrated to valley of Kashmir after the establishment of Muslim rule.

The establishment of the rule of Muslim kings called Sultans in Kashmir neither affected its independence nor at first brought about any significant change in the political, social and cultural life of the people. Sultan Shamsu'd-din Shaikh Mir' (740-743 A.H.or 1339-41.A.D) and his immediate successors were content to carry on with the old institutions and organizations. However from the time of Sultan Qutub ud-din' (775-791 A.H.or 1373-89 A.D.) onwards when large number of Syeds and Sufis started pouring into Kashmir from different parts of Persia and Central Asia, the condition began to undergo a change under their influence. The Sufis and Syeds who migrated from Persia and Central Asia or those who were invited by the Sultan Zainul Abidin (922-942 A.H.or 1418-38 A.D) began to transform the life of people. As a result of their contact with the foreign Muslims their local converts began to adopt many of their manners, customs, culture etc, but at the same time they did not give up all of their old beliefs, practices and traditions. The result was the development of a unique social order in which the old ideas and institutions assimilated with the new ideas. In the process a lot of new arts and crafts of foreign origin were introduced in the valley. The immigrant Sufis contributed a lot and worked in real sense to propagate the message of new arts and crafts of foreign origin were introduced in the valley. The immigrant Sufis contributed a lot and worked in real sense to propagate the message of peace, equality and unity. One group of immigrants consisted of Andrabi Syeds from Andrab, Afghanistan. They came here in the wake of missionary activities of Mir Syed Ali Hamdani during the rule of Sultan Qutub ud-din.

Syed Ahmad Andrabi (d.A.H.980/A.D.1480) was the first Andrabi to enter in valley. Sultan Qutub ud-din was impressed by his teachings and constructed a Khanqah for him at Malaratta Srinagar, known by the name of Khanqah Andrabia and granted him the Jagir of various areas. The Khanqah became the centre of Andrabis in valley. The Andrabis upto Syed Shamsu'd-din (d.A.H.1502/A.D.1582) son of Syed Shamsu'd-din Andrabi was the first Andrabi in the valley of Kashmir who became the follower of Qadriya Sufi Silsila. With the passage of time descendants of Mir Mirak Andrabi migrated to far off areas and disseminated the message of equality among the masses that too without any interest. The prime one among them was his son Syed Qasim Ahmad Andrabi.

Syed Qasim was a noted Sufi reformer of Kashmir society and acted as the true helper of people. Syed Qasim denounced worldly life and devoted himself to spread the message of peace. For many years he worked as a servant of the Khanqah of his spiritual guide Mir Mirak (father) at Malaratta Srinagar. Impressed by his piety and devotion and spiritual progress, Mir Mirak appointed him as Khalifa. On the instructions of master he migrated from Malaratta in Srinagar to Puchal, Pulwama in (1001/A.H./1593/A.D). After reaching in village Puchal, he went in a house in search of fire, their was only blind girl in the house. After taking little bit of fire from the house, the great Syed gifted her with the eyeshine. Durga Nath Khare the father of blind was the first to accept Islam at the lands of Syed. Afterwards all the residents and dominant groups like, Khurs, Khans, Bhat, Bohras, Kumars, Khatri's,etc accepted the new faith as Islam without any fear.

After the mass conversion in a broader sense the valley as society got divided into groups, peasant Andrabi Syeds (Medieval Jagirdars) identified as the literate section(first generation learner's in valley) of society and rest as zamindars comprised of, Bhat (cultivators), Sheikh (cultivators), Dar (cultivators), Lone (ferocious tribe), Wani (Shopkeeper's and Tailors), Bundi (cultivators), Rishi (land tillers), Mir (agricultural activities), Beigh (labourer), Khan (general workers), Shirugji (mail sellers), Ahanar (agricultural tools), Teli (oil pressers), Dham (modern Ganaiyas, people without land), Gulawans (horse keepers), Dhoobi (washermen). Among the above casts, Shergogri, Teli, Ahangar, Dham, Gulawans etc, have no hereditary land of their own and belong to Scheduled caste section of society. As compared to earlier faith they were provided better status in new religious sect. Besides the above groups there is also presence of another Scheduled caste group of Muslim Watali Sheikh's (dealing with skin of animals). They too were not agriculturists and having no hereditary land. Economically their condition was very miserable and considered as deprived. However the economic disparity was there with them before the conversion and it's level to a greater extent got minimised in the Muslim community towards new positive directions.

As Syed was communicative and well versed to others like the ruling section. So he also acted as the medium of communication between the people and administrators. Because of soft and compassionate attitude he became very much popular among the people. Thus his magnetic personality, learning and piety was instrumental in influencing the people of area. His life was a model for people and influenced them greatly. Under his proper care people from far and wide got influenced and motivated towards the developmental activities. He propagated the concept of oneness, and consequently a new culture emerged in the area. His preaching became a turning point in the socio-religious and cultural activities of the locality and a new social order got cropped up. Such a social stratification had its impact on the surroundings also. He not only boosted the literary taste among the people, but equally worked for the economic change. People wereinstisted to boost the humanitarian approach. That approach is possible only through the Sufi teachings. Because all the essential elements of all-round change are present in the Sufi ideology. Purification of thought and soul is very important to change the mind set of people and that can achieved through different Sufi teachings like, teacher, devotion, zikr, chillah etc.

Syed Qasim Ahmad felt that for the acquisition of different types of religious knowledge the teacher should be selected with care. As a good teacher Syed continued to teach the disciples according to their capacity and prescribed the right path for the spiritual attainments. He compared his task with worldly physicians and said that the medicines might be innumerable, but only a particular medicine is prescribed for a particular disease in accordance with the nature of disease, which is known only to the physicians. The same is the case with the Sufi path, although the forms of devotion are innumerable and all of them are true, the particular disease of the heart of a devotee can be cured only through a particular devotion. Like all spiritual teachers Syed laid great stress on (Salat) Namaz. He pleads that it should precede all other acts of devotion. But the key to prayer is...
purification, which is of three kinds, firstly the clothes and body, secondly of the nafs (soul) and last, of the heart. The body and clothes is najs (unclean) according to the ahli-sharita. The other two kinds of puri-
cification can be achieved only by the followers on the spiritual path. He held puri-
cification as a pre-requisite to prayer, and guided the people and taught them the
principles to be followed while praying. The real meaning of prayer, he said can be
understood only by arbitration, while going to pray one should purify their desires from
the inner recesses of heart and in it retain only the divine thoughts .There shall remain no
desires save the exclusive desire of Allah and the desire for the pursuit of righteousness.

Due to his extraordinary spiritual attainments several Karamats are associated with him.
He not only influenced the people who approached him but also removed several social evils
from the society especially the habit of drinking which was completely eradicated from the
area. He opposed all sorts of oppressions and injustice and propagated the feeling of equality
among the common masses and consequently a new culture emerged there. He influenced the
culture of area both materially and spiritually. In material side he encouraged the
people to adopt new arts and crafts to boost their economic set up. He introduced the
art of embroidery work with the golden thread (Zardoozi), needle work on the shawls. Still one can bear the imprints of skill in the area. Even that is also a
source of earning for them. Not only fine art progressed too much but also the modern
dry cleaning system got introduced in the area and number of people were
inclined towards the new opportunities. Dress of people that too changed became
more simple and round head burqa (male head pagri ) and turbon (female head burqa )
were made popular in the area. There were no external benefit of the Zikr, even some have counted as many as hundreds of
Hadiths, what would be more virtuous than this that on becomes the intimate to
God. As in other fields, so were the changes in the socio-economic field. The his-
torical events and activities introduced which was completely eradicated from the area .

He can be also called as environmentalist because people were guided to save the
environment from pollution. People were always assisted by him that it is
everyones responsibility to keep their surroundings neat and clean. With the
result said area became a model for the people. By virtue of his guideline at pres-
cent the area has become too much conscious and having the hundred percent sani-
tication facility. Not only cleanliness is maintained in the whole area but also has
progressed too much as compared to other areas of the district. Because clean
environment is an indication of change, like education ,road and connectivity.

In the area their was evolution, revolution and development. The society got
turned into progressive one in various fields like, trade, agriculture, industry, edu-
cation, health etc. Besides these measures the concept of superiority and inferior-
data was removed from the area in terms of religion. All cultural aspects which
inculcated the knowledge, belief, values, customs, norms and habits of the people were
acquired a new shape. The people received new traits of culture as a part of social heritage, which
in turn reshaped the culture and newer elements of change got introduced which
later on became part of the heritage for succeeding generations.

After getting deeply involved in the progressive activities, he ultimately departed
in(1040.A.H/1631.A.D) and is laid to rest at Mohallah Mohiend Uttarpora
(Puchal) Pulwama. His Urs at present is annually cerebrated by the people on
17th of Zaqeth (Kashmiri name of month). Large number of people those belong-
ing to different religious sects visit the Shrine and seek the blessings of Syed. The
devotees used to distribute rice and meat among the people especially on
Thursday.

The present population of village has paid glowing tributes to the Syed for the
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CONCLUSION:
The present population of village has paid glowing tributes to the Syed for the
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REFERENCES:
Village of Puchal is situated towards east of district Pulwama and is almost 9 Kms away from Pulwama town. The village is comprised of three broad units, Mohirad utterpora, Kulul and Bun-Puchal. The collective name of all these is Puchal.

Their main occupation was leather work. The Watals of first category make boots and sandals, while the Watals of second class have busied themselves with the winnowing trays of leather, straw and perform mainly the duties of scavenger. Both of them at present are found in village. Their settlements are very close to the Shrine of Syed.