

Development of the Doctrine of Sama in Islam up to Nizam al-Din Auliya (d. 1325<D>)

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The controversy over *sama* began very early in Islam. Although Malik is reported to have said about music in general that people who indulge in it in Medina are morally depraved people, nevertheless it is well known among the *fuqaha* that the people of Medina were given to singing and listening to music. Al-Dhahabi¹ states in his work on Prophetic Medicine that once the Prophet (peace be upon him), returned home in the evening and asked about a girl who was supposed to be married that day whether she had actually gone to her in-laws among the Ansar of Medina. On hearing that the girl was married and had gone to her in-laws, the Prophet (peace be upon him) asked whether somebody had been sent to sing and perform music because, as he put it, the Ansar are used to listening to music. When the answer to this question was "no" the Prophet (peace be upon him) asked that someone be sent to give musical performance². That many people in Medina were fond of music is also apparent from a statement from the Syrian jurist Al-Auzai, a contemporary of Abu Hanifa, that a person who takes the legalization of alcohol from the Hanafis, the legalization of Muta marriage from certain *fuqaha* of Mecca, and the legalization of drugs also from certain *fuqaha* of Mecca and, finally, the legalization of music from the people of *para* Medina, he has combined all the evil that he basically can.³ However, we hear of music in the religious context first of all from a report emanating from Al-Shafi'i. After his return from Iraq, in the last quarter of the second century of Islam Shafi'i said that he had left behind in Iraq a grave heresy, namely, that one person would stand up and play his musical instrument and the rest would get up and start dancing⁴. This practice, of course, occurred in the context of what the Sufis termed *dhikr* or chanting of God's name in order to induce an ecstatic state. It appears that somewhere towards the middle of the second century or a little later this *dhikr* ritual began to be accompanied by instrumental music. There are various authorities which are of the opinion that the introduction of music into the religious

¹ Ibn Taimiya, *al-Istiqama*, Riyad, Vol. 1, 1983, p.274.

² al-Dhahabi, *al-Tibb al-Nabawi*, Cairo, 1961, p.159.

³ References in note 1.

⁴ Ibn Taimiya, *Ibid*, p. 238.

practice of Muslims was the work of certain non-Muslims, particularly Christians who wanted to undermine Islamic religious practices.

It is apparent⁵ from the above statement of Al-Shafi'i that he disapproved of music, particularly instrumental music, in religious practices. Otherwise also, there are traditions coming from Al-Shafi'i to the effect that a person who is excessively devoted to music cannot be regarded as a balanced person and therefore his/her evidence in court must be rejected. Al-Shafi'i⁶ is reported to have categorically stated that he did not like any sport for amusement. Malib⁷ is credited with the statement that if a person buys a slave-girl and after that finds out that she is given to singing, he has the right to return her from the person from whom he bought her, just as any article can be returned after purchase when a defect is found in it. In view of these facts,⁸ find it strange that during the controversy over *sama* in the time of Shaikh Nazam al-Din Auliya, both sides, pro-and-anti *sama*, were agreed that Al-Shafi'i regarded music accompanied by a certain kind of drum as lawful. Al-Ghazali is certainly of the opinion that the statements of Al-Shafi'i do not amount to declaring music altogether unlawful but that he most probably regarded it as *makruh* or religiously disapproved.⁹ But from this to the view that Al-Shafi'i allowed music accompanied by drums in spiritual services, as was held by Shaikh Nizam al-Din and his opponents as well, as we shall see later, there is a very long distance and I personally am not at all aware as to how and when this transformation of Shafi'i views took place. There are of course Hadiths from the Prophet (peace be upon him) to the effect that singing accompanied by certain instruments like drums is allowed but none of these hadiths is mentioned either by Al-Shafi'i or by anyone who transmitted his views on music, with a singing girl or, in some versions two singing girls who were singing and playing music. The Prophet (peace be upon him) simply went in, lay on a bed and covered his face. After a while Abu Bakr, Ayisha's father entered the house and, seeing the two girls asked what they were doing. Abu Bakr asked them to leave the house but the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to Abu Bakr "let them go on, it is the occasion of Eid." From this kind of Hadith¹⁰ most orthodox '*ulama* have concluded that singing accompanied by certain kinds of musical instruments is allowed at the time of celebrations like birth, marriage, etc, particularly or primarily to women and children. Most '*ulama* believe in the Hadiths that forbid the use of flutes, certain stringed instruments and certain kinds of drums as unlawful. Al-Ghazali, however, while accepting this Hadith as valid nevertheless endeavors to explain that these particular musical instruments were disallowed by the Prophet (peace be upon him) because of their prior exclusive association with professional musicians who used to sing objectionable material and also indulged in objectionable practices like drinking. It is a point¹¹ worthy of note concerning the latitude with which the Muslim *fuqaha* operated on various issues

⁵ Ibid, also pp.325,464;al-Ghazali, Ihya, Cairo, p.343.

⁶ Ibid, p.278, questions from al-Qhushairi;also al-Ghazali Ihya,2,Cairo,1967,pp.343,362.

⁷ Al-Ghazali, Of.Cit,p343.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Al-Ghazali,Ibid,p.362

¹⁰ Ibid,p.354.

¹¹ Ibid, pp. 347-348 .

that, on the issue under discussion here i.e. that of music, Ibn Qayyim Al-Jauziya, a direct student of Ibn Taimiya, disallows music completely. Another pupil of Ibn Taimiya, Al-Dhahabi, whom we have mentioned earlier, praises music sky high and regards only that kind of music as unlawful which is performed by morally depraved men and sex exciting women in the streets. Otherwise, he holds that music is something that gives the heart strength,¹² it postpones old age and even many animals react to it; hence music per se is one of the great gifts and blessings of God. Ibn Taimiya himself discusses the question of music at length in his Kitab al-Istiqama, a book which he wrote with the specific purpose of delineating the middle road among extremes in Islam. Although Ibn Taimiya is regarded generally as an extreme and rigid rightist, a perusal of his writings belies this belief. In his discussion on music where he also quotes the above mentioned statement of Al-Shafi'i in criticism of music, he states nevertheless that, according to Al-Shafii, music is a "vain pursuit (*batil*)" but that it is not unlawful in Islamic law. While stating the above-mentioned report from Al-Shafi'i, Ibn Taimiya attributes the word "Taghbir" to Al-Shafi'i and explains Taghbir by saying that it arouses *ghubar* or cloudiness in the mind. Other interpreters of the statement of Al-Shafi'i however transmit, the term as "Taghbir" instead of "taghbir". They interpret "taghyir", which means "to change", as something which changes the bad state of one's mind into a good state and therefore they understand this term to mean the opposite of what Ibn Taimiya does. Ibn Taimiya¹³ in this work has criticized both theologians (*Mutekalimun*) and has characterized them as making up opposing camps in Islam. He explains that both the theologians and the Sufis have written against each other's works of extreme severity, which is not supported by the Islamic doctrine. For example, he says that the famous theologian Ibn Furak composed a well-known work against the Sufis, while Ibn Abd al Rahman al-Sulami, the teacher of al-Qushairi, wrote a strongly worded book in condemnation of the theologians. Ibn Taimiya observes that the theologians, resemble the Jewish learned men, who have a brain but no heart, let alone feelings in the heart, while the Sufis resemble Christians who indulge in all kinds of devotional music and worship and have a heart but are unbalanced in their religion.¹⁴ Ibn Taimiya holds music to be lawful just as pleasurable food and good clothes are lawful.¹⁵ While eating is necessary eating good and pleasurable food is lawful although indulging in pleasurable food continuously is reprobate; similarly clothing is necessary but good and attractive clothing is allowed in the Shari'a, although one may not spend excessive wealth on one's clothing. In the same vein, while one hears voices which are good and attractive, making the voice more attractive by singing will not be regarded as unlawful by the Shari'a. He, however, strongly objects to the views held by many Sufis are for example, by Ahmad al-Ghazali, the Sufi brother of the illustrious Ghazali and by many Sufis later on, particularly in India by Chistis; that listening to music is religiously mandatory for the Sufi. For Ibn Taimiya, this constitutes extremism in religion which must be avoided; but he particularly condemns those Sufis who, along with music, would have the company of beautiful faces like women or adolescents. This

¹² Al-Dhahali, Of. Cit, p.161.

¹³ Ibn Taimiya, Of. Cit, p.238, n.2.

¹⁴ Ibid, pp.219-221.

¹⁵ Ibid, p.237

practice, which he claims is fairly widespread among the Sufis, he denounces with all his strength.¹⁶

Before addressing the music issue to India, I think it is worthwhile pausing briefly to give the analysis of this issue presented by Al-Ghazali in his *Ihya*, for Ghazali has not only collected the arguments and wisdom of the past generations on the issues that he tackles, but possesses an unusually powerful analytical mind and his teaching has probably been the most influential for coming generations. Al-Ghazali sets out by presenting traditional opinions for and against music, as we have done at the outset of this paper.¹⁷ Next, Al-Ghazali attempts to prove that music, by its very nature cannot be unlawful; indeed, for him, if it is not mandatory in religion, it is certainly recommended (*mustahab*). He does state that music is not for everyone because it is a catalyst that brings out from the depths of the heart its latent feelings and emotions. In some men these dormant emotions are harmful like the arousal of enmity, sex etc. These people must not hear music unless they are directed by someone who is an expert on the Spiritual Way.¹⁸ Al-Ghazali says that man possesses five perceptual senses and one inner sense which is called intelligence.¹⁹ All of these senses have their own field of activity and a certain pleasure or pain arising out of their experiences in each field. Sight, for example, is pleased by witnessing beautiful scenes like green grass, streams flowing etc. Intelligence has its own pleasure when it solves an intellectual problem or perceives a new truth. So far as hearing is concerned it has its own pleasures and pains. Therefore, the pleasures of hearing can be as little unlawful in the Shari'a as the pleasures of sight pointed to above. After giving these arguments based upon reason Al-Ghazali gives arguments from revelation for the lawfulness of music. He quotes a word from the Qura'n which says "the most repugnant voice is the voice of a donkey."²⁰ By implication then, Ghazali argues, a good voice and an attractive one cannot be unlawful but may, indeed, be recommended by the Shari'a he also quotes a Hadith which many pro-music scholars in Islam have been quoting, that the Prophet (peace be upon him) once said to Abu Musa al-Ashari, who sang beautifully, "(He, al-Ashari) has been given one of the flutes that David use to play."²¹ Since beautiful and attractive voice is not unlawful to listen to, there can be no objection either against listening to an attractive voice which is transformed into more attractive tunes and rhythms (*lahn*).²² Men can cast his voice in tune form but tunes are heard in nature as well, for example, certain birds like nightingales sing not only with an attractive voice but in tunes as well. Next comes the stage of a voice which is attractive and which is played out in tunes but which also has an understandable meaning, and this is poetry.²³ Now there is nothing in the teaching of Islam that declares poetry to be haram, although the Qur'an in the Sura of the Shu'ara

¹⁶ Ibid, pp.218-219, pp.318-319, and elsewhere.

¹⁷ *Ihya*, p.345.

¹⁸ Ibid, pp.351-352.

¹⁹ References in No.17.

²⁰ *Ihya*, p.346.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid, 346-348. Ibn Taimiya strongly disagrees with this view, which he quotes from al-Qushairi, calling it an unwarranted assumption-see *al-Istiqama*, 1, p.243.

²³ Ibid, p.348-351.

(Poets), declared that most poets are inspired by the devil, this applies only to certain types of poetry and in fact the Qur'an itself in the same Sura made an exception in favor of poets who were pious Muslims like Hasan Ibn Thabit. While enumerating seven categories of songs and poetry, like that which incites people to go to pilgrimage to the Holy Ka'ba by singing the glories of the Holy Ka'ba, Jihad poetry, Epic poetry, poetry of joy, and songs of happiness which are sung on their proper occasions and finally songs of love none of which are unlawful in Shari'a unless their objective is not praiseworthy, Al-Ghazali finally talks about poetry in love of God. To the question as to how God can be an object of love Al-Ghazali answers²⁴ that the God the Author of the universe, with all it's beautiful and useful things including human life, when made an object of proper reflection, can excite love which nothing else can. In fact, people generally do not appreciate God and do not love him, at least as he deserves to be loved, not because his effects wherein His beauty is displayed are too obscure but because they are so manifest that they blind human intelligence. God, indeed, is the Being that once a person truly loves Him he cannot love anyone else at all, and even the word *ishq* (i.e. absorbing love) fails to convey the feeling that He and His works arouse in a human heart. It is interesting to note that although even Ibn Taimiya accepts the Hadith according to which the Prophet said "God is beautiful and therefore He loves beauty", which seems to be a Sufi hadith, he nevertheless insists that the word *ishq* must not be used in reference to God but only the word *hubb* because the Qur'an has never used the word *ishq* and, secondly, because this term has been appropriated by poets. Al-Ghazali holds that so far as possible the sweet voice of a woman should not be listened to, although it is not *haram* (prohibited) per se. He goes on to say that fixing one's glance on a beautiful woman is definitely unlawful. But the Shari'a has not declared listening to her voice as such unlawful just as it has not declared looking at beautiful faces of adolescents as unlawful. Therefore, he concludes, listening to the singing of a woman who is not personally present there with her face uncovered, may be regarded as allowed by the Shari'a.²⁵ Someone asks Al-Ghazali if the Qur'an is God's revelation and there is a good deal of evidence both in the Qur'an and the Hadith that the Qur'an should be recited in a beautiful voice (to attract listeners), why is it that people still flock to other singers more than they are attracted to the recital of the Qur'an? Ghazali gives seven reasons²⁶ why singing of other songs and poetry is more attractive to the ear than the recital of the Qur'an. His account boils down to the fact that whereas, in singing, ordinary poetry may be manipulated in such a way that long vowels are shortened and short vowels lengthened and for the sake of *lahn* or tune stress may be placed on certain places and not others this is disallowed in the case of the Qur'an, because of it's sacred character. One other main reason Ghazali advances is that when poetry, because of its sacred character, or songs are heard they are designed especially to appeal to emotions, while much of the Qur'an does not arouse emotions directly. Certainly, there is much in the Qur'an that sings of the Glory of God and His creation, which arouses feelings of love and ecstasy there is much else whose subject matter is rather prosaic and therefore not suitable for the arousing of emotion. If a person, for example, hears verses concerning inheritance laws, no emotions can be aroused in him/her by this subject matter unless ones mind is as quick as to grasp

²⁴ Ibid,p.357-359.

²⁵ Ibid, p.359.

²⁶ Ibid,p.3881-385.

other points that may be allied to such verses, for example, the remembrance of death in connection with inheritance laws. An ordinary person, however, since his imagination cannot grasp points like these, is unable to be enchanted by the Qur'an reciter. There is, states Ghazali, some kind of powerful primordial harmony and mutual attunement established by God between the sense of hearing and a beautiful voice when transformed into a musical tune but which also contains ideas and allusions that powerfully affect the heart.

Before we discuss this issue in India then, the question of *sama* i.e. spiritual concerts among Sufi circles, had already been thoroughly discussed and one may say pretty well settled. The great Jalal-al-Din Rumi, in his *mathnawi* is not only not defensive about his musical instrument but wants to put its opponents on the defensive in the following couplet:

"(My musical instrument) is dead: its head is desiccated, its veins i.e. (strings) are dry and drained of life, and its skin is all dead. Whence then comes to me the voice of my friend"?²⁷

When we come to India, the first great figure we meet in this field is Ali al-Hujwiri, an eleventh century figure and therefore almost a contemporary of Ghazali like whom he pre-dates Sufi orders. Hujwiri, in his *Kashf al-Mahjub*, has a lengthy discussion on *sama*.²⁸ While, like al-Qushairi he gives both points of view both for and against *sama*, he, like his Middle Eastern predecessor, seems not to approve of it, although he did practice it. In fact, his over-all judgment on the value of *sama* is considerably harsher than that of al-Qushairi. In one of his statements Hujwiri describes music as the "root of all immorality." In this connection, as has been attempted by Bruce Lawrence in an unpublished paper titled the Early Chishti approach to *sama*, Hujwiri, as several Sufis before him mentions two sets of their terms something that begins at least with al-Qushairi if not earlier. One set of terms relates to the quality of the listener of *Sama*, is one who makes an effort to "take in" the music while *Tawajjuh* means to try to get into a state of *wajd* or ecstasy. The second pair denotes the attainment of ecstasy while *wajd* appears to mean being or identity; Thus while in a state of *wajd* the Sufi is 'lost' (*fani*) in *wajd*, he rejoices being (*baqa*) which however, is not the same being as he had before *fana*, while the other relates to the respective state of the heart of the listener. These terms are *mutasammi*, *mustani* and *nami* on the one hand and *tawajjuh wajd*. The first term in each set implies effort or artifice; Coming now to Shaikh Nizam al-Din, the point that I would like to bring to the notice of reader is the Shaikh's statement, "*sama* is an indissoluble bond for men". The words "Indissoluble bond" of course come from the Qur'an²⁹ (and mean the indissoluble bond that is utterly reliable and no matter how much pressure is put upon it, it will not break); in the Qur'an these words indicate the true spirit of Islam that bind man to. The second important word to note in this statement is

²⁷ Quoted in Muhammed Iqbal, *Bal-i-Jibril*, the poem titled *Pir-i-Rumi Wa Murid-i-Hindi*.

²⁸ See *Kashf al-Mahjub*, the chapter on *Sama*.

²⁹ Qur'an(2:256 (also 31:22).

"men". There is no doubt in this writer's mind that this refers to the famous Sufi view which, borrowing the terminology of the *futuwwa* organizations, called a perfect Sufi "a male hero or a chevalier" (*fata*) we hear time and again that a person who has attained to the highest spiritual heights, has become a chevalier: a woman who attains to those heights, in fact, becomes a chevalier and ceases to be a woman except in the physical sense, Professor Annemarie Schimmel has quoted³⁰ the Sufi, Jamal Hanswi as saying that a person who is attached to this world is a female, a person who gives up this world for the next is a eunuch, while a person who gives up both worlds for God is a chevalier (*fata*).

One interesting and important point in the doctrine of Shaikh Nizam al-Din is the relationship he establishes between Sama and the Sufi state of *baqa*. This is brought out by Ala Sijzi in the record of his sessions with Shaikh Nizam al-Din known as Fawa'id al-Fuad.³¹ He tells us "I said to the Shaikh, I do not find in anything else as much efficacy in bringing my heart to a state of pathos as I do in listening to Sama. The Shaikh replied, This is exactly the state of the people of the path and the taste of lovers. Sama kindles in them a fire of love and bonding. But for this what would *baqa* mean and what taste could it have"? Sijzi continues, "When Shaikh said this his eyes flowed with tears. He took a deep sigh from his breast and then said 'once in a dream I saw something appear before me and I recited the following hemistich:

O friend! you killed me with the hand of waiting. Then I repeated the same hemistich in the same dream and read it as follows;

O friend! you killed me by the wound of waiting . When I Woke up, I remembered that this hemistich was something like this:

O friend you killed me by the sword of waiting,³² First of all, in this account the connection between the statement about baqa and the Shaikh's account of his dream is not at all obvious at first sight. It should be noted that Sama is connected here with baqa and his spiritual condition would become intolerable without Sama and that it is only sama that makes it tolerable, acceptable and enjoyable. Baqa is a state that according to Sufis supervenes upon the state of fana or annihilation in God. In the state of fana the Sufi does not possess himself, he is not conscious of himself, he has no being himself. But in the state of baqa he regains his self and lives with the newly acquired consciousness enriched by the state of fana. But the Sufi, in his state of baqa is in a state of "painful waiting".

(Waiting, that is, to have communion with God, just he had in a state of *fana*. Different Sufis have given different interpretations of *baqa*. But Shaikh Nizam al-Din's view of *baqa* in connection with account of his dream, I think, makes quite clear that his view is

³⁰ For a discussion see, Fazlur Rahman, Health and Medicine in the Islamic Tradition, Crossroad, New York, 1987, pp.119-120.

³¹ Lahore, 1966.

³² p.108.

very close to that of the early Sufi Junaid. For Junaid, in the state of *fana* the Sufi thinks that he has become one with God and this leads him to an intense spiritual pleasure mixed with pride; he begins to talk about his newly gained status as one who has annihilated himself in God. He talks about miracles, and *mukashafat* i.e. the revelation of the truth that he has obtained in this state. But then God returns him to himself. This state of return, for Junaid, is an extra-ordinarily painful state. Through restoring the Sufi back to himself, says Junaid, God tells him "This is what you are. This is your reality. Your (so-called) identification with me was something either transitory or deprive". Junaid repeatedly says in his works that this state of *baqa* is a torturous awareness of the otherness of Sufi from God and that he longs to get back to the earlier state of *fana* but he does not get back. This is what seems to me to be the connection between Shaikh Nizam al-Din's statement that without *sama* the state of *baqa* would be intolerable and it also explains why he relates his dream about the pain of *intizar* which is characteristic of the state of *baqa*.)

In this work of Sijzi³³ it has been repeatedly stated that Shaikh Nizam al-Din strongly disapproved of instrumental music accompanying *sama*. It is related that once someone came to the Shaikh and reported to him that several of his disciples were seen in a *sama* session where musical instruments were used. The Shaikh strongly disapproved of it and said "The Shari'a has taken so much care that it has enjoined that if during prayers the Imam makes a mistake, a male standing behind him say '*Subhanallah*' in order to alert the Imam to his mistake, but that a woman may not utter any word but may strike the inside of her one hand on the left side of the other in order to avoid any suggestion of a female attractive voice". The Shaikh then went on and made the following comments "If a Sufi calls from a higher station to a lower station within the spiritual path, he will inevitably fall within the field of Shari'a (because the spiritual Path is contained within the Shari'a and is not outside it). But if someone falls outside the path of the Shari'a i.e. by resorting to use of unlawful music during *sama*. Where can he go?³⁴ Similarly, on another occasion, someone came and reported to the Shaikh that he had seen some of his followers in a *sama* session where they listened to instrumental music. When he inquired why these people had indulged in *sama* that was accompanied by instrumental music, they replied that they were so engaged in listening to *sama* that they did not even notice the instrumental music. Upon this Shaikh Nizam al-Din remarked "This is nonsense. Similar remarks can be made on behalf of indulgence in all kind of disobedience to God."³⁵

In his discussion of *sama*, Shaikh Nizam al-Din³⁶ seems to have been highly influenced by the views of Al-Ghazali and, generally speaking, follows him. The one important point on which he seems to differ from Al-Ghazali is that he does not allow listening to the voice either of a woman or a young adolescent, while Al-Ghazali,

³³ See the treatise of al-Junaid, edited and translated by Ali Hasan Abdel-Kader, entitled "The Life, Personality, and Writings of al-Junaid, London, 1962.

³⁴ Fawa'id al-Fu'ad, p.164-165.

³⁵ Ibid, p.384-385.

³⁶ Ibid, p.384-385.

theoretically at least, allowed these, as noted earlier. We have already noted that Sheikh Nizam al-Din was given to frequent weeping not only while listening to *sama* but also but also while discussing certain matters concerning spirituality and Sufism. Amir-i-Khurd, in his work *Siyar-al-Aulia*, gives detailed descriptions of some of the *sama* sessions of Sheikh Nizam al-Din. While describing one such session, Amir-i-Khurd tells us how one late afternoon a session of *sama* began which, even when the singer Hasan Paihadi, had finished his singing, kept Sheikh Nizam al-Din engaged, upon which Amir Khusrau started reciting his poetry. Sheikh Nizam al-Din continued to be under the spell of *Sama* while listening to Amir Khusrau's poetry and then the earlier singer again resumed his *sama*. The Sheikh was so overcome by his feelings that he continuously wept and sobbed.³⁷

Finally, we must touch upon the hearing at Sultan Ghiasuddin Tughlaq's court where the Sheikh was asked to come and defend his practice of *sama*. Amir -i-Khurd gives a detailed account of this court session and also of the activities of the various Ulama and Qadis who had instigated this event out of feelings of jealousy against Sheikh Nizam al-Din. Before Sheikh Nizam al-Din a similar campaign had been started against Sheikh Hamid al-Din Nagori, who, however, escaped the fury of these *ulama* because the Qadi or the judge himself concerned was himself fond of *sama*.³⁸ Amir-i-Khurd tells us that, after a good deal of questions and answers in the court of Sultan Ghiasuddin Tughlaq, the king finally turned to the grandson of Sheikh Baha al-Din Zakariya, who was the direct disciple of the founder of the Suhrawardi Tarqa, Sheikh Shihal al-Din Suhrawardi. The Suhrawardi's were known as having nothing to do with the practice of *Sama*, although both Sijzi and Amir Khurd tell us that once a man came to Multan by the name of Abdallah Rumi and told Sheikh Zakaria that once he had witnessed the founder of the Suhrawardi Tariq participating in *sama*. We are told from Abdallah Rumi that upon hearing this Sheikh Zakariya also participating in *Sama* one evening.³⁹

To resume the story of the court- hearing the king asked the grandson of Sheikh Zakariya, Sheikh Alam al-Din as to what he thought about the practice of *sama*. Alam al-Din replied that he had written a tractate concerning the pros and cons of the institution of *sama*. He also added that those who really want to listen to *sama* from the depths of their spirit, for them it is lawful; otherwise it is unlawful. The king then said to him, "You are a well-travelled man. You have been to Baghdad, Syria, and Turkey. Do people in those lands listen to *ama* or not?" Sheikh Alam al-Din replied that he had often witnessed *sama* -sessions in those lands, which are frequently attended by most Sufis, adding further that they even use musical instruments in *sama* but that no body objects to it. After this the Sultan turned to the audience and said "I think there is little wrong with *sama* and that Sheikh Nizam al-Din may continue with it."⁴⁰ It appears that the role of Sheikh Alam al-

³⁷ *Siyar al-Auliya*, p.785.

³⁸ *Ibid*, p.798.

³⁹ *Fawa'id al-Fu'ad*, pp.234-235.

⁴⁰ *Siyar al-Auliya*, pp.798.

Din was crucial in getting the matter settled in favor of Sheikh Nizam al-Din. During the discussions, Sheikh Nizam al-Din tried to put forward certain hadiths allegedly accepted by Shafi'i favor of music with drums if not with stringed instruments and flutes. The opposition to Sheikh Nizam al-Din insisted that hadiths supported the view of Shafi'i alone and the Hanafis did not accept these hadiths and therefore never allowed *sama* with music at all. The contention that the Hanafis had always been anti- *sama* is of course correct. But as I said earlier, in the light of the views of Shafi'i mentioned before, in this paper, the allegations that he had adopted the view that singing with certain musical instruments at least was lawful, is extremely difficult to believe.

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