



Evolving Islamic Styles of Dressing in the Punjab, Pakistan

Ghulam Abbas*

Archeologists and anthropologists have explained early clothing styles against the harshness of weather that had primarily some purposes such as decoration, magic, cult or prestige and protection, however, latter found to be more practical as it was resulted by the extreme climate conditions. Biologically speaking, no clothes were used in the hot summer and sweating environs, and if it had to use then they were remained open or unstitched. In the case of extreme cold conditions, the development of closely fitted or skintight style of clothing was a behavioral adaptation to deal with the chill. In the ancient times, these purposes of clothing have resulted into various styles of clothing. With the passage of time as the human civilization developed these purposes remained almost unchanged. Yet the particular style of dressing used in specific region depends on the domination of certain purpose or the geographic conditions. As far as South Asia is concerned, it would not be wide of the mark to say that all walks of everyday life are influenced, or rather defined by religion. Accordingly, the Muslim society of the Punjab, Pakistan is also no exception.

The study of ancient Indian sculptures and the murals of Ajanta and Ellora explores that unstitched dresses were in vogue before the Muslims influx to India. For instance, both men and women covered their bodies with unstitched sheets, saris and dhotis, which is also confirmed by the traveling accounts of the early Arabs who visited India even before the Muslim conquerors. Interestingly, earlier Arabs, before the Islamic era, like the Indian, also wore unsewn clothes from waist to the ankles and the headgears. During the medieval period, the local Indian style of dressing got influenced by the Arabs, Persian and Turkish styles, but a grand combination of all these, resulted into an aesthetic form typically Mughal in execution. According to some historians, especially those who have heavily relied on the syncretism in medieval India, the advent of Muslims, from diverse backgrounds in different phases, caused the establishment of new social, economic, political, religious and cultural milieu in India. Though the Muslims came to India as conquer and "the culture of the Muslims", as Jamil Jalabi says, "was the culture of a conquering nation. It had a full capacity and potential to assimilate great vastness of life". During the early phases of Muslims' settlement in India the process of syncretism took place which resulted into establishment of a new composite culture, also called Al-Hind ways or Muslim-Hindu culture [1]. The distinguishing quality of the Al-Hind ways was that it did not eradicate the ancient Indian heritage, but embraced it within the new consciousness of good neighborliness, of sharing together without compromising their own respective identities.

Akbar, the great Mughal Emperor, following his policy of sulh-e kul (peace with all) was so keen to develop himself as per local Indian taste and aesthetics that he was able to invent a new costume combining the Jamah and the Takawchiyah. The Jamah was foreign and wore by his ancestors, while the Takawchiyah was a kind of one-fold typically Indian garment originated from the costumes of the Rajputs [2]. The resultant new garment was also called the Takawchiyah. It became very popular during his reign and continued to be worn by the end of the Colonial period.

Of course, a new era of syncretism in the Indian style of clothing begun during the colonial period in India as the Britishers or the Europeans were the last to introduce pant-shirt and pant-coat to the Indian taste for dressing. The European styles of dressings engendered to create many new styles of dressing by adopting new methods of tailoring and combining a variety of new features to the Indian styles of clothing. Present modern styles of clothing in the Indo-Pak subcontinent may be considered as the direct Western influence caused by the printed tailoring and fashion catalogues and the cutting edge information technologies. It has also replaced many articles of the Mughal era.

In post-Partition (1947) era, the military takeover especially by General Zia-ul Haq from 1977 to 1988 is deemed to be the most crucial period in the history of Pakistan as it gave rise to the far-reaching influence on the socio-political and religio-cultural life of the country. The Nizam-e Mustafa (Islamic System of Governance) was enforced in every sphere of life. Within Islam the puritanical tendencies were revived which ignited the relative distant problems. As a result the traditional triangular rivalries between the Shias, the Barelvīs, and the Wahhābīs, once again, entered into the most critical phase of sectarianism. Alongside the inflammatory religious discourses, deadly weapons were also used and adherents of all three sects were targeted that continues until today. These sectarian rivalries are cutting across secular aspirations of everyday social life critically. Other than bradri (caste), class and sectarian-homogeneity, devotional bonds to certain sufi orders or spiritual ideologies have become another provision for establishing the matrimonial relationships. Long ago the element of tolerance had been obsolete and presently one's woe is deemed another's foe. Every sect believes itself the only righteous school of faith while all others have gone astray. Each sect wants its faith to be the state religion and others' declared kafir (blasphemous). Therefore, everyone assumes his religious duty to bring all others on the right path. Denouncing other's faith has become the only method of proselytization. There are certain human behaviors which have been constituted by the varying clothing styles, all popularly considered Islamic ways of dressing. These behaviors reflect the strong feelings of sectarian differences, identities, rivalries, desires, social/spiritual status, religious/sectarian bonds and spiritual affiliations. This study endeavors to scrutinize the anthropology of dress addressing the relationship between these so-called Islamic dressing styles and the sharia (Islamic doctrine) and de-scribes the reasons for ongoing critical process of Arabization of the local cultures and aesthetic tastes pertaining to the contemporary styles of clothing in the Punjab. In contemporary popular Islamic culture of the Punjab, Pakistan, some other new elements have been founds that indicate critical sectarian, moral, social and legal issues of

*Corresponding author: Ghulam Abbas, Associate Professor, GIFT University, Pakistan, Tel: +92 55 3892989; E-mail: abbasnca73@yahoo.com, abbas@gift.edu.pk

Received: November 28, 2020 Accepted: April 28, 2021 Published: May 01, 2021

the men's clothing as oppose to the recommendations of the sharia. Amongst these are the Tablighi Jamat, Dawat Islami, Sufi Barkat and Saifiya order, a popular fashion brand called J. by Junaid Jamshed, the tendency to wear the typical Arabic dresses, wearing shalwar qameez particularly on Friday, and a variety of head dresses used by Naat Khwans. Before we get on to describe these clothing behaviors, let me first explain briefly the Islamic ruling about the clothing.

These rivalries and identities may be viewed in the contemporary everyday visual culture of Pakistan, which suggest how the element of religiosity has been cultivated after 1980s. It reflects how sectarian differences and identities have operated at the social, cultural, political, and even individual levels. All three sects have developed exclusive textual and visual vocabularies incorporating emblems, visual signs, colors, slogans and particularly different styles of clothing as marks of their sectarian identities. Certain devotional affiliations especially with the varying sufi practices and ideologies are defining the critical religio-cultural and sectarian fabrics of the Islamic societies.

The Islam accords clear guidance about each and every aspect of life, even including matters of decency. Albeit Islam has no fixed standard of clothing or type of dress that Muslims must wear, yet there are minimum requirements that must be met. In other words, codes of conduct, specifically in terms of dress, are greatly relaxed when individuals are home and with their families. There are certain requirements which are supposed to be followed by both women and men Muslims when they appear in public, and not in the privacy of their own homes. Islamic ruling for women and men has been clearly explained in the Quran and in many ahadis (plr. of hadis meaning the tradition of the Prophet Muhammad). The question of women dressing in Islam is not new and has been hotly debated throughout the Islamic history. The accounts of theological arguments on the topic fill volumes of history and legal commentaries. However, this study is more concerned with the contemporary clothing styles of men in the Punjab.

According to the Islamic ruling, the intimate parts of the human body, especially men, must be covered by clothing. It is important to mention here that the fundamental requirements of the Muslim man's dress are similar to Muslim woman's clothing with the difference being mainly in degree. The Quran uses the words "awrah" which refers to the intimate parts of both men and women bodies that should be covered all times unless there is an expressed exception. On the basis of Quran and ahadis, it is unanimously agreed upon by the jurists that awrah for the woman is defined as the whole body except for the face and hands; however, for the man, it is defined as the area between the navel and the knees [3]. So following the definition of awrah, there are the basic requirements: man should fully cover his awrah; men's clothes should be loose enough so as not to describe what he is covering (his awrah); clothing should be thick enough in order to conceal the color of the skin or the parts required to be covered; dress should not be designed in a way to attract attention, and the basic rules of modesty and avoiding "show off" applies to all believers' men and women. Additionally, men's clothing should not be similar to the dress of nonbelievers and females, and it should not reflect the fame, pride and vanity as well. Let me now explain the contemporary varying Islamic styles of dressing in the Punjab and reasons for their immense popularity.

Tablighi Jamat is a 'Society for spreading faith'. It is strictly a non-political global missionary movement that focuses on urging Muslims to return to Practicing Islam, and particularly in matters of

ritual, dress, and personal behavior. It may be considered one of the most influential religious twentieth-century movements of Islam in India. The movement was founded in 1927 by Maulana Muhammad Ilyas al-Kandhlawi in Mewat province of India in accordance to the teachings and practices of the Prophet and his companions. Maulana put forward the slogan, 'Aye Musalmano! Musalman bano' (O Muslims! Become Muslims). Presently this movement has spread to 150 countries and has an active following estimated to be between 70 to 80 million devout followers. The teachings of Tablighi Jamat are expressed in 'Six Principles', Kalimah (Declaration), Salat (Prayer), Ilm-o zikr (Knowledge and remembrance of God), Ikram-e Muslim (Respect of Muslim), Ikhlas-e Niyat (Sincerity of intention), Dawat-o Tabligh (Proselytization). The movement asks the Muslims at-large to spend their time and money in spiritual journeys called khurooj to seek religious knowledge or taleem and promote the faith. During these scheduled journeys – usually for a specified period of 4 months, 40 days, 10 days, or 3 days – members of each travelling group known as jamat learn the basic tenets of Islam from each other. The members of the Tablighi Jamat usually wear white Kurta, Shalwar with white Pagri. The kurta is a loose collarless long shirt with open sleeves while the Shalwar is a pair of loose, pleated trousers, usually tapering to narrow at the ankles. White is used for symbolizing the purity of the soul.

Other than politicians, many celebrities in Pakistan have also associated themselves with the Tablighi Jamat in which a number of Pakistani cricketers are incorporated. A well admired musician Junaid Jamshed was also reverted to Islam through the Jamat. Junaid Jamshed Khan was a Pakistani recording artist, television personality, fashion designer, occasional actor, singer-songwriter, and preacher. He was born in Karachi on September 3, 1964. He first gained nationwide prominence and international recognition as group 'Vital Signs' vocalist in 1987 with the album, Vital Signs 1. Soon after the commercial success of Vital Signs' in Pakistan's rock music industry, Junaid decided to release his solo albums. As a result, his first solo album, Junaid of Vital Signs, was released in 1994; however, his fourth and last solo album, Dil Ki Baat, in 2001, became highly successful in the country and gained a lot of public and media attention. In 2004, Junaid left both his engineering and music careers but, to supplement his income, he opened up the clothing store "J." (www.junaidjamshed.com) which has several outlets throughout the country and abroad. Afterwards, he focused on his religious activities for Islam and reciting naats (an epithet in which the Prophet Muhammad is praised) on TV and releasing them on CD's. Junaid died in an air crash when he was returning from a Tablighi Jamat mission in Chitral on December 7, 2016.

Alongside a wide range of outfits for men and women, J. is selling Khaadis (a form of Kurta-Shalwar). This product is targeting the religious people particularly those who belong to the puritanical faith called Wahhabis, Deobandis or Tablighis etc. Likewise, keeping in view the rocketing demand of the hajjis (the person who performs hajj), the Leisure Club, another fashion brand which was founded in 1997 by SEHAS LLC, has introduced the Haj Kurta. It is meant to be used by those Muslims who go to Saudi Arabia for the haj [4] or umrah (supplementary hajj) purpose.

Dawat-e Islami (Invitation to Islam) is also a non-political and purely religious organization belongs to the Sunni Barelvi faith. This movement was founded by Indian religious scholar Arshad Al-Qadri in 1981. It is serving the Barelvis doubly; one, as to proselytize Muslims into pure Sunni Barelvi faith, and the second, to encounter

and to save Bareilvis from influences of the Tablighi Jamat. It also allows its adherents to follow the tradition of the Prophet. It was launched from Dar al-Ulum Amjadia Karachi and Muhammad Ilyas Attar Qadri was appointed its first Amir (commander). Today Dawat-e Islami seems to be very active and using the electronic media to achieve its required goals. Since 2009, it is running an independent Madni TV in order to project its message globally like QTV and a chain of Peace TV channels. Interestingly, organizational structure, the nature of its preaching activities and the methods to perform them is highly identical to the Tablighi Jamat ones. Even the clothing style of its followers is also the same. They use white kurta with open sleeves and baggy shalwar, but the color of the pagri will be green, inspired from the gumbad-e khizra or the green dome of the Prophet Muhammad's shrine at Medina.

Barkat Ali Ludhianvi is a sufi who belonged to the Qadariya spiritual order. He was born on 27 April, 1911 at Ludhiana, a city of the Eastern Punjab and was died on 26 January, 1997 at Faisalabad, a renowned city of the Western Punjab. His great-grandfather was also one of the great sufis of the Seventeenth century and popular with the title of Baba Dandu Shah. He is enshrined at the bank of the River Sutlej in Eastern Punjab. Earlier he was doing job in Indian Army, and after the Partition 1947, he migrated to Pakistan and got settled at Samundri, a small town of the district Faisalabad. He considered his migration for God and called himself mahajar il-Allah (immigrant of God). According to Sufi Barkat, he had to migrate forty-one times. He also assumed the title of dervish al-vora, a saint who has abandoned this material world. During his long journey of migration for God from 1947 to 1997, he was ridiculed, mocked and humiliated by the people from varying background such as landlord, policeman and shopkeeper etc. Such a negative behavior made him learned a lot. In 1957, he paid a visit to the shrine of Makhdoom Alauddin Ali Ahmed Sabir Kaliyar (1196-1291), nephew successor to Baba Farid (1188-1280), and the first in the Sabiriya branch of the Chishtiya Order, at Kaliyar village, near Haridwar, India. Sufi Barkat gave his word to Makhdoom that he will renounce this world utterly for God. He promised to do three things for rest of his life as: 1) to praise God, 2) invitation to Islam, and 3) selfless serving to humanity. Apart from first two points which are purely of spiritual nature, in order to serve humanity he established a hospital called Darul Ehsan which is run on alms and donations received from his murids disciples or followers. He was so much committed to his cause that unlike the established sufi tradition of appointing khalifa (spiritual heir) he declared that "no one will be my khalifa; however, everyone who praise God, invite people towards Islam and serve poor people selflessly will be my khalifa." Barkat Ludhianvi authored more than four hundred books on various subjects incorporating religion, ethics and philosophy.

Most pictures of Sufi Barakat, made during the last decade of his life, may be seen dressed in khaki (dusty or earthy color) kurta and tehband/tehdad/dhoti. Interestingly, no collar or band round the neck is given to the kurta, rather unlike the sewing tradition it is half-sleeved that demonstrates the persona of purely a working person. He had a long and untrimmed beard and a khaki cap identical to the Nehru cap which is generally deemed as the hallmark of his followers at the level of visual. Sufi Barkat had a special relation with this earthy color as on one night, he saw the Bible covered in khaki clothe in his dream. For almost more than a decade he had been wearing khaki uniform as he had served the Indian Army till the Partition in 1947. However, according to Sufi Nazar Muhammad, one of his popular khalifas, who is also serving the humanity as per desires of

his pir at Gujranwala, the typical style of the cap and the khaki color emblematically differentiate the followers/disciples of Sufi Barkat amongst many others dressed in a variety of colors and varying styles of clothing.

Pir Saif ul Rehman Mubarak established a new sufi order called Saifiya in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab provinces. In fact Pir was born on Monday, 10 August, 1925, in a village of Urchi, also known as Baba Kuli, 20 Kilometers in the south of Jalalabad, Afghanistan. He received his early education of the Quran from his father Qari Sarfraz Khan, but was able to memorize only a few chapters of the Holy Book. He was only 13 years old when his mother died. His father took him to Sheikh Khwaja Shah Rasul Taliqani, who belonged to the Naqshbandiya order of sufis. There Pir Mubarak set out on his spiritual journey at very young age. It was his first beyat (allegiance) at the hand of Shah Rasul. After the death of the Sheikh in 1968, following the advice of his murshid (spiritual director) he joined the spiritual company of Muhammad Hashim Simingani for his second beyat. Shah Rasul forecasted about the future fortune of Pir Mubarak and said that this boy will be the sultan (king) of all auliya (saints) of his time. He also studied the science of Islamic law and jurisprudence, hadis and the legal commentary of the Quran from a number of great teachers.

During the regime of Dr Najib (r. 1987-1992) when the socialists domination over Islamists engendered a kind of civil war throughout the Afghan territories, the Pir Mubarak, in 1987, decided to migrate to a Pir Sabaq, a small town of the district of Nowshera, Pakistan. He stayed there for three years with Maulana Abdul Salam and started to invite people to the God. Later he shifted to Khajuri near a popular Barah Market in the suburbs of Peshawar, where he built a complex, comprising a mosque, a madrassa (seminary) and a sufi khanqah. His style of preaching Islam and to rejuvenate the Sharia (Islamic doctrine) was quite identical to the Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi (1564-1624), a popular sufi of the puritanical Naqshbandiya order in India, who was an ardent exponent of the sufi philosophy of wahdat al-shuhud (the Unity of Appearance). Apart from Naqshbandiya, Pir Mubarak would also boast to have received the spiritual training indirectly or directly in the renowned Mujaddadiya, Chishtiya, Qadariya and Suhrawardiya sufi orders, yet he never mentioned his teachers particularly for this purpose. He also used the title Imam-e Khurasan (the Leader of Khurasan), although it is difficult to prove any geographic or spiritual relations of Pir Mubarak and the particular region of Khurasan. Finally he moved to Lahore in 2006 and dwelled there till his death on Sunday, 27 June, 2010. He had seven marriages during his life time, out of which he had four wives alive at the time of his death at the ripe old age of 85. He left thirteen sons and four daughters amongst his descendants. His eldest son Muhammad Saeed Haideri Al-Saifi became his gadi nasheen (spiritual heir), and the rest all are engaged in certain capacities to run the routine operations of the khanqah (convent), mosque and madrassah.

Once he said, my message to my disciples, friends and youth is that the success in this world and the hereafter depends upon the following of the sharia and the slavery of the Prophet Muhammad. Who will adapt the sharia, would be successful, and the deprived one will remain unfortunate. I have endeavored to cast my youth and disciples out of the mould of Islam. I believe that God will treat me in a good manner.

In an interview with Malik Mehboobul Rasul Qadri, Pir Mubarak answered the question regarding the significance of amama as, "the

use of amama is quite an act of following the sunnat (the tradition of the Prophet), and the performing only one namaz (prayer) with amama is better than the seventy prayers said without amama. The present era is full of seditions for the ummat (Muslim nation), and to revive one tradition of the Prophet may reward you more than even one hundred martyrs. This cap-cum-amama is generally considered to be the symbolic headgear of the followers of the Saifiya order. Indeed it is the Shia amama ties around the Turkish cap. However, a particular form of amama tied without any cap is mostly used by the Iranian or Isna Ashari Shia Ulema. Muhammad Tahir-ul Qadri, founder of Tehrik Minhajul Quran [5] and a well known religious scholar who belong to the Sunni Barelvi faith, is popular for using the Turkish cap.

The tradition of securing sectarian identity through apparels is not new. This tradition may be traced back to the “Ganga Jamni Tehzeeb”.

The tendency of wearing the Arab dresses especially on the Milad occasion is an important feature of the Milad celebrations in Muslim South Asia. Though this tendency is not new and goes back to 1950s when the processionists used to put on Arab dresses. This practice was common in Lahore, Delhi and Mumbai though it was restricted to the children; however, presently this propensity is growing steadily in adults. The increasing popularity of this new trend may be ascribed to the popular Pakistani naat-khwans, liberal South Asian cultural ethos, the orthodox puritanical sects, and media for the fashioning of Arab culture in the region.

According to the recent developments in modern naat-khwani, Abdul Rauf Rufi a well-known Pakistani naat-khwan, was the first appeared in the traditional Arabic men dress called thawb/dishdasha, probably in late 1990s. Later, it became a tradition to wear the Arab dress by many Pakistani naat-khwans to give Arabic look to their spectators. This practice of wearing Arab dress is common amongst both Barelvis and the Wahhabis. Earlier Arab dress was used occasionally but the present days this propensity is becoming an everyday practice. In the age of globalization, when there are so many sources available, these naat-khwans become the ideals in the popular devotionism. Amazingly, to give respect and cherish other’s religious and cultural traditions has been one of the South Asian cultural practices. In some ways, either soft feelings for the ethnic cultures or emotional religious association of the Muslims of South Asia with the Arab world, as it is the land where Islam was originated, may have played a role in fashioning the Arab dresses.

As per practice of the Milad processions in South Asia, children (only boys) would be sitting on the carriage and enjoying overwhelmingly. Boys would clad in a complete traditional Arabic men dress called thawb/dishdasha, and keffiyeh on heads. Some would be riding on camels and looked extremely thrilled. They would be hiring camels especially for this occasion, following the tradition of the procession. Camel has certain symbolic value in the Milad processions as per its relevance to the Arab cultures. It is said that according to the Arab cultural tradition, after the birth of the Prophet – newly-born baby was sent with Halima – for early fostering. She was riding on a she-camel and took the baby to her home in the suburbs of Makkah. Although, riding on camel is invariably cherished by children, but it reflects, somehow, an aspect of dramatization at the level of performance and spectacle. It may be related with the performances of Ramlila or Krishnlila, but simultaneously, it could also be distinguished from the Hindu religious performances, where

human beings can become God, unlike Islam. In a way it becomes a kind of mobile theatre which required a wide arena, may be a city or some part of it. Despite the Ramlila or Krishnlila performances in India, which is the birthplace of Hinduism, the performance of Islamic content in a different context denotes the Arabicization or Islamicization of the local cultures. This re-enactment of religious content per se resonate certain human desires of becoming a deity or a part of divine anecdote.

This occasional style of Arabic dressing is becoming a common everyday style of clothing in Punjab. A couple of months ago, I came across a person Hafiz Zain Riaz who belongs to the Wahhabi faith and he is a Imam masjid. He had put on ghatrah and aqal, a purely Arabic headdress, with the local kurta and shalwar. This Wahhabi intention also represents the ambitions of religio-cultural school of Arab nationalism that “regards Islam as a vital part of the Arab national heritage” and believes: “in modern times, Arab could further contribute to world civilization by striving for freedom, unity and socialism”[6]. Apparently, the Wahhabism is destined to serve Arab national concerns and to subvert the Sufism, Barelviism and Shiism, the custodians of the syncretic values that developed under the notions of rawadari (tolerance) in the Subcontinent. The Wahhabi project of Arabacization of the local Islamic cultures. It endeavors to the replacement of certain Perso-Islamic, Indo-Islamic aesthetics and local expressions, which have been developed into popular Islamic culture and vernaculars over the practice of centuries in the Subcontinent. For example, the replacement of the local forms of burqa and rab or khuda with the Arabic abaya [7] and Allah [8] respectively, clearly shows the elimination of the liberal values of local Islamic cultures and Perso-Islamic aesthetics, which have been cherished and cultivated after a long and historic process of cultural syncretism.

The act of putting topi (caps) on heads is not peculiar to any occasion, and may also be observed throughout the year. In my discussions, as gleaned from different Muslim students at JNU, wearing a cap is the common practice among Muslims across the country that differentiates them visually from all others in India. Similarly, the use of burqa is also getting popular among their female counterpart. Apart from the Islamic ruling, it is also a point of distinction among all other women in public sphere. As pointed out by the visual marker of difference fall under the acts of “showing” and “seeing”[9], whereby the topi, the beard and the burqa explicitly demonstrate their desires to be seen as “a Muslim” in public spaces. It is also confirmed by the popular Sachar Committee Report in which all three symbols are declared as “Markers of Muslim Identity”[10] in India. The use of topi is another point of distinction between the Indian and Pakistani Muslims. In Pakistan, Muslims wear topi only when they have to say prayer.

Considering the significance of visual, mostly naat-khwans love to have their photographs published on mahafil posters and their own business cards. These photographic representations manifest beards of varying length and styles, sometimes, dyed in varying shades of brown, black and red! According to the Islamic doctrine, having beard on the face is sunnat (lawful as per tradition of the Prophet). Popularly it is considered as an emblem of a true momin (faithful) and enhances the character of a pious Muslim. A variety of headgears is also revealed e.g. sindhi topi (traditional cap from Sindh), amama (Arabic turban), kulah (a Persian style cap within a coronet) and other highly embellished headdresses (in which some designs are specific to the northern-areas of Pakistan). These headdresses signify

the individual's taste, his association with the certain Sufi order and his emotional attachments with the local or alien cultures. The use of amama and the kulah denotes the Arab-Indian and Perso-Indian aesthetics respectively at the level of dresses. Yet, the use of embroidered sherwani (Indian style of overcoat) with shalwar (trouser) and kulah in vibrant colors signifies the contemporary fashion of costumes used by the bridegrooms at marriage occasion in Pakistan and popular singers. It is also reminiscent of the Muslim elite of colonial period.

The role of cutting edge technology to substantiate the public image of a naat-khwan is also noteworthy. Presently available many video albums of the celebrated and well-established naat-khwans reveal the change of costumes like the Bollywood and Lollywood actors and actresses in film songs, in order to capture spectators' attention. This changing of costumes evidently shows the desire what Mitchell calls "showing" and "seeing". Many boutiques and textile enterprises sponsor naat albums for the sake of advertisement. Sometimes, video clips from the documentaries of National Geographic, images of the haj occasion, images of the shrines in Makkah and Medina and other animations are incorporated to enhance the picturesque nature of videos and the comprehension level of content. Albeit this gloomy and fashionable look of naat-khwans is greatly appreciated at popular level but it is viewed very critically in religious arenas. As Mufti Asif Ashraf Jalali, an established and popular Sunni religious scholar has objection on the appearance of naat-khwans and states clearly in his fatwa: "a naat-khwan is not to make others feel fashionable and singer

by his style, manners and costume" [11]. But nobody pays attention to it, perhaps due to the popular demand of the visual pleasure created by the Bollywood and Lollywood films.

References

1. Chand T (1965) Society and state in the Mughal period. Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
2. Ansari MA (2008) Socio-cultural Life of the Great Mughals (1526-1707 AD). Sundep Prakashan.
3. Abbas S (2015) And O you believers! Turn all toward Allah that you may attain bliss. *J Middle East Women's Stu* 24: 30-31.
4. Henderso JC (2011) Religious tourism and its management: The hajj in Saudi Arabia. *Int J Tour Res* 13: 541-552.
5. Tahir-ul-Qadri M (2007) Islamic concept of knowledge. Lahore: Minhajul Quran Publication.
6. Agwani M S (1981) The Arab World and Non-Alignment. *International Studies* 20: 371-377.
7. Lindholm C (2013) Cultural collision: The branded abaya. *Fashion, Style & Popular Culture*: 45-55.
8. Moshay G J O (2008) Who is this Allah?. Chick Publications.
9. Mitchell WT (2005) What do pictures want?: The lives and loves of images. University of Chicago Press.
10. Sachar R (2006) Sachar Committee Report. Government of India.
11. Asif M, Jalali A (2010) Ek Nau Muslim Ke Sawalaat Ke Jawabaat. Lahore: Sirat-e Mustaqeem Publications: 48.

Author Affiliations

Associate Professor, GIFT University, Pakistan