

**ECO-FRIENDLY TEACHINGS OF RESHISM IN KASHMIR WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SHEIKH NOOR-UD-DIN (R A) "NUNDRESH"**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Today the whole world is facing the all-time biggest problem of environmental crises. Though man has made his life very comfortable and luxurious but it is all at the cost of life supporting pure environment. Mother earth which the only life supporting planet in the universe is now at the verge of extinction, not because it makes the capacity to hold fresh life but because of the misuse and adulteration of life supporting organs. At present we are in the rat race of materialism and in the pursuit of worldly wealth we are destroying the ecological balance of nature, Kashmir which is considered the most beautiful part of the world owing to the pure waters, lush green forests and pure and clean mountains and valleys but now the scenario is different. This paper will highlight the teachings of great Sufi Sheikh Noor-ud-din Wali (R A) which he propagated throughout his life for the conservation of the nature.*

**Keywords:** *Environmental issues, Sufism, Extinction. Eco-friendly, Technology.*

**Introduction**

Environmental Education is a process of recognizing values and clarifying concepts in order to develop skills and added tools necessary to understand and appreciate the interrelationship among man, his culture and his bio-physical surrounding. It creates an overall perspective, which acknowledges the fact that natural environment and man-made environment are inter-dependent. It should consider the environment in its totality and should be a continuous lifelong process beginning at the pre-school level and continuing through all stages. It should be inter-disciplinary and examine major environmental issues from local, national and international points of view. It should utilize various educational approaches to teach and learn about and from the environment with stress on practical activities and first-hand experience. It is through this process of education that people can be sensitized about the environmental issues.

We must understand that with the passage of time the empty part of the 'vessel' gradually fills up with received knowledge and information, and, as religious evangelists would confirm, it is far easier to convert an atheist than one who already subscribes to a particular faith or belief-system. Because, in the case of the former, the 'vessel' is already empty and therefore easier to fill, while in the case of the latter, the 'vessel' must be emptied of existing knowledge and information before it could be re-filled with new knowledge and information. The process of emptying and re-filling can be difficult because, as a child grows up, he or she accumulates life experience and norms and values specific to his or her socio-cultural context. Also, with advancing years we become set in our ways and comfortable with what is familiar to us, and so it becomes more and more difficult for us to change our values or attitudes unless forced to do so by circumstances.

It would follow, therefore, that early childhood is the ideal time for instilling environmental awareness in children and for educating them on the need to care for and respect the natural environment instead of exploiting it mindlessly or degrading it. If done effectively, imaginatively and universally, such education would sustain them through their lives' sojourn in ways that would ensure that a reasonable global environmental capital is left behind for future generations.

The Reshi order of the Sufism is one of the main Sufi orders. It is itself an ideology like Sufism & a way of life & has got its own style of social & cultural setup. Reshi is a Sanskrit word which means clean & clear or pure, some scholars are of the opinion that Reshi has been derived from Reyesh which means to see and they believe that Reshi is a person who can see beyond the worldly means and has got deep insight into the existence & metaphysical aspects of life. In Kashmir the Reshism is as old as its history, since the beginning of the human civilization in this part of world it has mentioned by Kalhan that the valley of Kashmir has been made worth human life by a great Reshi known as Kashab Reshi. According to historian the valley of Kashmir was occupied by water and it was under the control of a great giant (Dev) & it was Kashab Reshi who entered this valley for the first time & made the Dev to leave this land & latter on it was made inhabitable by the people.

Eco-friendly means "being friendly to the environment". Eco-friendly technology is all about optimization of renewable resources without harming the environment. Aim of this technology is "do more by using less". This technology makes sure that we use fewer resources with full efficiency for gaining more profitability and productivity. By using this technology, we can get energy from the sun, water, wind and sea.

We can protect our environment by reducing toxic emissions of gases and liquids from various industries. We can increase the recovery and reuse of waste or scrap materials. People are more alert about the environment. They are intended to buy eco-friendly products. It will give a healthy competition among the companies. At present companies can increase their brand image through providing eco-friendly products. By developing new innovative products, companies can earn credibility and fame among the customers. It will reduce risk also by not using toxic substances. There can be innumerable advantages of eco-friendly technology. It depends on us that what extent we can use this eco-friendly technology

### **Objectives**

The paper has following objectives:

- To know the ecological conditions of Kashmir division of J and K State.
- To high light the sufi teachings of Sheikh Noor ud din Wali (R A).
- To find out the relation of sufi teachings with ecological conservation.
- To identify ecofriendly technologies for sustainable development

### Sheikh Noor-ud-din as an Ecologist

At the time when Sheikh Noor-u-din Wali was preaching his message into pros and cons of Kashmir the surroundings were completely virgin and greatly un-interfered by the destructive human activities. Kashmir was a real scene of Paradise. The present cities of Kashmir especially the Srinagar city round the Dal Lake were covered by the dense forests; pure land, fresh air and crystal clear water were there characteristics. Historians have mentioned that when Sheikh Noor-u-din along with his close companion Naseer-u-din in his journey to Srinagar reached near present Dalgate he stopped there and cautioned his disciple not to proceed ahead. Baba Naseer-u-din asked for a reason and Sheikh replied "It is the paradise and we are yet to make sufficient meditation to get ourselves entitled to enter the heaven".

After complete two centuries, the Mughal aesthetics discovered this paradise and they beautified it with their rich architecture, the present Mughal gardens in front of Zabarwan on the western bank of the Dal Lake are the examples of such architecture. There is no doubt that the Sheikh Noor-u-din's Kashmir was paradise which had all the bounties of nature undisturbed. In spite of that Sheikh Noor-u-din had Sainctic vision about the future that he was aware that this natural beauty will get disturbed and tarnished by the irresponsible acts of uncultured, uneducated and ignorant inhabitants of Kashmir.

Sheikh Noor-u-din who was having ecological vision has explained the importance of ecological balance some six hundred years before. The following verse is as famous as a universal truth and is respected by people with letter and spirit.

ان پوشره تیلہ  
پوشہ ون ییلہ

Meaning - The universe will sustain only if the forests (trees) sustain.

The sayings of the great Saint are at present used as a motto by the Jammu and Kashmir Forest Department for spreading awareness for afforestation. Sheikh made Conscious efforts for maintaining ecological balance both by his literary work and teachings, Sheikh Noor-ud-din has practically avoided any Carnivorous diet only to safeguard other creatures of the God.

Sheikh Noor-ud-din has explained the dependence of humans on the nature in a very nice way, and made us clear that at every stage of development we are dependent on the bounties of nature in one way or the other. After the breast feeding we take milk from the domestic animals, which they (animals) generate from wild and domestic grasses, we start taking food, the food also mainly comes from field and plants so we are dependent on nature, we need clothing and shelter in the form houses. These necessities are also obtained from the forests, and other natural resources and when we become helpless at old age nobody helps us even the nears and dears leave us at that time and it is nature which helps us at that time as well. Plants provide us a Stick which becomes our support. Sheikh Noor-ud-din has treated these obligations of nature as the nature's debt and not as free gifts. According to the Sufi Sect of Muslim jurisprudence, the debt is the first liability to be discharged from the assets of the deceased believer. No any believer should die without clearing his / her debt whether of his companion or nature borrowed by him / her even of a single penny, lest he dies under the obligation. According to Muslim law based on mandatory provisions of Quran, Hadith or the preaching of great Muslim Saints the Sin committed by disobedience of God's orders may be

forgiven if the Sinner Consciously goes for penance. On the other hand, according to the principles of the Muslim ethics, the debt from a fellow being or even from nature is a mutual transaction between the two and such debt if not discharged cannot be forgiven by any manner of Penance unless the creditor forgives the debt. This indicates that no any human being is free to pollute the environment and if he utilizes a tree he should implant another so that the debt of nature gets credited and a balance will be maintained in the nature.

Sheikh Noor-ud-din was a great environmentalist as he respects not only the Creator but all the creatures, He has produced, when Sheikh was warned about Cave dwelling by her mother and she said to her son there are certain wild animals that can harm you. On this Sheikh replied by following verse:

گوہڑ چھم کورمت گچھ تے  
بہہ تے شال چھم باڑے  
وانس وپترم پچھ تے  
دبو پچھ چھم خد ماڑے

Meaning - I have painted the Cave, for my meditation, I am staying here to create a relation with nature, The Lions; Jackals are my friends and family members. I consider life is brief and it should be lived in harmony with other Creatures of God.

Recognizing the importance of the flowering plants and the natural topographical features of land Sheikh has said:

پوشہ متین لولہ ابدالن  
خوش کلو من بوزکھ معنے  
سنگاسن چھکھ کوہن تہ بالن  
یمن لعلن مول گس زانے

Meaning - Those light houses who have bedecked themselves with roses, who have ingrained capacity to comprehend their Sweet words. Have adorned the hilltops and mountain cliffs as their thrones, Can one evaluate the worth of those Jewels? It is the nature through which man develops communication with his creator and receives eternal inspiration from Him.

Sheikh Noor-ud-din was critically examining the life of people and their way of dealing with the nature. In his poetry he had time and again warned the people not to misuse the natural resources for their Selfish needs the following verse of Sheikh Clearly demonstrates his concerns about the life style problems and the way people are performing their work while harming the nature.

ون تہ ونہ نشہ لنجے ژچن  
کیاہ ژٹتھ لنکھ پچن تل  
کندیو ماژو پرنگن ڈبن تہ کوچھن  
دہن کتھہ نہ بریو کھ ژچن تل  
شیطانی اتھ وٹھر ژچن  
حساب ہنکھ پچن تل

**Meaning** - While plucking the fruit (almond, walnut, apple, etc.) from the trees we recklessness damage the branches of the trees, thereby reduce their productivity, damaging nature and disturbing its balance why are you using wood (extra) in your houses by destroying trees, why have you decorated your house by the wastage of timber. Why are not people living in modesty, alas, the Satan has misled you. You should remember that the damage you are causing to the nature will make you feel sorry when the creator will clear your accounts of deeds.

Sheikh Noor-ud-din developed and propagated a sect of Islam called Sufi Sect with the fundamental principles of Non-violence and common good. He was the poet of this religious group of Islam and uses his religious code of conduct to preach the morality in the same manner in which Milton uses Christian religious moral code or Tagore conveys his ideas through Hindu mythology or Iqbal uses Muslim political thought to carry his message, He has Consciously made the commitment with the nature and protection of natural surroundings as an inalienable part of Muslim moral Code. Sheikh himself experienced the nature and shares his experience in the following verse:

یاردن منز مہیوئرس جنگلس  
 شراونہ چھہ لُج اوجیہ پیے  
 موشتہ بدون تھوی نیمہ زلس  
 لکھ ماز ربر لعلس ویے  
 رپی کالی ژھہ گڑھ اتھ لاس  
 نہ اؤ شامس پانس پیے

Meaning - I visited the forests of the Kashmir through Kael trees, the hot climate of June damages the delicacy of Jasmine, The dew drops are like pearls on the leaves of flowers and by mere mishandling these pearls get damaged, so we should be aware that if we are to enjoy the nature then we have to our self-safeguard it because it is very tender and delicate.

Sheikh was a pure naturalist, he was so dedicated and involved with the delicacy of Jasmine flowers and its soft petals that he wishes to become shield to defend this delicacy against the natural process itself, he is equally angry with the Sunshine for the role it plays in destroying the dew drops resembling the pearls.

It is not only Sheikh Noor-ud-din Wali who was considered to be a great ecologist but his disciple and followers were also examples in themselves. The four great friends of Sheikh and the pillars of Reshi Movement were also living in the jungles among the wild animals. One of the Reshi, Baba Neek Shah was feeding the wild animals and it is said if sometime any animal showed some wild behaviour the Reshi were talking to them like the family members.

Now the need of hour is that our present day educationist should understand the need of high lighting the teachings of the Sufism regarding the ecology so that our people will understand the importance of the nature and its resources. It is also the need of hour that our politicians and policy makers may learn a lesson from the teaching of the great ecologist Noor-ud-din and the Reshi Movement.

Nature plays a great role in progress and prosperity of humans that is why today the world is so highly concerned about the environment and its conservation, though the world powers are all in a rat race to

overpower others and to develop very sophisticated weapons which are a great threat to the environment. Today we are trying to minimize the degeneration of natural resources but at the same, the developmental works are going on a high speed and the population of the world is also increasing arithmetically. It is unwise to think that we can increase our comforts of life, develop weapons of mass destruction, provide modern facilities to every individual and at the same time safeguard the environment. The progress and development are inevitable but to conserve the nature and its resources are equally important. Man should be educated and informed about the teachings of great saints like Sheikh Noor-ud-din and other environmentalists about the importance and necessity of the nature and natural resources especially the exhaustible ones.

#### **Conclusion:**

The last stage of Sheikh's life was very important and vital, as during this phase he spread the message of Sufism and Rishyat to the pros and cones of Kashmir valley. This phase of his life has seen a large number of challenges and difficulties as he started a new sect of thought and tried to spread it among the masses, as this school of thought was based on truth and reality and as opposed to the misguidance of superficial monks of that time. It was opposed by Mullahs and Gurus of that time but despite all opposition and difficulties, Sheikh has been successful in spreading the message of peace and harmony in the Kashmir. He himself visited every part of Kashmir and benefited people by guiding them to the right path. Sheikh propagated such teachings which not only helps to conserve environment but the balance of nature as well. It is not only Sheikh Noor-ud-din Wali who was considered to be a great ecologist but his disciple and followers were also examples in themselves, they all were ready to sacrifice their personal tastes for the wellbeing of Environment. As educationists and as scholars of environmental education it is our duty to safeguard our environment and everybody should understand the need of high lighting the teachings of the Sufism regarding the ecology so that our people will understand the importance of the nature and its resources.

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