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**DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF CEREMONIES, RITUALS AND TRADITIONS OF
THE SUFIS OF NEMATOLLAHI GONABADI DYNASTY IN TEHRAN**

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ABSTRACT

One of the most important socio-cultural phenomena of Iran in Islamic period is emergence and spread of Sufism streams, since the streams have had determinant role in social and political evolutions of Iran. Since 6th century, with the establishment of Sufism schools, new features were occurred for Islamic Mysticism or Sufism and the school of Sufism was established. However, with the presence of disputes and conflicts among sheikhs of Sufism, a dynasty was established named Nematollahi Dynasty, which was one of the most famous dynasties of Sufism of conflict and unique branches. In this regard, the main objective of the present study is introducing customs, traditions and rituals of Sufis of Nematollahi Gonabadi Dynasty in Tehran. Applied method in this study is library, document, qualitative and deep-viewing method. In addition, presence in field of study in abbey of Amir Soleimani in Tehran and also abbey of Mazar Sultani in Bidokht Gonabad has specified qualitative and descriptive aspects of the study.

Keywords: Sufism, nematollahi dynasty, Gonabad

INTRODUCTION

One of the most important socio-cultural phenomena in Iran of Islamic Period is emergence and spread of mystical and Sufism streams. Iran society, as a society with rich religious and cultural background,

has been always under effect of Sufism thoughts and beliefs and especially with the entrance of Islam in this territory, different Sufism sects were established because of cultural reasons and had vital role in social

and political evolutions of Iran in continuous centuries. Sufism is one of the most brilliant and attractive appearances of Islamic culture, which has always inspired many people. Based on theory of nature, it could be mentioned that the truth of Sufism is rooted in divine nature of human and hence, no religion or religious culture can be found that has not used Sufism orientations. Islamic Sufism that is rooted in Quran and tradition, in its most organized historical form that is Sufism, has had considerable emergence.

With the establishment of Sufism schools since 12th century, Islamic Sufism created new features of its history with many ups and downs and Sufism was begun. Each of the mentioned creeds provided some followers for them through claiming for legitimacy, originality and monopoly through redemption and began to compete with each other in regard with increasing their power and hence, gradually dispute and conflicts on polarity among Sufism sheikhs was increased. The disputes over the centuries and among Sufism was enhanced in Qajar Era and then, Nematollahi Dynasty found many branches as one of the most famous dynasties of Sufism and as a result, over the effective stream of these branches, only a number of branches of Nematollahieh such as Gonabadieh could preserve their form and

inherence and continue their activity and life till the current age.

In this regard, through conducting a deep study and using one of the novel methods of anthropology on Gonabadieh, as one of the most important branches of Nematollahi Creed that is currently as one of the most influent and developed dynasties of Sufism in Iran, the study has investigated this issue.

History of Nematollahi Sheikhs

At the first, an overview should be presented on history of Nematollahi Creed, brief assessment of life of sheikhs and evolutions and manner of formation of branches of the dynasty in regard with estimating mind of readers with process of events that can result in establishment of Gonabadi creed.

Nematollahi dynasty, which is attributed to Shah Nematollah Vali that his shrine is in Mahan Kerman, has been derived from several creeds from the dynasty that have some followers in Iran. Nematollahi Sufism was in India to the age of Zandieh and by that time, Sayed Ma'sum Alishah Dakani came to Iran on behalf of Shah Alireza Dakani to publish the sect from India. His first students were Feiz Alishah and his son Noor Alishah. Nematollahi dynasty was faced separating tendencies after Noor Alishah.

Origin and parentage of Shah Nematollah Vali

His parentage reached to Prophet Mohammad with a mediator, since he states that: "my 19th ancestor is Prophet Mohammad, is clear, not hidden". Sayed Nooredin Nematollah Ibn Abdollah Ibn Mohammad known as Shah Nematollah Vali was founder of Nematollahieh sect and from Hosseini Sadat, whose parentage reaches Imam Ali through Ismail Ibn Jafar. He was born in Halab on 731 A.H and since then, he used to show specific dignities and signs and used to do religious prayers and tolerate hard austerities [1]. However, Sayed Nematollah Vali learnt official sciences from famous professors and went to Arabic countries for Hajj on 755 A.H in age of 24. After arriving in Egypt and at the time of accommodation, he became student of Sheikh Al-Sheikhs Abu Abdollah Yafei. Although Sayed Nematollah has been in interaction with many leaders and elders, he became student of Sheikh Abu Abdollah Yafei and position of Sheikh Abo Abdollah was reached to Sheikh Ahmad Ghazali and Yafei was the great man and familiar with implicit and explicit sciences [2].

Sayed Nematollah Vali went to Kerman for short time after tolerating many difficulties and went from Kerman to Mahan and spent his rest of life to 25 years in Kerman and

sometimes in Mahan. During residence of Sayed Nematollah Vali in Mahan, his fame was reached to most regions of Iran and India and many people traveled to Mahan to visit him. Ahmad Shah Bahmani from Dakan asked Sayed to travel to India. Sayed sent his grandson to India and provided preparations of transfer of Nematollahi Dynasty and travel of Shah Khalil to Dakan.

Nematollahi dynasty, which was established by him, became a support for Sufism in Iran and India for long time. Caliphs of Nematollah went to India after him and prevailed several Nematollahi ways there [3].

Personalities of Shah Nematollah Vali and his Sufism compared to other sects

1. He could enter Iranian Sufism to a new stage, along with Islamic religion, and could also impress followers of other sects.
2. One of the differentiation aspects of Nematollahi Sufism from other sects is its commitment to Islamic Sharia. Hence, he used to observe orders and sentences of Islam among students.
3. Shah Vali believed that presence of leader is essential for guiding wayfarers.

No wayfarer can reach perfection position, who has not reached perfection (Collection of Poems, 60).

4. Nematollahi Sufism has no specific clothing. They believe that business is pleased function by God and businessman is friend of God.
5. They respect to all obligations of law and rules of Islamic religion [4].

Rituals and customs

In anthropology, ritual has been defined as customary ceremonies and preparations and the aim by ritual is a series of words, conducted actions and manipulated subjects and objects, which have been exactly codified that are associated with the belief related to active presence of extraordinary creatures. Hence, for example religion can be defined through being relied on belief in extraordinary creatures and some effective behaviors against these creatures and also being relied on certain way for contacting them and this way is same Sha'ayer (Rites) [5]. The aim by rites and ceremony in this paper is all behaviors, symbols, customs, rites and specific traditions that can differentiate Gonabady Dynasty from other sects and is sometimes similar and sometimes different from other ceremonies and common customs in the society.

Terms of Nematollahi Gonabadi Dervishes

1. Cloak is position of guidance, which is granted to the student by sheikh of Sufism and is not special clothes, although it has been common among some Sufism sects to make clothes by pieces of other clothes. However, in Sufism sect no specific clothes is considered and they believe that the best clothes are Virtue and piety.
2. Commemorate circle refers to community of dervishes in the convent and commemorating God and his orders.
3. Secret commemorate is commemorate of God's names that is expressed by heart, not by tongue.
4. Clear commemorate is one of the divine names or a phrase that is also expressed by tongue like Allah or Rahman or Towhid, etc.
5. Contentment stone: in some dynasties, in regard with austerity they close a stone to their stomach, so that they would not become hungry.
6. Lasso of unity is submitted to the Murshid (sheikh), under orders of whom he can pass over the Sufism process, so that to reach positions of destruction of actions and personalities and nature of God.

7. Love thorn is burning and melting of true love, which can sometimes result in attraction.
8. Sitting in the temple of monotheism refers to sitting and saying prayers.
9. Sama is expansion, which can be achieved under condition of submergence in obtained commemorate and can be moved sometimes unintentionally.

Sermon

The aim by such preaches is prohibiting people from conducting bad actions and doing good things and gaining their attention to God and connecting to him [6]. In the dictionary, it means advising and admonishing [7].

Monotheism

In the dictionary, monotheism means making unique and faith in unity of the God [7].

three types of monotheism are mentioned as follows: "one is monotheism of God from God that is divine knowledge on his unity; the other one is monotheism of God from his creatures that is associated with orders of God, who should be regarded unit by human and then create monotheism in his heart that is monotheism of human from God or knowledge of divine monotheism by human". According to him, monotheism was that, through which the truth can't be endangered [8].

Repent and trust

Repent in word means reference and return and based on order of law, repent refers to turning back from sins and leaving them and taking way of the Almighty God.

In Sufism, repent is not same as repent in religion and sharia, so that a Sufis can repent from sins, but also the aim by repent is leaving the material, world and taking way of God and although the actual aim of Sufis can guarantee the previous fault, it pays mostly attention to leaving sins in the future [6].

The subject of trust is one of the ethical bases of Sufism and has gained attention of Sufis and Saleks (seekers). In view of Sufism, trust could force sufi to be destroyed and submit any kind of intention and desire completely to the God [6].

Allegiance

In terms of Sufism, agreement between henchman and sheikh of Sufism can be regarded as allegiance. True wishful and applicant would take repent ceremony and promises to follow a series of relevant rules and systems of Sufism [6].

Representation, caliphate and guidance permission

The subject of caliphate and representation can be necessities of Sufism and the principle has been agreed almost by all dynasties of Sufism. Elder people of Sufism used to train henchmen and seekers

and select those people as their representatives, who were competent for leadership and were able to help followers in way of Sufism, and used to permit them orally or in written form to accept seekers and train them.

Convent and its foundations

In the dictionary, the word "convent" refers to a place, in which dervishes and sheikhs live and say prayers and has been also defined as monastery and abbey of dervishes [7].

The word "convent" (Khaneghag) has been composed of two words of "Khane" (home) and "Gah" (place) and is closer to the destiny and it can be mentioned that convent means a place with several chambers that has been prepared for rest of dervishes and passengers. It is also clear that when a person becomes resident of a place, naturally the person needs food too and usually landlords would be responsible for this issue. Hence, convent has been a place, in which some people had accommodation and they were feed and this has been followed and has been completed constantly [6].

Convent that is also named as *angle* and *ligament* was a place for community of dervishes. *Chelle Neshini* has been also one of the instruments of loneliness of people and in belief of Sufism, repeating it was the

tool for reaching perfection. Commemorate had two secret and clear types. This was because; they used to hide the first one from people and used to express the second one clearly. During loneliness, Sufi used to sit in a corner with specific customs and take name of God for several times and his lips and tongue used not to be moved and only his heart used to be mention name of God. Many people of Sufism used to take the pronoun of "He" instead of "Allah", which was also common in Quran. In convent and out of it, Sufis had also other ceremonies: advising ceremony and Sama ceremony. In the advising ceremony, Sheikh used to give mystical advises, which were sometimes full of taste and relish. Mysticism of Sheikh Tabrizi, ceremonies of Molana, ceremonies of Sa'di have been some examples of what used to be mentioned in these ceremonies. However, Sama ceremony was a spiritual custom full of taste and relish. In Iran, Pakistan, India, Egypt and Turkey, some examples of these ceremonies are still existed, in which the taste is associated with music and dance [8]. Spenser has written about structural specifications of these centers as follows:

"The buildings included some rooms, in which ceremony of Advice and Sama used to be hold." Another center that used to be emerged similar to structure of initial

convents was shrine and tombs of followers and sheikhs of Sufism. Presence of a scientist and human-based leader could make people to be some around him and use his presence and after his death, they used to build a shrine for him and through this, his greatness and brilliance used to be displayed in form of a curved building. Through following his way by his children and henchmen and prevailing his dignities and kindness and subject t of pilgrimage of his shrine can be added. Clear specifications of such places can be found in shrine of Safi Ali Shah 1316 A.H in Tehran [9].

Ligament (Robat) is also related to convent. In Islam history, Robat has been public name of camps near the boundaries of Islamic borders, which in the age of development of power of caliphs, always a group of Muslims were ready there to defend against invasions of pagans. Apparently, roots of the term have been derived from interpretation of "Robat Al-Khalil" (Anfal Surah/ verse 62), where it is advised to Muslims to provide military forces for fighting against pagans as much as possible. Residents of Robat, who have been in fact living in boundaries used to be named as Morabetun, who have been Muslim and faithful and had devoted themselves to preserving Islam and defending Islam [10].

The word "angle" in terms of Sufism has been used to refer to night veil, a cloth that used to be applied by Sufi to gather his furniture in it and fasten it and carry it in travels [6]. The term angle used to be considered as humility and used to be named as angle, since Salik was able to take a corner in it and say prayers and worship God there. In building of convent, in addition to chambers of saliks, an angle was also belonged to manager and sheikh of convent.

Dynasty of Nematollahi Gonabadi Dervishes

Nematollahieh: Nematollahieh was one of the sects attributed to famous Sufi, Shah Nematollah Vali Kermani, known as Sayed and Shah and was from great people of Sufism in 8th A.H century [11].

Owners of dictionary have defined dynasty as chain and continuous rings [7]. The aim by dynasty among people of Sufism has been defined by one sect of Sufism, which its founder was one of the sheikhs and after him, his representatives used to be charged for leading the sect [12]. In other words and in a better definition, the word in terms of Sufism indicates the link and connection between Velayat and cloak of Sufism, through which mysteries of Sufism have been continued as a chain from Prophet Mohammad to his friends and then to Sufism sheikhs one after another and

generation by generation. Therefore, it could be mentioned that the aim by dynasty of Gonabadi Dervishes in this study is religious group and organization composed of followers and henchmen of Sultan Ali Shah Gonabadi and his successors, who were selected after an important branch and its leaders reached polarity one after another and they used to give the permission of their position to elderly people of Sufism sheikhs and they could be attributed to Prophet Mohammad and innocent imams such as a chain.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study of Nematollahi Dynasty has been conducted as a field and depth-oriented study using direct observation and has also applied library documents. The most important method applied in this study has been interview.

Scope of the research

The present study has been conducted in convent of Amir Soleimani located in Tehran, Imam Khomeini Street, Behesht Street on dervishes of Nematollahi Gonabadi Dynasty.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Gonabad

Gonabad is located in south of Mashhad in the distance between Torbat, Kashmar, Ferdows and Birjand and has a fresh and arid climate and some of its people work as farmers and because of hardness of lands and water shortage, they have to tolerate many difficulties in their business. Gonabad is a block including three parts and each part has several villages and its central part is named as Gonabad and its mountainous region is known as Barakoo; meaning that is located in range of mountain and its northern part of it with flat and hot lands is known as Pasklut and Klut means hill and is used for waste and salty lands and as a klut is between this part and central part, it has become famous as Pastklut. Central part is more important than it and has several villages such as Juymand, which is center of offices and today is governing center of Gonabad and has been approved by National Council in the recent divisions of the country on 1937. Gonabad city was divided into Kashmar, Bojestan, Ferdows and Tabas; although later gradually according to approval of board of directors, Kashmar became an independent city and Ferdows became also an independent city [13].

The dynasty against Nematollahieh Sultan Ali Shah Gonabadi

Dynasty of Gonabadi is one of the most famous strains of Nematollahi, which is

named as Bam Al-Salasel. The chain of the dynasty is ended to Imam Shah Nematollah Vali and has passed over Imam Joneid Baghdadfi, who was one of the biggest Sufis in age of Imam Hadi (peace be upon him) and Imam Askari and as he has been in same age of small absence of Imam Zaman and has been also permitted to be guided on behalf of Gharin Al-sharaf Imam Zaman (peace be upon him), Sufis used to name him as Sheikh Al-Taefe and Aval Al-Ghasab fi Gheyba. The great person has been trained by aborted series, which were permitted to guide people on behalf of Imam Reza and Imam Javad and Imam Hadi and has been trained in Karkh. He has been watcher and guardian of Imam Reza and has been permitted on behalf of the Imam to guide people and has been in terms of Sufis Sheikh of Sheikhs and the famous dynasties are derived from him. the reason for this issue that the dynasty is known as Razavieh is that affairs of Sufism have been published by the Imam more than others, so that affairs of sharia and sentences of law used to be published by Imam Sadegh (peace be upon him) hence, Shiite religion is also known as Jafari religion.

Education system of Nematollahi Dynasty and its convent complex has been stable since early 9th century to the date and based on social rejection or acceptance, it has

continued its life sometimes in movement and sometimes in weakness.

Nematollahi Dynasty at the early days of invitation, because of good conditions and generality of Shah Nematollah and after that due to the Shiite religion, has been successful in its affairs and has achieved relative development. After him, grandson of Sayed Nematollah was married daughter of Sultan Ahmad Khan Bahmani, king of Hind, and sent many gifts to Shah Nematollah in two steps to Kerman. Through this, economic basis and material aspects of Sufism organization of Nematollahi was empowered and its advancement was provided. After that, one or two persons of posterities of Shah Nematollah became relative of kingship family of Safavid Dynasty and achieved money and position and found political influence and credit. They could enhance credit of their family through this. Probability emergence of the word Shah beside name of nematollahi Sheikhs, regardless of historical background of Sufism, has not been with any reason, since achieving wealth and distributing them among needy people and becoming relative of dynasty of sultans and having title of Prince could empower kinship and reign in its heart [6].

**CUSTOMS RITES AND
CEREMONIES**

Ceremonies and customs and minorities form wide part of interactions and social behaviors of people. Ceremonies, customs and symbolic aspects of Gonabadi Sufism can be hold sometimes in common and publicly and sometimes privately and different from common customs in the society and other groups.

Customs, ceremonies and special rites of Gonabadieh

Poverty initiation ritual and its customs:

A person, who has tendency for joining the dynasty, is named as Taleb (seeker).

The first step for entering manner of dervishes in this Sufism is presence of Taleb in the ceremony of initiation and doing its customs and after end of the ceremony, title of dervish would be applied for the person.

The first step for initiating to poverty can be named as step of need; meaning that firstly Salik comes to the place of pole of the sheikh with a heart full of need and asks for being accepted as Sufi with humility (however, they need a person from the dynasty members to introduce them) and if sheikh accepts them, he can determine a date and hour, which is usually Friday evening, for initiating the person and orders to perform 5 types of ablution for the promised day as follows:

1-repent ablution; 2- Islam ablution; 3-pilgrimage ablution; 4- Friday ablution; 5-wish ablution

Also, 5 things should be provided as follows:

1-a white cloth 2- coin 3- ring 4- nutmeg and 5- rock candy

In the promised day, the henchman sits in a room, along with sheikh and makes his head and feet nude according to order of sheikh and wears only a shirt and pants. Sheikh fastens the 5 mentioned objects in a white cloth and takes it in his right hand and takes hand of seeker with his left hand. At this time, murshid sits on the ground and puts his hands on his knees and puts his head down. Old seeker takes a step toward the murshid and prostrates, so that palms are face to the sky and backs of both hands are on the flat. Then, he stands up and takes a step forward and again prostrates. Hence, in third prostrating, he would be placed in front of sheikh and at the same time that sheikh has hands of seeker in his hands, gives the objects to the murshid with his right hand. Then, right hand of seeker would be placed in hand of pole and then, pole speaks to him about the agreement and necessity of commitment to it and gives advices such as taking care of prayers and emphasizing ablution and cleanliness, being good with parents, councilmen of heart thought and commemorate, kindness

with people and so on. Afterwards, heart commemorate would be inculcated to him and he takes method of poverty and need and a paper including orders of poverty to the new entered seeker and the rock candy would be given to the seeker and others after the ceremony as consecration (Keyvan Ghazvini (Ostovar), 1997).

The rock candy is as a consecration for Gonabadi Dervishes and is the factor for brightness of heart and it should not be given to other people than members of the dynasty.

Ceremony of need

One of the most important and mysterious display of special Gonabadi Rites is ceremony of need. The ceremony is not for all people and only a number of dervishes can attend the ceremony. Hence, majority of dervishes of the dynasty are unaware of manner of holding the ceremony and this is heart wish of many of them to gain required competency for being invited to the ceremony.

About appellation of the ceremony, it has been written in Ostovar Book that: "the ceremony is hold for meeting needs of audiences based on their talent and the ceremony is a market, in which need would be bought by God and every participant has a shop and a salesperson and God is ready for transaction. The second idiomatic meaning of need is the small gift given to

God by people, since in this ceremony it is necessary to take a fasten cloth of rock candy and give to pole with the small world" [14].

About ceremony of need and quality and its coordinates among written heritage of elderly people of the dynasty, no significant issue can be observed and the reservation is in an extent that current pole of the dynasty states in answering a poor person on need ceremony and its quality that: it is not essential for you to be informed of need ceremony and you will understand it, whenever you are invited to it.

Dig Jush (pot boil)

This is a specific and symbolic ceremony and in other words Ultimate of Sufism, it is mysterious with many customs and secrets and many rites, which has not been even observed by all dervishes and some of them have heard about it rarely and some of them have not even heard about it. According to Keyvan Ghazvini, which is the one and only information base in this field, Dig Jush is similar to agate (Aqiqe) in Islam (Keyvan Ghazvini, Behin Sokhan, 1997). In Sufism school, it has been considered as the last level of perfection and the person, who boils the pot, sacrifices his sensuality (bad nature) such as a sheep and becomes a good person and is qualified for guiding human. According to him, giving boiled pot is a sign for competency of henchman for

expressing polarity position. In his opinion, boiled pot is the last position and level of Salik and the fifth condition and commitment given to the sheikh by henchman while initiation. Many henchmen are invited to this ceremony for several times, although they have not the competency for holding the ceremony. It should be mentioned that only pole can issue permission of holding such ceremony; although each Murshid and pole has not also the competency for holding pot boil ceremony. In regard with appellation and manner of holding the ceremony, it should be mentioned that based on Sufism custom, a seeker, who has gained the permission of holding pot boil ceremony can place the sheep in the pot after sacrificing it and put its led and then makes it boiled, so that it is cooked. The boiling should not be stopped and after a while, pole should remove the lid of the pot, so that he can take the steam as the first person and then, pole can divide the meat among the participants and audiences [14].

Therefore, pot boil ceremony has many rites and customs and special commemorates and special secrets and mysteries; although it seems currently that the ceremony is not being hold, since in interview with dervishes, they were completely not familiar with the ceremony.

Poverty ceremonies

Religious communities should be only for mentioning the God and using his help and using help of pure persons of religion and material and worldly goals should not be considered, but also elders have prohibited to speak about worldly affairs in the religious ceremonies that are only for mentioning God and the valuable time of these communities should not be consumed for worldly goals and they have prohibited transaction and dealing in the mosque. However, worldly affairs and communities have not been prohibited, but also mentioning God and obeying him has been regarded as essential affairs; although they have mentioned that the special ceremonies for commemorating God that are named as circle can be divine ceremonies and pure and truthful souls and spirits are present there and also owner of Velayat and the leader of the age is also present in the ceremony and the attention should not be limited to worldly affairs, which are not significant. This is because; the Almighty God has no partner and rejects prayer and worship that are polluted to worldly goals and intentions. Poverty ceremony is one of the most important examples of Gonabadi rituals and a symbol of commemorate circles and thinking circles of ancient Sufis. Poverty ceremonies are so significant in the mentioned Sufism and have been emphasized by leaders of the dynasty and

also they have confirmed and emphasized respecting it and books and speeches and lectures of the ceremony. Hence, in regard with respecting the ceremonies, it has been written as follows: Poverty ceremonies are respectful and holly and are specified to mentioning the God and taking help of elderly people of the religion. The ceremony should be free from physical pollutions and mental filth.

Maybe the most basic and fundamental aspect of differentiation of the ceremonies and its commemorate circles from ceremonies of Gonabadi is possibility of participation of all dervishes with no limitation from pole of the dynasty to common poor people in the ceremony. It should be noted that with the presence in these ceremonies, majority of dervishes find that they should participate the ceremonies according to their statements in agendas of dynasty pole and they consider high holiness and spirituality for the poverty ceremonies.

Common customs, rituals and ceremonies of Gonabadieh

In addition to specific ceremonies, customs and symbolic aspects of Gonabadieh, which is a confirmation for their dervish-oriented manner, common ceremonies of Gonabadieh that are derived from followers of Mulla Sultan Mohammad on one hand as a Shiite Muslim and on the other hand with

Iranian identity, it is expected that they have some things in common with other people of their territory for holding some ceremonies and customs.

Religious rituals

Gonabadi leaders have paid special attention to holding religious ceremonies and rituals such as holding religious celebrations and mourning ceremonies for Imams from the early days of establishment of the sect.

However, the respect to holding the religious ceremonies has been also reflected in practical way of other poles, so that each of them based on important religious events, hold celebration or mourning ceremonies and perform lecture or passion play in these ceremonies. In statements of elderly people of Gonabad, the importance of holding the ceremonies has been also emphasized and some special instructions have been issued for dervishes of the dynasty; for example, holding mourning ceremonies should be free of any kind of incompetent issues and the things that can cause offense to holly presence of imams and weakness of holly beliefs in front of strangers and enemies of Islam, but also mostly true positions of the holly position should be explained.

According to the report of dervishes of the dynasty and common observations, ceremonies would be hold for different

religious rituals and customs and many people attend the ceremonies. Obtained results from the study indicate that the ceremonies have no significant difference with other Shiites of Iran and mourning ceremonies for imams, religious celebrations and other aspects of religious rituals of Gonabadieh would be hold very similarly to other ceremonies. Most of the ceremonies would be hold in Hosseinieh of dervishes and participation of public people is permitted. Based on one of the elders, cost of the ceremonies can be provided through collecting vows of members or by charity of dervishes.

It should be also mentioned that in the ceremonies of respecting poles of the dynasty, the dining would be begun firstly with a cup of coffee and then similar to other Shiites, tea, date and halva would be distributed among guests.

Gonabadieh and marriage rituals

In history of Sufism, leaving marriage and being single for all life has been common among some Sufis and dervishes, since they believed that marriage can be a sign for attachment to the world and worldly wishes and believed also that being single can be a way for refinement and purity [9]. such idea is not common among all Sufis and in Gonabadi Sufism, due to the attachment to appearances and orders of sharia of Islam, being single has been

denied and marriage and having family and preserving family are emphasized. Even elderly people of the dynasty believe that married people should attend the ceremonies, since if a single person has attended and then has committed sin, poles of the dynasty would be partner of the person. In addition, elderly people of the dynasty have prohibited having several wives at the same time for their members. In regard with marriage ceremony, they have stated that it is not different issue and even marriage sermon should not be mentioned by the members of the dynasty. About emphasizing dervish nature of the parties in marriage, no emphasis and insistence has been existed on this issue.

Gonabadieh and mourning ceremony

In regard with manner of burial and holding mourning ceremony of dervishes, the dynasty is not different from mourning ceremonies of other Shiites, since as it was observed by the author in the ceremony of burial and mourning of grandfather of dervish, no difference was observed.

Organizational structure of Gonabadieh

In charismatic organizational structure of Gonabadi, establishment of hierarchical system was based on innate manner of people and the division from the lowest to the highest rank includes some titles as follows:

1. Poor

2. Permitted of prayers
3. Sheikh
4. Sheikh of sheikhs
5. Pole

It should be mentioned that the general and common rule in this dynasty states that people should append steps of the dynasty respectively and achieve higher positions and confirmation of competency of Salik for reaching higher position can be possible only by the pole and based on his confirmation. However, it seems that the rule has some exceptions too, since through documenting to thesis of Velayat, Vafa Ali (a sheikh of the dynasty), has achieved order of being a sheikh without spending the initial steps and gaining preliminary permission.

CONCLUSION

In this regard, through conducting investigations and analyses, it could be found that identity of Nematollahi Gonabadi sect includes some beliefs, customs and rituals, which can make life of seekers meaningful and in regard with the specific issues, imagination of having mystical moods in the materialistic world has played vital role in meaning of their religious life. Among Gonabadi followers, in terms of religious beliefs, it has been emphasized that a gonabadi dervish should be firstly a true Shiite Muslim and after that, he should pass special steps of Sufism

to reach position and level of dervishes. Major part of beliefs of the followers is same Shiite beliefs; although they know exactly that they have special customs and rituals and they have significant emphasis on their difference with other sects and religions and this is the sense of spiritual preference and closeness to God. Another difference of the sect with other Shiite Muslims is that dervishes have access to ceremonies always in home of the pole and can present their problems.

Over the world of Shiite, Hosseinieh has gained special position in regard with holding Shiite mourning ceremonies (passion play, saying prayers and weeper for imams and advising).

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