

Name of the Candidate : **Scintila N. J.**  
Name of the Supervisor : **Prof. Mohd. Ishaque**  
Name of the Co-Supervisor : \_\_\_\_\_  
Department : **Islamic Studies**  
Title of the Thesis : **Cultural Symbiosis between Sufism and Vedantism  
under Dara Shikoh.**

### **ABSTRACT**

The present research focuses exclusively on the peaceful co-existence between Islam and Hinduism in Medieval India with special emphasis on the spiritual and intellectual attainments, and inter-faith dialogues of Dara Shikoh. The thesis begins with an Introduction which is followed by six chapters including conclusion. Moreover five appendices attached at the end.

**Introduction:** The introductory part of the thesis gives a short description on the background of the study which also includes the methodology, objectives, literature review, significance and scope of the study.

**Chapter – 1: Origin of Sufism and its Development in India:** The First Chapter is a detailed exposition on Sufism in which the origin, principles and its development have been discussed in detail. It also deals with the development of Sufism in India by emphasizing on the different Sufi orders and some special features and dimensions of Indian Sufism in particular.

**Chapter – 2: An Introduction to Vedantism – Its Origin and Principles:** This Chapter is a parallel description of Vedantism which includes a brief introduction on the origin, principles and tendencies of Vedantic philosophy.

**Chapter – 3: Peaceful Co-Existence of Sūfism and Vedāntism: Theoretical and Historical Perspectives:** This chapter discusses the peaceful co-existence between the Hindu-Muslim mystical and cultural systems, in theoretical and historical perspectives. A chronological description – from eleventh to seventeenth century – on the major attempts of cultural symbiosis constitutes the most significant part of this chapter.

**Chapter – 4: Dārā Shikoh – His Life and Works:** It is a detailed biographical account on the political, intellectual and mystical life of Dārā Shikoh. It also tries to put light on the literary pursuit of Dārā by pointing out his famous literary works.

**Chapter – 5: ‘The Mingling of the Two Oceans’ under Dārā Shikoh: An Analysis on the Cultural Symbiosis:** The Fifth Chapter is the creamy part of the whole thesis, which deals exclusively with the interfaith pursuit of Dārā. The significant part of this chapter is the analysis and review of the contents of *Majma‘ul-Baḥrain* in the perspective of basic Islamic principles.

### **Conclusion**

Dārā engaged himself in the acquiring of knowledge on the religion and philosophy of Hindus, particularly on the mystic side. The *Majma‘ul-Baḥrain* can be considered as the first fruit of the comparative study of Islam and Hinduism by Dārā Shikoh through which he made an attempt for bringing out the points of agreements between the two schools. The common bond of the uniformity of basic ideals of the Hindus and Muslims showed to him that the different modes of expression used in the two religions, were nothing but the varying phases of one changeless Truth.

While considering the mystical approaches of Dārā, one could realize that his mysticism is experimental rather than doctrinal and is completely devoid of abstract speculations. A close examination of his works in a chronological order reveals the fact that his earlier writings were purely Sufistic in character and were not extended with an examination of the mystic systems of the other religions. But the deeper his knowledge became, the greater he realized the truth in other religions and the bolder he became in appreciating them. In fact, Dārā never denied the existence of God; but his God was incomprehensible to the average Muslim, Christian or Jew.

As this research analyses Dārā’s works and ideologies in an intellectual as well as philosophical perspective, it can be found that Dārā represents his quest as a kind of research work, looking to a variety of sources, in order to find answers to his questions. As far as his inter faith approaches are concerned, religious truth is not the monopoly of any person; every person has a distinct, inexpressible relation with God; and even Qur’ān says that religion must be understood as we have experienced it and it has happened to us. He brings home the valuable lesson for a plural world that everyone should respect differences and tolerate dissensions so as to create a society that uses the best that everyone has to offer.