

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

A Look at *Anasheeds*

In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful, I begin to write:

In pre-Islamic and early Islamic history, *anasheeds* involved wholesome poems (about battle victories, wisdoms, courage, etc) chanted in an unorchestrated fashion without the accompaniment of musical instruments, except for the *duff* (similar to tambourine but without bells or cymbals) which was legally permitted for women on special occasions. During the 2nd century after Hijrah, chanting of du'aa, remembrances, crept into the ummah by the innovations of the mystic Sufis who, in turn, took it from the Christians. It was then called *at-Taghbeer*. All of these forms were denounced by the early scholars of Islam, including Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee, Ibn Taymmeyah, Ibnul Qayyim, Ibn Katheer, Ibn Rajab, and many others.¹ The Sufis centered most of their methodology of worship on congregational *Taraaneem* (singing by way of trilling, or quavering and prolonging the voice with a musical sound), resembling the Christians in their churches. Then the Sufis began to introduce physical movements during remembrances and du'aa close to those practiced by the Jews. Rarely do you witness a Sufi "Hadrh"² without these innovated practices.

Nowadays, the matter is not limited to the Sufi adepts. Many Muslim parties (groups) have innovated special bands for the emotional arousing of their followers and for the "ummah" at large! Much of what is being practiced with these *anasheed* does not escape, at least, one of the following observations:

¹See Al-Qawlul Mufeed fee Hukmil-anasheed (including the fatwa of the reliable contemporary scholars of Islam). Authored by 'Isaam Ibn 'Abdul Mun'im al-Mir-ree (1423/2002), Maktabatu al-Furqaan, Ujmaan, UAE.

²*Hadrh*: Presence. Used by the *Sufis* in its general meaning, "Being in the presence of Allah." In the school of mystic Ibn 'Arabi, however, there are "Five Divine Presences," a metaphysical doctrine of the degrees of reality of which there are different versions. This concept is influenced by the Neo-Platonist chain of "Stages or Orders of Being." [See *Mu'jam Al-Mustalahaat As-Sufiyyah* by Al-Hafnee, p. 237 and Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam, p. 125, edited by H.A.R. Gibb and J.H. Kramers, 4th impression, 1995. Published by E.J. Brill, Leiden, The Netherlands.] The *Mureed* is informed that the *Hadrh* is the start, then the *Mukaashafah* (Mystic spiritual revelation regarding the Truth [Allah] and the *Ghayb* (unseen). Through this stage, things will be manifested as if he sees them by his eyes). The next state is the *Mushaahadah* (Witnessing of the Truth). Sufi singing, clapping, and swaying accompanied by drum beats is part of the "ritual"! Some of the mystics also claim the actual attendance of the Prophet (ﷺ) in their circles!

1. Involving more and more people, especially children, keeping them busy with what could be, least to say, of a lesser benefit.
2. *Anasheed* are accompanied with musical toning and chanting (Eastern and Western beats) in the name of "culture" and "tradition." This is becoming more and more apparent, with bands competing in their selection of words and beats.
3. Remembrances of Allah are introduced in these *anasheed* in ways clearly resembling the intoning and chanting of the Christians in their churches.
4. The congregational chanting and singing that takes place resembles to a great extent that which goes on in the circles of the mystic Sufis in their singing circles. Former "stars" are being more involved with the mystic Sufi ways through so-called "Islamic *anasheed*." Some bands sing the infamous *Shirk* poem known as "Burdah," which involves shirk levels of exaggeration in the status of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).
5. Luring the children to sing, especially the young girls, imitating the base of the infamous Muslim and Non-Muslim singers.
6. Replacing the Qur'aan with the so-called *anasheed* in the Da'wah to the young, claiming that they don't respond to the Qur'anic texts, therefore, legitimizing their use. The same is done with the Sunnah, eventually turning people away from what constitutes the true life for the believers.
7. In many of these singing circles, musical instruments and intoning are gradually taking hold, something known to be forbidden in Islam, except for the *duff* for women.
8. The emergence of so-called professional singing groups performing at weddings, parties, schools and the like.
9. Development of so called more advanced ways of video singing as a modern way of contemplating and reflecting on the creation of Allah.
10. Allowing taking pictures of young girls during different presentations of songs in itself is a *fitnah* (affliction and trial) and

an opposition to the *Sahree'ah*. Some make movies and records of these young girls singing on special occasions.

11. Many things that are untrue are presented in these songs through acting, or through exaggeration in praise.

12. If you examine many of these songs, you will find a lot of them focusing on the *Tawheed* of Lordship only, something even the Mushriks confess to (i.e. matters pertaining to the signs of Allah in the creation, His running of the affairs, Him being in full authority and the like).

13. Transgression against the Sharee'ah in the form of acting roles. You see a child taking the role of *Salah*, saying, "I am the *Salah*, and these are my merits!" Another takes the role of Fasting and so on. Worst of all those who claim to represent the Qur'aan. Yet we know that the Qur'aan is the uncreated Speech of Allah.

14. Assuming in some cases the movements and walks of some of the losers from the known male and female singers. Imagine when this is done while chanting the remembrances of Allah!

15. Calling these *anasheed* Islamic itself is a transgression, especially when they call it an "art" and a means of education and nourishment for the Da'wah! "This is an innovation in Deen, and this from the deen of the innovators of the Sufis."³ The companions chanted poetry of wisdom, courage, generosity and of *maroo'ah* (describing good character), and not in congregations. They chanted poetry sometimes while working or during night travel. None of them claimed this "Islamic." Rather, everything takes its own particular ruling, whether it is innovated, allowable, recommended, obligated, disliked or forbidden. Therefore, that which may be allowable of it we don't call "Islamic" because if it is called so, people would think it to be from the Deen. And to label any matter as Islamic, requires textual proofs.⁴ In fact, Sh. Al-Albani (*rahimahullaah*) referred to them as "Sufi singing", and a similar conclusion was reached by Sh. 'Abdul 'Aziz Aal Ash-Shaikh, the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia, as well as by Sh. Bakr Abu Zayeed and Sh. 'Abdul 'Aziz Ar-Raajhi and other scholars (may Allah preserve them all).⁵

³See Fatwa of Sh. Saalih Al-Fawzaan, may Allah Preserve him, in *al-Khutab al-Manbariyyah* 3: 184-185.

⁴See Sh. Al-Fawzaan, *Ibid*, p. 56.

⁵ *Ibid*. pages, 32, 49, 62-68.

The following question was raised to our Shaykh Muhammed Ibn Saaleh al-'Uthaimeen (Rahimuhullaah):

“What is the ruling concerning the *anasheeds*? Is it permissible for the Caller to Allah to listen to “Islamic *anasheed*”?”

The Shaykh responded, “In the past, I listened in the past to these Islamic *anasheed* and there was nothing therein which shuns away. After listening to them recently, I found them to be rhythmic with delectation and entertaining, like the songs accompanied with musical instruments. Accordingly, I don't see that it is permissible for people to listen to them. However, if they come natural without musical accompaniment and without delectation or entertainment, then there is no harm in listening to them. Still, however, it is conditional that:

- (i) the person does not make this a habit listening to them all the time, and
- (ii) make not that which benefits and admonishes the heart restricted to them.

Because if he makes of this a habit, he will abandon that which is more important. Moreover, in doing so he will relinquish the greatest admonition and it is that which came in the Book of Allah and in the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger. But if he listens to them sometimes, or if takes them as a means of help on his journey while driving his care in the wilderness, then there is no harm in that.”⁶

Then he was asked, “Is it permissible for the man to chant the Islamic *anasheed* and is it permissible that the duff, which is the tambourine without any of these bells attached to it, is it permissible to use the duff with the chanting and is the chanting or the *anasheed* permissible in other than the Eed and other than the festivals?”

The answer: “*Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem*, In the Name of Allah The Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful”, then he returned the greeting to the person who asked the Question, and said: “The Islamic *anasheed* is an innovated chanting innovated by the Sufis. Therefore, one should turn away from it and resort to the admonitions from the Qur‘aan and Sunnah, unless it is used in the battlefields to help as a motivation for Jihaad in the

⁶See *As-Sahwah Al-Islamiyyah Dhawaabit wa Tawjeehaat*, a collection of fatwa and statements by our Sh. Ibn 'Uthaimeen compiled by Abu Anas, 'Ali Ibn Hasan Abu Lawz (1414/1993), p. 123, no. 40.

cause of Allah, the Most High, then this is good, however, if it accompanied with the *duff*, then it would be far away from the truth.”⁷

Moreover, on several occasions, he (*rahimahullaah*) directed the people to give the best of attention to the Qur'aan and Sunnah, since they are the greatest admonitions.

A special warning concerning the infamous *Burdah* poem of Al-Busiri: It is plain shirk because it exaggerates the Prophet (ﷺ) giving him attributes of divinity, as if he knows the unseen and what is written in the preserved tablet. So much of this, unfortunately, is spread throughout the Muslim world and particularly in Southeast Asia, particularly in Indonesia. Think about it. Moreover, they have musical groups in these countries only specialized to sing these poems, especially the "Burdah". In some recent forms, it is "recited by Khalid Belrhouzi featuring Yusuf Islam (yes!) This is an ad on the net carrying the title:

Burdah (audio tape) Khalid Belrhouzi and Yusuf Islam (Arabic + English)⁸

It is stated in this poem, among other things, that ‘**And of your knowledge is the knowledge of the pen and the preserved tablet**’! The "pen" refers to the pen which Allah ﷻ commanded it saying: "**Write! It said, 'What should I write, my Rabb (Lord)? Allah said: Write the record of all preordained matter until the commencement of the Hour.'**"⁹ According to this poet, the Prophet (ﷺ) knows what the pen already wrote and what is written in the preserved tablet. We seek refuge in Allah from these fabrications.

I ask Allah ﷻ to guide us all to the truth and to make us accept and yield to it.

The slave of Allah,
Saleh As-Saleh.

**Concluded on the 14th of Thul Hijjah 1425,
Corresponding to January 24, 2005.**

Acknowledgment: May Allah reward sis Umm Maahir al-Amreekiyyah for voluntarily transcribing this material which was originally a response to a question about *anasheed* in the room "Understanding Islam."

⁷Fatwa al-'Aqeedah, no. 369m p. 651, Maktabatu As-Sunnah,

⁸Source: <http://onlineislamicstore.com/a3683.html>. This is for verification only, and not an endorsement of the site. Rather, I caution not to possess this poem, due to the warnings cited above. May Allah guide them both to the truth and save all Muslims from all forms of mysticism and innovations. Aameen.

⁹Saheeh Al-Bukhari, V.4, P.9, Hadeeth 13.