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# Travelogue

*Huzoor Taj al-Shari'ah's Trip to  
Istanbul 2014*

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It was the month of Ramadan. We had come to Madinah Munawwarah to present ourselves in the court of the master of both worlds ﷺ. A mureed of Huzoor Taj al-Shari'ah in Madinah Munawwarah told us one day that a prominent Sunni scholar from Turkey, Shaykh Mahmood Cubbeli<sup>1</sup> will present himself to meet Huzoor Taj al-Shari'ah. After a brief wait, he presented himself. Huzoor Taj al-Shari'ah was performing his Taraweeh prayer so we sat with him in a room and talked with him. He began questioning about Deobandis, so we informed him about the Deobandi creed [Aqa'id], rulings and some shameful stories. Upon hearing them, he said, "These people come to Turkey and present themselves as big Naqshbandi Sufis (they present themselves as Naqshbandi as there are a vast amount of Naqshbandis in Turkey) and let alone the laymen, they deceive even the scholars. I will – Allah willing – on return, unveil their reality before the scholars and common-folk of Turkey, and I will expose their true colours." We were just talking and Huzoor Taj al-Shari'ah came in after completing his prayer. The Shaykh briefly met with Hazrat, requested permission and then left.

For many years a trip to Turkey was being planned, however, this plan had not become reality as of yet. Meeting Shaykh Cubbeli had emphasised our plan of visiting there. Hence, approximately one and a half to two months after returning from Madinah Munawwarah, when the tour of Europe was agreed, the trip to Turkey was also decided. In Turkey, there are many places worth seeing, however, as we were there for only a few days, and we, especially Huzoor Taj al-Shariah, were tired, we sufficed with travelling only to Istanbul, which has a great significance in the history of Islam.

Before writing the travelogue, I wish to introduce this city with a few words, which will definitely be of benefit.

Istanbul, situated between two coasts, is the renowned, well-known and highly populated city of Turkey. The majority of this city is in the continent of Europe and some of it is part of the Asian continent. Between both these parts is the Black Sea – upon which there is a long bridge approximately 700 metres that connects both these parts. The government of Turkey has decorated the city's streets and roads beautifully. In many places, they have planted green plants from which the pedestrians continuously gain fresh scented air. On the seashore, for many miles, beautiful and delightful gardens are scattered, which invite tourists who come from different corners of the world to visit them.

In this city there are many historic places, however, for us, the ones with the greatest amount of importance were the Topkapi Museum (which has the sacred relics of the Messenger ﷺ and other Prophets and of the revered Ahl e Bayt), the mausoleums of the Sahabah and Tabi'in, and some historic Mosques which were great feats of fine architecture.

The residents of Istanbul are naturally jovial; staunch Sunni in terms of creed; Hanafi in terms of Madhhab; and majority Naqshbandi in terms of Tariqah. They ardently love the Messenger of Allah, his Sahabah, Tabi'in, Taba' Tabi'in and righteous Awliya'. However, in terms of living and attire, European civilisation has drastically influenced them, which truly causes pain to my heart after seeing it. Allah through the blessings of His beloved ﷺ remove them from this calamity – Aameen.

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<sup>1</sup> Shaykh Ahmad Cubbeli is a Murid, Student and Khalifa of Shaykh Mahmood Effendi

On the evening of 7 September 2014, along with Taj al-Shari'ah Allamah Mufti Muhammad Akhtar Raza Qadiri Azhari (Allah preserve him) and his son, Hazrat Mawlana Mufti Muhammad Asjad Raza Qadiri (Allah preserve him), we landed at Sabiha Airport. Our host, brother Abdul Rashid and his son, brother Abdul Qadir arrived at the airport to collect us. We prayed Asr and Maghrib at the Airport Masjid, collected our luggage and sat in the car. After an hour of driving, we reached our destination. As we had just completed a long journey, after finishing Salah, food and other things we rested.

In the morning, as we completed the essentials, our peers arranged to visit the shrine of the companion of the Prophet ﷺ, Abu Ayyub Ansari رضى الله عنه. Thus we left to reach there. Due to traffic congestion and regular red lights, it took us quite a long time to reach there. When we arrived at the sacred shrine, looking at the crowds of people reminded us of our shrines. All around us, all we could see were multitudes of people. Seeing the illuminated face of Huzoor Taj al-Shari'ah, the people's attention turned to us. They did not feel the need to ask who this Shaykh was, but they proceeded forward and with permission kissed Hazrat's hand and requested for Du'as. Children and adults, all were flocking. Shop owners came, leaving their shops, and gained the opportunity of kissing the hands. Moving through the crowds, we proceeded and neared the sacred shrine. We desired to enter inside, however, we were informed that the shrine is undergoing renovations, hence the doors have currently been closed. We conveyed our Salam and prayed Fatiha from outside, and circumventing the people, we exited.

From there we went to the shrines of Hazrat Ka'b Ansari رضى الله عنه and others, which were in a garden; the air was scented with the various flowers and fruit-filled trees. In this shrine, there was no crowd; simply peace and tranquillity. As we arrived, the Khadim at the shrine immediately stood up. Gaining the chance, we calmly presented ourselves and gained the blessings of the Sahabah. We then left to return to our place of residence.

On the second day, as we completed breakfast and other things, we were told that Shaykh Mamood Cubbeli (whose meeting has been mentioned earlier) has arranged a meeting with the prominent scholars of Istanbul. Thus we began to get ready to go there.

After praying Dhuhr Salah, we left to attend the meeting. Shaykh Cubbeli had sent a car to guide us. When we arrived at the place where the meeting was being held, we saw that Shaykh Cubbeli and his peers were present to welcome us. He gave us a warm welcome and took us inside.

Inside, there was a very big hall, in which around 100 to 150 people could fit. We proceeded forward. Huzoor Taj al-Shari'ah sat on the chair and his respected son, Huzoor Asjad Miyan Qiblah sat on his right. After a little while, all the invited scholars gathered and the meeting began.

Firstly the Qur'an was recited, then Shaykh Cubbeli, in Turkish, introduced in great detail, A'la Hazrat Imam Ahmad Raza Qadiri رضى الله عنه and Huzoor Taj al-Shari'ah (Allah preserve him), by which the people present became highly intrigued, and the reverence of A'la Hazrat and Huzoor Taj al-Shari'ah settled in their hearts. After the introduction, the scholars asked Huzoor some questions to which Huzoor replied in a very concise yet comprehensive manner, providing evidence from the Qur'an and the Hadith. The details of the questions and answers will – Allah willing – be provided in the next edition.

- 1- What steps should be taken for the unity of Muslims?
- 2- How should Muslims live among themselves?
- 3- What is the threshold of Zakat in terms of grams?

4- How many kilometres is the distance of travel for one to have to pray Qasr?

In reply to the first question, Hazrat quoted the Hadith narrated by Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رضي الله عنه, “*The last of this community will surely not be rectified except by that which rectified the first of them*” and explained it.

In reply to the second question, Hazrat recited the verse “*Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; and his companions are stern with the disbelievers and merciful among themselves*” [Qur'an 48:29] and briefly provided its interpretation.

In reply to the third question, Hazrat told them the same threshold that is known to us – meaning, [the threshold is] equivalent to 1 Tola 10 grams and 7 Tola 75 grams.

And in reply to the third question, Hazrat said: the distance of travel where one will have to pray Qasr is 92 kilometres. They were very pleased with these concise yet comprehensive answers. The meeting lasted approximately one hour and then ended with Salat o Salam and Hazrat's Du'a. In this meeting, eminent scholars of Istanbul were present. At the end of the meeting, Almost all of them requested *Ijazat of Hadith, Tafsir, Fiqh* etc. Hazrat granted all of them *Ijazah* and granted along with it *Sanads* (certificates).

Shaykh Cubbeli and his peers had prepared food, thus after the meeting the feast began. For food there was: dal, rice, meat, salad, lassi and Turkish bread. Upon seeing the meat, we were apprehensive so Shaykh Cubbeli immediately said that eat freely as this has been sacrificed by my own hands. Upon hearing this we joined in eating. The food was made very appetising. After finishing eating, we went, upon his invitation, to the residence of a scholar of the Silsilah Aaliyah Qadriyah, Shaykh Anees al-Qadiri. The time of Maghrib had begun so we prayed Maghrib as soon as we arrived at his house. Then he, according to his custom, fed us some dates and Qahwa, and showed us some of the sacred relics he had at his house. The sacred relics were: the blessed hair of the Prophet ﷺ; blessed button, curing soil [*Khak-e-Shifa*], a piece from the cover over the blessed grave, a piece from the cover over the grave of Ghawth e A'zam رضي الله عنه, the soil of Karbala and the footprint of the camel of the Prophet ﷺ among other relics.

After Ziyarat of the sacred relics, we requested permission and left for our residence.

On the third day, there were many events. One was to view the sacred relics of the Prophet ﷺ at the Topkapi Museum and second to meet Turkey's biggest Shaykh, Shaykh Mahmood Effendi. Due to his old age and weakness, he was unable to travel. To meet him, one has to travel to his house, which is quite far from the city of Istanbul.

11 o'clock in the morning, we finished breakfast and departed for Topkapi Museum. On reaching there, first we prayed Dhuhur Salah in the famous and well-known Blue Mosque, and then we purchased tickets and stood in the line to enter the Topkapi Museum, which is close to the Mosque. As Huzoor Taj al-Shari'ah was in a wheelchair, he did not have to wait in the line. His son, Huzoor Asjad Miyan took Hazrat inside. After a little while, our turn also came, so we entered praying Durood and Salam. When we were inside, we viewed many sacred relics, some of which were: the staff of Hazrat Musa عليه السلام; the blessed hair from the sacred head and sacred beard of the Prophet ﷺ; the swords of Hazrat Ali رضي الله عنه, Hazrat Khalid bin Walid رضي الله عنه, Hazrat Ammar bin Yasir رضي الله عنه and other companions; the blessed Jubba of Hazrat Imam Hussain رضي الله عنه; the blessed Jubba and box of Sayyidah Fatima رضي الله عنها; the Mizab-e-Rahmat and the key of the Ka'ba, and some old drawings of Masjid-e-Haram and Masjid-e-Nabawi.

There were big crowds of tourists who had come from within the city and from abroad. The locals informed us that many non-Muslims accept Islam after seeing these sacred relics. This too is a living miracle of the Prophet ﷺ, which is before us in the form of sacred relics, by which even now, non-Muslims are blessed with the treasure of Iman – Subhan-Allah.

After being honoured to see the sacred relics, we departed for the residence of Shaykh Mahmood Effendi, and like I have mentioned earlier, his residence was quite far from there. We were in the European side whereas his house was in the Asian side. In between there was a long bridge that connected the two sides. On the way there, there were traffic jams at many places, so we reached his house after a long while. He too had sent a car to guide us. In his house, Shaykh Cubbeli and many other peers and students were present to welcome us. They gave us an excellent welcome and took us inside.

As we entered, we prayed 'Asr Salah and we then entered the room of Shaykh Mahmood Effendi to meet him. There were 10-15 of us, however only five received permission to enter. The rest of us saw the Shaykh from a window which had a very large glass installed. As we entered the Shaykh's room, we saw that he was sat on a chair peacefully and without any care of the world and its surroundings, with a Tasbeeh in his hands, he was engrossed in the remembrance of Allah. Rays of Noor were emanating from his face. Due to old age, his weakness had increased so much that he was unable to walk or move his hands and feet. Strength of seeing, strength of hearing; all these strengths had diminished. He had an interpreter who would reiterate the other person's words in a loud tone. Shaykh Mahmood Effendi and Huzoor Taj al-Shari'ah shook each other's hands and sat in front of each other. Shaykh Cubbeli told the Shaykh about Huzoor Taj al-Shari'ah and in return he told us some things about the Shaykh. Then, both Shaykhs gave each other Du'as and after seeking permission, we came out of the room. Food had been prepared here as well, thus we sat and ate the food. Immediately after finishing eating, the time of Maghrib had started so we performed Salah and left from there.

During that time, we had a beneficial conversation with Shaykh Cubbeli and his peers, which would definitely be of benefit to mention.

Shaykh Cubbeli first queried about prostrating to graves – What is the Shar'i ruling? We replied that prostrating to graves and any form of prostration for respect is Haram, and A'la Hazrat Imam Ahmad Raza Qadiri رحمه الله has penned a comprehensive treatise, al-Zubdah al-Zakiyyah Li-Tahreem Sujood al-Tahiyyah upon its impermissibility. Therein, he has established its impermissibility by presenting numerous proofs.

Thereafter, Shaykh Cubbeli then asked about our position regarding Ibn Taymiyyah. We replied, referencing the work of 'Allamah ibn Hajar Haytami Makki, al-Jawhar al-Munazzam, and other works, that it is stated about ibn Taymiyyah: *"A slave whom Allah misguided and led astray and dressed him in a cloak of disgrace, and his punishment because of his ability to slander and lie is that of shame, and Allah deprived him [of guidance]"* [page 28] and our position is that he is not a kafir but he is misguided and misleads.

Huzoor Taj al-Shari'ah also supported our answers<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Hazrat was not present in the room at the time as Hazrat was eating in another room. When Hazrat returned after finishing eating, he confirmed the answers to Shaykh Cubbeli.

There was a scholar with Shaykh Cubbeli, Shaykh Shafeeq Sahib. I asked him which book of Fiqh was prevalent there, to which he mentioned Multaqi al-Abhar, which is a famous and a noteworthy book of Hanafi jurisprudence. Then I asked about Fiqh al-Muqaran, to which he said that Shaykh Mahmood Effendi and the likes do not favour it as whosoever begins to study it, considers himself no less than a Mujtahid.

A lot of time had passed so we requested permission to leave and stood.

As we were walking out, Shaykh Cubbeli asked Hazrat to make Du'a against an individual who disparages the Messenger of Allah. We asked, what type of disrespect? He replied that he says the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is a human just like us (Allah forbid); he eats and drinks like us and so on.

Hazrat made Du'a that if in his destiny there is guidance then he will receive guidance, otherwise he will perish and Muslims will be protected from his evil. After this, we sat in the car and departed for our residence.

We reached our residence late at night. As we awoke in the morning, it was the time of our flight. Thus we quickly completed the essentials and left for the airport.

With us on this trip were: Qari Dilshad Ahmad (Banaras), Hafiz Saif al-Malik (Banaras), Haji Yunus Qureshi (Mumbai), Shiraz Bhai (Malawi), Irfan Edhi (Madinah Munawwarah), Asif Noori (Madinah Munawwarah), Junaid Yaseen (Durban), Ridwan (Durban) and others.

We pray to Allah that he preserves the shadow of Huoor Taj al-Shari'ah over us and blesses us Sunnis with his blessings. Moreover, Allah preserve Huoor Asjad Miyan and make him the true Jaanasheen of Huoor Taj al-Shari'ah – Aameen.

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