

CONTRIBUTION OF MAKHDOOM ABDUL RAHIM GIRHORI IN SUFI THOUGHT AND OBSERVANCE

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ABSTRACT

Makhdoom Girhori of eighteenth century battled against satanic designs of both Sikhs and Hindus. His symbolic prominence owes much to his prognostic faculty; nonetheless his religious debates with the contemporaries, his manuscripts and poetry are of no less significance. Among his many services include his martyrdom while fighting a Hindu magician, Mahadev, notorious for converting Muslims with his evil spells. Makhdoom's preaching had a considerable impact on society and his mysticism guided several people who became his disciples. This paper attempts to explore sufi exertions of Makhdoom Girhori through content analysis of scholarly manuscripts and oral traditions as well as unstructured interviews with sajda nashin and visitors of the shrine.

INTRODUCTION

Makhdoom Abdul Rahim Girhori was grand Khalifa of Khawaja Muhammad Zaman Lanwari of the Naqshbandi order in Sindh. He wrote many books on different subjects including literature, religion and *fiqah*. Besides, Makhdoom was a characteristic poet of Arabic, Sindhi and Persian languages, an eloquent debater of religion and unrivalled for his prognostic faculty.

Makhdoom Girhori was eleven years old when Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, a great poet of Sindh, died. Makhdoom was highly influenced by Shah Latif and both belonged to *wahadat ul wajood* school of thought. His early life is shrouded in mystery and the major account of his early life comes from oral traditions. This paper is gleaned from oral traditions, scholarly monographs and group discussions with the visitors of the shrine of Makhdoom.

HIS EARLY LIFE

The information regarding the birth and childhood of Makhdoom is related differently in different sources. Ali Nawaz

Hajan Khan Jatoi (1956:1) quotes Dr. Nabi Bux Baloch that Makhdoom was born at village Waar, taluka Khipro, district Sanghar. However, Umer Bin Muhammad Daudpoto (2005:14) opines in Muqadma of *Kalam-e-Girhori* that Makhdoom Girhori was born in Ranipur, Khairpur State and his father's name was Saadullah. While, the disciples of Girhori shrine affirm that he was by caste Mangrio and born on 1153 A.H in taluka Gambat in Khairpur Mirs. Ali Nawaz Hajin Jatoi (1956:1) refers Khan Bahadur Muhammad Sidique Memon stating as Makhdoom Girhori was born in 1152 AH. From this data, it can be inferred that Makhdoom Girhori was born in Khairpur State in 1152 AH. He was Mangrio by caste and his father's name was Saadullah.

Like his date of birth and birthplace, little is known about his family and early education. Abid Mazhar (2012:66) writes that Makhdoom secured Quranic education from Muhammad Sharif Farooqi at Ranipur and later got lesson of Muqadama from saints of Kotri Kabir. However, Dr Daudpota (2005:13-16) is of the opinion that Makhdoom got his basic education from Miyoona Mobeena. Since he was fond of reading, he developed respect for his teacher Miyan Mobeena and out of reverence used to call him "father". The spiritual relationship between the teacher and student can be gauged from the anecdote that whenever any person in distress used to approach him for help, he would instantly mutter "Abdul Rahim son of Mubeena son of Raud has given salaam" and the danger would soon move away from that person.

RELATIONSHIP WITH CONTEMPORARY SUFIS

Initially Makhdoom Girhori was an orthodox scholar and used to ridicule disciples of various religious scholars and sufis of his time. According to the visitors of the shrine, one incident changed his life:

Once Girhori saw a disciple was going to his spiritual master named Khawaja Muhammad Zaman Lanwari. He asked the disciple in a satirical manner that when you reach your *murshid*, enquire from him whether a person can attain Mairaj or it was ended with the visit of Hazrat Muhammad (S.A.W). When the disciple reached there, he forgot. However, Khawaja Muhammad Zaman told his disciple to inform Makhdoom that people of

Baghdad were not allowed to cross over a newly constructed bridge until the caliph himself will cross it first, afterwards it was open to the public. Similarly, Mairaj can now be attained after it was traversed by the Holy Prophet (S.A.W), but it was prohibited before the visit of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W). It is said that when Makhdoom Sahib heard the remarks of Muhammad Zaman, he went straight to him and became his disciple and was later elevated to the Khilafat. Thereafter, Makhdoom Girhori had a great reverence for his spiritual leader.

Daupota (2005:18-19) describes argumentation regarding prayer timings:

One day Makhdoom argued with Khawaja Muhammad Zaman over the timing of Zuhur prayer that it should be strictly followed. However, Zaman asked him to leave this rhetorical discussion and later during ablution spanked some water on Makhdoom Girhori and he went unconsciousness for a few hours. At the request of the disciples to Zaman, Girhohri regained consciousness. And Khawaja Zaman asked how you will compensate the missed prayers. At this Makhdoom understood the importance of manifestation. He went back to Mirpurkhas and resided at Girhor thereafter.

ROLE OF GIRHORI IN THE APPOINTMENT OF *GADI NASHIN* AT THE LANWARI SHARIF

Dr. Hotchand Molchand Gurbuxiani. (2011:76-77) relates that once Girhori saw Holy Prophet (S.A.W) in dream asking Girhori to go to Lanwari Sharif at once, for Khawaja Zaman's caliphate was going to be mishandled. After the death of Muhammad Zaman, his brother in law Suleman claimed *Gadi Nashin* that the only son Gul Muhammad of Muhammad Zaman was still a child and cannot bear the weight of *Gadi Nashin* to manage the affairs of the shrine. After the burial of Khawaja Muhammad Zaman, Suleman took *bayat* from the disciples of Khawaja Zaman. Makhdoom Girhori immediately reached there and reciting from the the Holy Quran "And we bestowed wisdom on Yahya (A.S) when he was yet a child" raised the hand of Gul Muhammad son of Khawaja Zaman who was appointed as the *Gadi Nashin*. After this, Makhdoom came back to Mirpurkhas.

PREDCTIONS OF GIRHORI

Many predictions have been attributed to Makhdoom Girhori, but Sayed Ahmed Shah, *Sajada Nashin* of the shrine of Makhdoom Girhori, explained the author that all those attributed prophecies do not necessarily belong to him.

Maulana Girami has critically examined the predictions which were attributed to Makhdoom Girhori. On the following prediction:

آهي ڪشف ڪتابن ۾ اهڙي پڇارا
 ته لوڏو ايندو لواري ڪي، وينديس زينتا
 ڇهين پيڙهي ڇيهه ٿيندو وينديس امانتا
 ڪري پوندو ڪفر ۾ جيتوڻيڪ منهنجو مرشد،
 چوئيندو پاڻ ڪي آهيان رسول خدا
 اهڙا آثار ظاهر ٿيندا، بلڪل ظهورا،
 چوئيندو پاڻ تي، ڪلمو شريف
 لاله الا الله محمد زمان، رسول الله

Moulana Girami says that Girhori had never made any prediction aimed at criticizing Lanwari's next generation. And this type of attribution is clearly based on falsehood (Anwar 2009:98-104). Mir Haji Muhammad Bux Talpur has also expressed reservations and repudiates it.

Gul Hassan, *Sajada Nashin* of Lanwari Sharif, mentions that during the Ahmed Zaman period, some people belonging to opposite sect added false predictions numbering in hundreds. However, in his opinion Syed Ahmed Shah the then *Sajada Nashin* has corrected these false predictions.

LITERARY CONTRIBUTION OF GIRHORI

Abdul Rahim Girhori was a learned scholar and eminent poet. He wrote many poetry books in Arabic, Persian and Sindhi languages. His poetry was published by Dr Umar Bin Muhammad

Daudpota under the title *Abdul Raheem Grohri Jo Kalam*. It is said that a large number of the books of Girhori were destroyed during the expedition of notorious Afghan commander Madad Khan Pathan on Sindh. Those which were saved are discussed below:

Fatah-Al-Fazal [Arabic]: It is the translation of Arabic Maqalaat of Khawaja Muhammad Zaman in Sindhi.

Sharah-Abyat-E-Sindhi [Arabic]: Allama Daudpota published this book of Makhdoom Girhori with the help of Sindhi Adabi Society Hyderabad. It is about Khawaja Gul Muhammad.

Risala Gul Nima [Persian]: The contents of this book was actually in the custody of Khawaja Gul Hassan. In this book Grohri has discussed about Khawaja Gul Muhammad.

Majmu'a Sindyat: Actual material of this book was in custody of Khawaja Gul Muhammad.

MARTYRDOM OF GROHRI AND BREAKING TEMPLE

Makhdoom Abdur Rahim Girhori was martyred fighting against Hindu magician Mahadev who started converting Muslims into Hinduism. Only 72 people participated in this religious crusade.



CONCLUSION

Makhdoom Abdul Rahim Girhori was a prominent soothsayer and sufi scholar of his time. He rendered indefatigable services for the propagation of the message of love and humanity. Though he was martyred while battling against a Hindu magician, but in essence he was striving for truth and justice. He is equally famous among both Muslims and Hindus. Hindus, in particular, come to pay him tributes on the occasion of Hindu festival Diyar.

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