

INFLUENCE OF MUGHAL RULE ON THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF SINDH

Mian Bakhsh Laghari

Sindh had clear political and cultural affinity with India since the Mughal period. Consequently there was much in common in many aspects of social and cultural life of Sindh and India in their relations. It is a well known fact that the patronage of the emperors of Delhi to education since about the middle of the 14th century i.e. the period when Sammas assumed the government of Sindh (1351 to 1520 A.D.) and dedicated themselves to this noble cause. It is said that within the thirty years of their reign, Islam made tremendous progress in Sindh.¹

The Muslim rulers gave great attention to education since the advent of Islam in Sindh. The conversion of the Hindus into Is'am made a way to the construction of mosques and makhtabs on a large scale. The Muslim rulers of India, like Muhammad Giori (1173-1206 A.D.) Qutbuddin Aibak (1206-1210 A.D.) who succeeded him, Iltutmish (1210-1236 A.D.) his daughter Razia (1236-1240 A.D.) Nasruddin (1246-1266 A.D.) and Balban (1266 - 1287 A.D.) and Khilji (1290- 1320 A.D.) monarchs were all patrons of learning. Even Tughluq kings in the 14th century A.D. made considerable progress in education. They patronized scholars and spent a large sum of money on education. Thus Delhi being the capital city of India during various dynesties remained a great centre of learning.

Sikander Lodhi (1489-1517 A.D.) made education compulsory for military officers.² He not only patronised learned men, but himself wrote some Persian verses. Under Sikan-dar's rule education in Arabic and Persian became extensively popular among Hindus.

The great Mughul Emperors were patrons of learning and promoters of education. Their example was followed by the Mughul nobility and upper classes. Consequently education progressed well under the Mughuls. They established educational institutions in different parts of the empire where boys and girls received education.³ They patronised educa-

tion by grants of lands or money to mosques, monasteries and individuals saints and scholars. The schools called 'Pathshalas' for Hindus and 'Maktabs' for Muslims were adjuncts of the temples and mosques respectively where primary education was imparted to girls and boys. The Mughul ruler Humayun (1530-1556 A.D.) founded a Madrasah at Delhi. Emperor Akbar's reign (1556-1606 A.D.) marks a new epoch for the system introduced for imparting education in schools and colleges. He established colleges at Fatehpur Sikri, Agra and other places. The Mughul Emperors were fond of building libraries.⁴

After the establishment of Mughul rule in Sindh (1591-1737 A.D.), the Sindh students got an opportunity to proceed to Mecca and Medina for acquiring higher education. Jahangir (1605-1627 A.D.) had promulgated an ordinance that in the case of death of a wealthy man or a traveller, leaving no heir behind, his property be utilized for construction and repair of madrasahs and sacred places.⁵ He used to spend Friday evenings in the company of scholars and mystics, Shah Jahan built imperial college near Jamia Masjid Delhi, and repaired another college Darul-Baqa.⁶

Emperor Aurangzeb (1656-1707 A.D.) himself was a distinguished scholar and a great patron of learning. He founded a number of Madrasahs in his domination and fixed stipends for teachers and students.⁷ It is noted that Thatta was a great centre of learning during his days, as reported by Alexander Hamilton about eight years before the death of the emperor.⁸

In Mughal India, education was largely motivated by the religious impulse.⁹ The same system of education remained in Sindh, during the days of Kalhoras (1701 - 1782 A.D.) who got the government of Bhakhar, Sehwan and Thatta from the emperor of Delhi. The Talpurs followed the Kalhoras, as the Kalhoras had followed their predecessors, so far as the education of the country was concerned. The accounts of local as well as foreign writers bear testimony to the fact as a British officer writes that "there were indigenous schools of the Holy Quran in Sindh. The classes were held in Hujras or rooms adjoining the mosques. The pupils were also taught the 3 Rs. (Reading, Writing and Reckoning) in

these classes".¹⁰ It is an admitted fact that same was the pattern of education in contemporary India. Makatabs were found every where. In these Maktabs children were taught Reading, Writing.¹¹

It is the firm faith of Muslims all over the world that the education of Muslim child should commence with a lesson from the Holy Quran which is the symbol of Muslims life whether in the individual sphere or in the collective sphere. The Holy Prophet of Islam (peace be upon him) said:

"When God bestows good upon any one, He increases his knowledge of religion and shows him in the right path.

The fruit of faith is knowledge. On the day of judgement, the ink of the scholars will be weighed with the blood of the martyrs".¹²

Sindh enjoined this belief and accepted Islamic system of education. The age for admission to maktabs or primary classes in Sindh was usually six years.¹³ According to Burton when he was in Thatta he saw a venerable old man with grey beard teaching the children presumably of the same age to read Quran with pleasant voice.¹⁴ It had been practice among Sindhi Ulmas to teach their children at home and in addition to class room.

During the Kalhora period, Sindhi language, for the first time came to be taught compulsorily in maktabs and Madrassahs of Sindh. The early text books appeared to be in rhyming style, which were written by learned teachers. like Mian Abdul Hassan himself, Muhammad Hashim, Ziauddin, Abdullah and Ibrahim all of Thatta-Nangar.

Diwan Bheroomal Mehr-chand Advani writes in this regard as under:

There was a Maulvi (Madressah teacher) of Thatta, who used to impart religious education to Maulvis. In about 1700 A.D. he wrote a book entitled Muqadamat-us-Salat which contained religious matters like ablution, prayer etc. Maulvi Abul Hassan wrote this book in plain and simple Sindhi language, hence he is the pioneer of Sindhi literature. In those days Muslim scholars generally wrote in Arabic and Persian and mostly resided in Thatta, Sehwan and other places. Maulvi Hassan's Arabic works were already there, but this book was his first attempt in Sindhi verse, which was fol-

lowed by more religious works by other Muslim scholars. Thus there are about fifty works written in the style of Abul Hassan-ji-Sindh, still extant.¹⁵

From Ghaznid period upto 1852 A.D. the Persian was the official language of Sindh. The Persian and Arabic were the literary languages and the scholars of Sindh produced literary works in these languages.

There used to be co-education in Maktabas upto certain age limits. It is said that the royal Talpur ladies who had their maid servants did not observe purdah. These maids used to go to the Akhund, received instruction from him for the ladies who were intelligent enough to learn the transmitted lessons.¹⁶

The first lesson imparted to the children was "surat fatiha" after which 30th paras or sections were taught. The period took about six months to complete it. Simultaneously they were taught to read and write. The Akhund or teacher wrote on farahi or wooden plank and the children were asked to exercise the dressing over the marks of the Akhunds' hand. Tahhaji or spelling was also done along with this.¹⁷ It is said that in Arab countries also the same practice was followed.¹⁸ It is stated that in all the Muslim countries the timings of Maktabas were more or less the same. The teacher used to reach early in the morning and leave at sunset. The curriculum comprises religious studies, Islamic philosophy, linguistic, and medicine and mathematics.

In 1554 A.D. the government went to Tarkhans who remained in power till 1590 A.D. when Sindh was annexed to the Mughal empire. In Sindh next to Quran, Hadith, Sarf and Nahv, the following subjects were taught:¹⁹

1. Qirat (Art of recitation of the Quran).
2. Ilm-i-khatt (calligraphy).
3. Hikmat (philosophy).
4. Munazarah (Art of argumentation).
5. Tarikh (history)
6. Tib (medicine).
7. Uruz (prosody).
8. Occult sciences, such as: (Ramal, Geomancy, Ilm-i-Nujum, Astrology, Jafar, (Science of numbers).

In Sindh there was Galaxy of learned and as religious persons like, Makhdum Bilal of Talty, Qazi Dito Sewistani, Qazi Qazan of Thatta, Makhdum Miran, Moulana Younis Samarqandi, Shah Jehan Hashmi of Khurasan, Makhdum Nuh of Hala, Shah Abdul Karim of Bulri, Makhdum Jafar of Bubak and others. They all lived in the 16th century A.D., a little less than a quarter of which Sindh belonged to the rules of Sammas followed by the Arghuns who ruled the country (Sindh) for about 35 years only. In the 18th and 19th centuries, i.e. during the Kalhora and Talpur rule, the courses in religious occupied an important place in the syllabi of the Madrasahs of Sindh, that produced many learned personalities, men of very high calibre who performed scholarship, lofty sense of devotion to religion and dedication to duties has been exemplary and inspiring.

According to Ain-e-Akbari, the students in the Indian Madrasahs too besides the compulsory subjects of the Holy Quran and Hadith for Muslims read the same subjects with a little variation e.g. they studied ethics, arithmetic, accounts, agriculture, geometry, logic, physics, medicine, political science and history.²⁰

According to Dr.Yusuf Hussain, Dars-e-Nizami prevailed in the Madrasahs of Sindh and it consisted of the following subjects:²¹

Sarf, Nahv, Mantiq, Hikmat, Riazi, Balaghat, Fiqha, Usul-e-Fiqha, Kalam, Tafsir and Hadith.

As the time of the annexation of Sindh to British empire, there were six madrasahs in Sindh e.g. at Sehwan, Talti near Sehwan, Khura North of Sehwan, Matiari, Mehar, Walhari near Umerkot and Chotiyari on the Nara River. ²² The Ameers of Sindh (Talpur) gave handsome amount and grain annually to all principal mosques, madrasahs and shrines. Most of these madrasahs had come down from Kalhoras who were religious minded persons themselves and it was their religious spirit which led to the establishment of these centres of learning. During the rule of Kalhoras there were more than fifty towns and villages in Sindh where adequate arrangements for learning were provided. The most important were Thatta, Bakhar, Sukkur, Rohri, Alor, Sewe-

stan, Bubak, Hala Kandi (old Hala), Johoja, Umerkot, Nasarpur, Walhar, Matiari, Hyderabad, Darbela, Sanghar, Shikarpur and Khuhra etc.²³

It is said that Thatta was the centre of learning in those days. There was a network of madrasahs in it and every scholar and poet had library of his own. There lived Mukhdum Muhammad Hashim Thattavi (D.1147 A.H.) Mukhdum Muhammad Mian (D.1161 A.H.) Mukhdum Zia-ul-Din, Mian Niamatullah, Mian Muhammad Siddique, Akhund Muhammad Shafi, Akhund Abdul Hassan, Mir Muhsin (D.1165 A.H.), Ghulam Ali "Mallah", Ghulam Ali Mumin, Muhammad Panah Riji, Mir Abin Turab and others. They were as eminent in their period as were Shaikh Sadi Sherazi and Anwari of Persia in their age.

The education in Sindh was generally imparted on the same lines as in other Muslim countries, such as Cairo, Baghdad, Cardona and Samarqand etc. The system of education adopted at Tashqand and in the rest of Central Asia, was that the children were admitted to Maktabs or primary schools at the age of five or six years, and those Maktabs were attached to Mosques. They started with alphabet followed by parts of the Holy Quran.²⁴

In almost all the madrasahs of Sindh, it was compulsory to read "Nurnamah" a Sindhi religious book and the Tafsir-e-Hashmi of Mukhdum Muhammad Hashim Thattavi.

It can safely be assumed that the influence of Mughal rule on the education of Sindh was the same system which prevailed in almost all the Muslim countries, the Curriculum and the venue of the education being the Quran Sharif and the "Hadith" respectively.²⁵ At the age of about twelve years, the boys were taught Persian. They started with vocabularies such as "Duwayo" and "Siwayo" as well as "Chism-e-Chiragh" for the purpose of teaching grammer. Having finished these, they were made to study "Karima" History and works of Shaikh Sadi Sherazi, such as "Gulistan", "Bostan" and works of Hafiz Sherazi, Moulana Jami and Nizami.²⁶ These works were very popular in both Sindh and India in the Mughal age.²⁷

The popularity of these works apart from their literary

value was also due to the influx of scholars from Iran, Samargand, Bokhara in Sindh in the same and the subsequent periods. Since their these works have remained in the Syllabi. Besides this, the Arghuns and Tarkhans spoke and wrote in Persian. Persian was also the official language of the Mughals of Delhi. Hence the works of those celebrated scholars were allowed to remain in the curriculum.

In Sindh the Madrasahs received financial aid from the Kalhora and Talpur rulers as well as from the nobility and upper classes. The Madrasahs had one or two Mukhdums; they were leading teachers who gave lectures. They received hand some salaries. They had a teaching staff of Alims or scholars. The students were given free food and clothing. The students were quite disciplinay and had good respect for their teachers.²⁸

In Arabic, the syllabus of those Madrasahs comprised studies in Sarf and Nahv (Grammer and Syntax), Mantiq (Logic) Fiqh (Jurisprudence), Tafsir (Exegetical study of the Quran), Hadith (Tradition) of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and Maani and Bayan Rhetoric. The same was the curriculum in the Madrasah of Mughal period in India and it greatly influenced the education system of Sindh till British occupation of Sindh in 1843 A.D.

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