

The Role of Pir Muhammad Rashid to Readjustment of Pledge Allegiance in Tasawuf

Mr. Abdul Majeed Dars

Lecturer Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University, Campus Naushahro Feroze, Sindh, Pakistan

Email: majeed.dars_nf@sbbusba.edu.pk

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9631-0294>

Dr. Mufti Muhammad Sahibdad

In charge Director Institute of Language, University of Sindh, Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan

Email: drsahibdad@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-7132-7190>

ABSTRACT:

One of the twelfth and thirteenth century eminent scholar and Sufi saint of Sindh is Imam-ū l-Arfī n Pir Syed Mohammad Rashid Roza Dhani. His contributions for revival of Dī n are a bright tower of the history. This is an historical research. Therefor historical and scholarly method of research is adopted.

Syed Mohammad Rashid Roza Dhani promoted the system of Tarī qat and re-established the random system of Sufism, especially the Qadiriya Sufi-order whose central system had been cold for a long time, and the traditions of the leading saints absolutely forgotten. An important source of misguidance in those days was the misguide sufis. He considered those who deviate from the commands of the pure Shari'ah are not monotheists but atheists who avoided obeying fundamentals of Shari'ah. He started the process of pledge allegiance following to the Holy Prophet and considered the pledge of allegiance as an effective means of reforming hearts in the field of preaching and through it sought a living revolution. If he is called the inventor of this formal system, it will not be wrong. Just as Sheikh Abdul Qadir Gilani, compiled Qadiriya Sufi-order in such a way that millions of people benefited, in the same way, Rozah Dhani also trained and supervised his followers with continuity and discipline, and set them up in a short period of time.

As a result of his combined efforts, a large numbers of people of Sindh in particular and the entire subcontinent in general have benefited.

Keyword:

Shari'ah, Sū nnah, Tarī qat, Haqīqah, pledge allegiance

Introduction

Among the eminent scholars and spiritual personalities of Sindh, one of the twelfth and thirteenth century scholars is Imam-ū l-Arfī n Pir Syed Mohammad Rashid Roza Dhani. His movement of revival of Dī n is a bright and enlightened tower of the history. The light of which has been benefiting a large circle of people for two consecutive centuries

The birth of Pir Mohammad Rashid Roza Dhani was held in 1171 AH, when his father Mian Muhammad Baqa Shah was settled at Rahim Dina Kalhoro village that is in the location of Khairpur Mirs district, in present days. Hafiz Zain ul Abidin Mahesar is his teacher of Qur'anic education. After that, he learned Mian Muhammad Akram, Shah Faqirullah Alvi (d. 1195 AH), Makhdoom Yar Muhammad Siddiqui (d. 1216 AH) and Makhdoom Tayyab Panhwar Baqapuri. Finally, he studied Hadith in the school of Ustad-Al-Qūl (Teacher of the teachers) Mufti Muhammad Arijavi (d. 1197 AH) and acquired the Degree of Graduation (Sanad-e-Faraghat). He pledged allegiance to his father Syed Muhammad Baqa Shah in the Qadiriya and Naqshbandia Sufi order, and after the demise of his father, he began his mission at the age of twenty-seven and continued to perform the duty of da'wah for thirty-six consecutive years.

The number of his caliphs was up to eleven hundred, of which five hundred were authoritative caliphs. According to Abu-al-Hassan Nadwi: I have personally listened to Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi expressing that he (Syed Muhammad Rashid) had almost the same status and fame in this country intellectually and spiritually as his contemporary Hazrat Shah Waliullah Dehlavi had in North West India.”¹

Pir Syed Muhammad Rashid is the ancestor of Rashdi family of Sindh, and the two intellectual and spiritual families of Sindh, "Pagara Pir" and "Jhande Wale Pir" are among his descendants.

Pir Syed Mohammad organized the movement of Da'wah and Reformation in such a way that in a short period of time millions of devotees started regaining their lost destiny. In a short period of time, millions of people acquired the grace of faith. He prepared such mystics and authoritative caliphs, from those the candle of preaching of true faith continued to burn. As a result of his combined efforts, Sindh in particular and the entire subcontinent in general have benefited. It is an unforgettable fact that the Muslims of the subcontinent can never forget his contribution. Through his beneficence, numerous centers of learning were established in Sindh and outside Sindh, the services of which continue even after the passage of two centuries.

The conditions to the time:

An important source of misguidance in those days was the misguided Sufis. They distorted the form of Sufism by separating Shari'ah from Tarīqat, and justified his misguided behavior and non-Shari'ah deeds in the distinction between Shari'ah and Tarīqat. There were many rituals that had nothing to do with Sharia and Sūnnah. The talk about “Wahdat ul Wujood” (unity of existence) began to become publically, and all

distinctions between slaves and Allah Almighty began to be declared meaningless. In the same way, dance and music became the lifeblood of Sufism, and the word of Tarī qat was used to cover atheism and heresy. The traditions of the pioneers have been forgotten. Sufism, which was the name of revival of Sū nnah and self-purification, has now become an arena of total darkness and innovation. In that time, so-called Sufis was established such ideas and traditions, which had nothing to do with Tarī qat. The ignorant Sufis wanted to introduce such a system by dividing Shari'ah and Tarī qat into separate sections, where Shari'ah rules were not remotely related. This so-called Sufi sect was a killer of the true religion.

Reforms in Sufism towards Pir Muhammad Rashid:

Pir Muhammad Rashid re-established the random system of Sufism, especially in the Qadiriya chain, the central system of which had been cold for a long time, and the traditions of the pioneer saints had been completely forgotten. Through his sincere struggle, he established a system of reform and training in the manner of Syed Abdul Qadir Gilani, the founder of the Qadiriya Sufi-order, so that the map of the first period came to the fore. He called the Shari'ah a standard for spiritual evolution in the field of Sufism, and inculcated in the hearts of the disciples the belief that those who do not care for the Shari'ah are astray and out of the way. The main focus of his teachings was to strengthen the relationship between Shari'ah and Tarī qat. He taught to be exactly the same, instead of considering Shari'ah and Tarī qat as separate from each other. His efforts in purifying Sufism from innovations and making it according to Qur'an and Sū nnah are very important. He broke the spell of the crude idea of these Sufis, and suppressed this miss-guidance with his beautiful sermons and priceless writings.

In his views, the pure Shari'ah takes precedence over Haqī qah and Marifat, Shari'ah is the name of the accuracy of outward actions, and Haqī qah refers to the accuracy of the inner state. Shari'a is the Haqī qah which cannot exist without Shari'a. Shari'ah is the act of the servant, and Tarī qat is the name of the guardian and protection of Allah Almighty.² Just as the body and the soul are useless apart from each other, so the Shari'ah is useless without the Tarī qat, and Haqī qah is nothing without the Shari'ah.³

He considered those who fled from the following to Shari'ah as misguided and those who deviate from the commands of the pure Shari'ah are not monotheists but atheists who avoided to obey fundamentals of Shari'ah. He announced that the attainment of the path of Tarī qat to be the obedience of the pure Shari'ah. He strongly rejected those so-called

sufis who said that Shari'ah and Tarī qat are contradictory of each other. He said that I am amazed to the condition of today's monotheists who are lazy in worship and they do not like to worship. If these people were really monotheists, they would not be in this situation at all. Because the monotheist does not have any cost or trouble in worship. They are not monotheists, but atheists.⁴ He have tried to test sufism or Tarī qat on the basis of Shari'ah, and in all terms, thoughts and ideas of Sufism, he have tried to make it compatible with Shari'ah. Allah Almighty chose him to reorganize the whole system of Sufism.

Meaning of pledge allegiance:

Taking the promise is pledge allegiance in literary means. In religious terminology, it is to confess his sins and mistakes and confess his obedience to the elders by hands in the hands of a prophet, guardian or saint. According to this terminology, all the actions must be corrected and performed in the light of Shari'h. The name of this acceptance is called pledge allegiance (بيعت) in Sufism.⁵

The Holy Prophet used to pledge allegiance to believers who accepted Islam and guaranteed to do good and leave bad deeds. There are four kinds of Pledge allegiance that they took by the Holy Prophet. First oath of allegiance took by the Messenger of Allah on Islam from delegation of Madinah at place of Aqaba. This oath was taken to remain steadfast on Islam and polytheism. Second oath took by the Messenger of Allah from his companion on fighting against enemies of Islam at place of Hū daybī ah. According to this allegiance the believers were agreed that they will fight against enemy as long as they were alive. Third oath of allegiance took by the Messenger of Allah on the day of trench, and he took allegiance for emigration. Fourth allegiance took by the Holy Prophet, it was pledged from believers that they will not commit certain sins. In the report of Ubadah b. As-Samit, these sins are reported such as to not associate anything with Allah Almighty, to not steal, to not have unlawful sexual relations, to not kill children, to not utter slander and to not disobey to goodness. Through this last pledge, Sufi saints follow this last pledge on repentance and take it from the public.⁶

Reorganization of the formal system of pledge allegiance towards Pir Muhammad Rashid

Pir Muhammad Rashid urged a large number of Muslims to renew their faith, to re-accept their religious responsibilities with a sense of responsibility, to awaken the faith and religious sentiments, and to love God in depressed and dead hearts. He tried to bring a massive religious and spiritual revolution in the hearts of people. Gratification of heart is the

guarantor of a lasting and vibrant revolution, and an effective means of creating gratification of heart is the chain of allegiance. He considered the pledge of allegiance as an effective means of reforming the heart in the field of preaching and reformation, and through it sought a living revolution. He felt the need for a permanent and deep relationship and continuous improvement for comprehensive reform and permanent training. He started the process of pledge allegiance following to Sū nnah of the Holy Prophet on the way of the Companions of Safa, so that people may repent, renew their faith from their previous life of negligence, create a warmth of faith in themselves through spiritual supervision and let them have the spirit of following the Sū nnah and the Shari'ah; and the passion of the Hereafter. He used to say that the source of grace of the Holy Prophet (peace upon him) and his Companions was companionship, and there was no mention of thought (in its present form) other than companionship. We also have companionship.⁷

He introduced a common understanding and a simple, comprehensive and formal system of generalizing spiritual grace, which is a manifestation of an ideal status. If he is called the inventor of this formal system, it will not be wrong. Just as the founder of the Qadria Sufi-order Syed Sheikh Abdul Qadir Gilani, re-edited and compiled this Su-order in such a way that millions of people in his life benefited from this great method and became acquainted with the sweetness of faith and good morals. In the same way, he also taught, trained and supervised his followers with continuity and discipline, and set them up in a short period of time.

The general practice of the followers of Tarī qat is that they do not take every visitor in their company, nor do they take allegiance from him. They would bake it in a test oven before taking it into their own allegiance. And the ordeal could last from days to years. When the disciple passed the test, he would swear allegiance to him. Sofia's consensus is that it is not appropriate for a sheikh to instruct a disciple to behave, and that the disciple's heart is attached to the world. In this way, he is presenting spiritual grace for misuse.⁸ Shaykh Muhammad al-Shanasi al-Ahmadi says that I went to Persia from the western cities to seek the path of Tarī qat, and when I asked Shaykh Abu-al-Humayl to swear allegiance, he did not pay attention to me, nor did he take a wide stand. But later, seeing the intensity of my desire, he approached me and took allegiance.⁹

He based the chain of allegiance on the Prophetic method, keeping in mind the mental abilities, inclinations, tendencies and regional background of the addressees, and considered such conditions as an obstacle to the welfare of the common man. What can be the means of

making the benefactors other than to go to the doorstep of people and make them see the door of God, to welcome every visitor, and to accept him with a hundredfold joy? In this regard, following the Sūnnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him), he started taking allegiance to everyone without any distinction. In this regard, he traveled in the most difficult areas for years, not days and months. He used to say that all human beings are servants of Allah Almighty. This is not a time for testing and experimentation. Just as the elders of the Sufi saints used to try to swear allegiance by performing Istikharah (asking Allah to help one make a choice). He used to say that everyone should be instructed, whoever gets what he deserves will come and fall into the trap.¹⁰

A cheerful and smiling forehead creates sweetness in a personality. And the existence of a good-natured person, like honey, removes the bitterness of life from its effect and makes it fragrant and enlightened. The Ashj' delegation that came for the peace treaty, and were so impressed by the good manners of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) that they accepted Islam and returned.¹¹ He would not only accept every visitor with the same smile, but would also welcome him wholeheartedly.

In his time, Sufis were neglecting to reform and train their disciples, and the system of reform and training of the leading saints had become lifeless. He considered the inner reformation of his disciples as the most important task of his life. If a group of new disciples and students came to him, he would not go to his house until he bestowed his grace and attention on each one. Occasionally there would be a situation where many nights would pass, and there would be no opportunity to go to the house.

If he see laziness and sloth among the students, they would try to divert it from their attention and warning. He keep a close eye on the occupation and routines of students. When he feel that some students are not asking him due to his honour, and due to which they are not getting proper training, he would appoint caliphs for such seekers. He appointed Qabil Shah, Qazi Abdul Rahman and Mian Hassan Shah for the task of finding out the situation of such disciples and presenting their problems at him, and taking instructions from him. In this way, for the disciples who needed heartfelt attention and meditation, he would instruct Sahibzada Muhammad Hassan Shah to accompany them to his companionship and engage in the hobby of meditation so that not a single hour of their time would pass in negligence.¹² A large part of the disciples who came to his allegiance would have lost consciousness due to his attention, lost their apparent understanding, and many disciples would have been in a state of ecstasy (Sūkar) for a long time. In order to bring such disciples out of such situations, Sahibzada Mian Muhammad Ata would be instructed to

keep such devotees in his company, and under his guidance prepare them for the journey ahead by crossing them from that temporary destination.¹³

In the same way, if he saw a student's first step any deficiency, he would not engage him in the next step, and the seeker would forget to eat and drink, work hard day and night to meditate and strengthen his condition. Such interrogation aroused a zeal in the disciples and wherever he was he was engaged in meditation.¹⁴ During the journey of Kach Bhū j, a large number of new disciples pledged allegiance in the area of Pau. He issued orders for the training of those new disciples and said that the new disciples should keep company with Khalifa Mahmud, and ordered the caliph to keep them in his training.¹⁵

He would associate some caliphs with his companions for the systematic training of the disciples, and would prepare them for the training of new disciples at different stages. Mian Qabil Shah and Qazi Abdul Rehman would find out the inner state of the new disciples, and take instructions from him and engage them in further lessons. Sahibzada Muhammad Hassan Shah used to take disciples who needed meditation and heartfelt attention in his company. Sahibzada Mian Muhammad Ata used to prepare the devotees for the next steps by crossing the state of Sukkur. In this way, it seems that an entire association was working together, where the corner of the mosque was divided into a separate occupation and a separate chapter.

In this way, he established the chain of allegiance on simple and comprehensive lines, and in a short period of time worked day and night to guide the disciples to the path of Tarī qat. And the chain of allegiance became an everlasting source of grace for the reform of the people.

Conclusion:

The Holy Prophet used to pledge allegiance to believers who accepted Islam and they guaranteed to do good and leave bad deeds. In the light of Sūnnah of the Holy Prophet, Pir Muhammad Rashid inspired a large number of Muslims to renew their faith and re-accept their religious responsibilities with a sense of responsibility. In his time, Sufis were neglecting to train their disciples, and the system of reform and training of the leading saints had become lifeless. He brought a religious and spiritual revolution in the hearts of people.

He considered the pledge of allegiance as an effective means of reforming in the field of preaching and through it established permanent, deep relationship and continuous improvement for comprehensive training. He pledged allegiance to everyone without testing them against the elders of the Sufi saints and associated some caliphs with him for the

systematic training of the disciples. He trained and supervised his followers with continuity and discipline, and set them up in a short period of time.

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