

Chapter One



INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER - 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE PROEM

This study has outlined the history of Sufi Darghas in Kandhar. It has also discussed the principal trends in development of Sufism in Kandhar from the 14th century A.D. to the beginning of the 20th century and also covers the study of Chishtiya, Suhrawardiyya, Quadariyya and Rafaiyya orders and their development in Kandhar region.

The present study begins with a brief description of the mystical philosophy of Sufism and its spread in Deccan India. It is followed by the study of Quadiriyya, Shathariyya, Naqshbandiyya and the Chishtiyya orders and their Shaikhs' establishment with Khanagh and Darghas in Kandhar. The research concludes with a summary of the Kandhar Sufis' traditions and its deep impact on the society of the related mid-Godavari Basin.

The Darghas and Urus festivals flourished in Kandhar from the 14th century A.D. What particularly strikes today's visitor to Kandhar is the extraordinary number of tombs scattered both inside and outside the city.

In Kandhar, some of the larger tombs, called Dargahs, have become the centres of still existing popular Sufi tradition or customs. On any Urs and on every Thursday and Friday afternoons, crowds of common people, both Hindu and Muslims, and mostly women, can be seen giving gifts to and taking blessings from the Dargah. The festival celebrations that annually commemorate the Sufis' death anniversaries (Urs, or 'marriage with God') illustrate the influence of traditions and customs even today. On these occasions, thousands of pilgrims from all over the Deccan region throng to Kandhar and join the local devotees in the celebrations.

The plan of the study is based on certain Persian and Urdu literature of Sufis and the information collected by visiting Sufi Dargahs in Kandhar. The work is based on the study of source material in Persian (translated into Urdu) literature as well as Indian regional languages, particularly Marathi and Hindi.

1.2 RELATED LITERATURE ON SUFIS IN KANDHAR

'Malfuz' literally means 'words spoken'. In common parlance, the term is used for the conversations or table talks of a system teacher or Sufi. Malfuz writing is one of the most important literary achievements of the medieval India. Nevertheless, the Malfuzat are more valuable for an understanding of the stages in the development of their theories than the treatises they wrote on their teachings.

Malfuzat Hazrat Haji, Sarvar Saiyyah Maqdoom Saidoddin Rafai have been printed in 1960. The copy is available in the collection of the manuscripts in Kandhar Dargah. The Persian to Urdu translation of Malfuzat has recently been published by Qadari Mohammad Arifuddin Shah Rafai in 2003 A.D. Also, the translation of Persian Malfuzat into Urdu, edited by Saiyyad Shah Mohinuddin Rafai Hussaini of Nanded was published in 2001 A.D. The Malfuzat of Haji Sarwar Maqdoom offers a deep insight into the

structure of the contemporary philosophy of Sufism and provides valuable glimpses of Khangah life. The Malfuzat discusses the main features of the Sufi teachings.

The present study is based on some Urdu books published in 1899 and 1903. 'Tarikh-e-Kandhar', a book in Urdu language, was written by Amir Hamza Munshi Mohammad, Niab Savishta of Nizam State, Hyderabad. This book dealing with the core information, with the nature of historical knowledge about Kandhar is referred. To discuss the ancient to 19th century Kandhar and its development by historic approach. This book also covers the information about Kandhar Sufis and their lifetime activities and also deals with major information about Sufi Dargahs in Kandhar. The Urdu book of history, *Maheboob-i-Zila Manan Taskarate Auliya-e-Dakkhan*, written by Maulavi Abu Turab Abdul Jabbar Khansaheb and published in 1899 at Hyderabad, provides the sources material about Sufis in Kandhar. The Maulavi was a famous historian in the Nizam State. He has also written extensively about another Dargah, Hazrat Rafiyoddin Quadari Dargah. The book mentions various Sufi saints' life and their teachings, which had flourished in the Deccan. Another important source book is *Hyderabad va Deshi Sansthane* (in Marathi) published in 1928 and written by Sharma Raghavendra, who was an advocate in the Hyderabad High Court. This informative book gives us deep knowledge about the Nizam State of Hyderabad. For the present study, Persian material has also been used such as 'Bahrul Anсад' written in 1470 A.D. by Hazrat Biyaban, a famous Sufi from Ambad in today's Jalana district (translated into Urdu).

The secondary source material used for the present study is available in Hindi, Marathi and English languages. These include S.A.A.Rizvi's famous treatise *History of Sufism in India*, Vols.I and II (1983), Setu Madhavrao Pagadi's *Sufi Sampradaya* (in Marathi) (1954). The published sources material available in the Barrister Khardekar

Library of Shivaji University, Kolhapur; Libraries of Rajaram College, Kolhapur; Sadguru Gadage Maharaj College, Karad; Library of Swami Ramanand Teertha Marathwada University, Nanded; Public Library of Nanded Municipal Corporation, and certain documents are available in the archives of Kandhar Municipal Council and the Dargahs at Kandhar.

1.3 SCOPE AND AREA OF THE STUDY

It is important that in the Deccan region, many scholars from abroad and India have attended to Sufi history in Deccan. R.M.Eaton studied the Sufis of Bijapur (1975) and S.S.K.Husseini studied the Gisudaras of Gulbarga. Like that, this research work entitled 'A Historical Study of Sufi Dargahs in Kandhar' is also of the same status in the history of Sufism in Deccan.

Kandhar, a small town in Marathwada, is one of the few places in Maharashtra that have maintained their historical presence and its remnants. Kandhar is a taluka headquarters, located in Nanded District in Marathwada region. It is situated on a low-lying southern plateau of Balaghat, which forms a sy-system of the Sahyadri mountain ranges.

This Dissertation covers a historical study of Sufi Darhas in Kandhar. The Sufis and Auliyas of Quadariyya, Rafaiyya, Chishtiya, Suharrawardiyya Silsilas came and settled in Kandhar town in mid-14th century A.D. In subsequent year, Kandhar became the centre of Sufism and many Darghas were constructed there (Dev, 1985:24).

For the first time in 1295 A.D., Alla-ud-din Khilji attacked Devgiri and finished off the ruling Yadavas to establish Muslim rule in the area. After the conquest of Northern India, Khilji's armies proceeded towards south under the leadership of Malik Gafur. Yadava territory had already been merged into the kingdom of Delhi Sultans; the Kakatiyas

and Hoyasalas were forced into accepting the Sultan's suzerainty. Besides, Malik Gafur had accumulated considerable loot by rampaging through Madurai and Pandya kingdoms. After the death of Alla-ud-din Khilji, Gyas-ud-din Tughalaq deputed his son Joinakhan (who later became famous as Mohammad Tughlaq) on the conquest of south. He merged the territories of Kakatiya and Pandya kingdoms into the Delhi Sultanate. Around this time, Tughalaq's rule was established on Kandhar and Muslim Sardars and soldiers began visiting the place regularly. Some Sufis also migrated to south from Delhi and established their Khanagah at different places. The then trading centre of Kandhar came to the notice of some Sufis and they became permanent residents there (Pagadi, 1954:48).

In the 14th century A.D., Kandhar came under the rule of Muslims. In about 1327 A.D., Mohammad Tughalaq established his rule in Kandhar region. In 1348, Tughalaq's Subhedar Qutlaq Khan was the Subhedar of the Bidar-Kandhar-Daulatabad region. During his times, a saint named Hazrat Saidoddin Rafai Haji Sarwar Kaqdoom Saiyyah, an Auliya came to Kandhar. After his death in 1358, a Dargah (Badi Dargah) was built in Kandhar in his commemoration. This was the first Dargah built in Kandhar. Even today, this Dargah is visited by the devotees belonging to Hindu, Muslim and other religions. Udgir and Kandhar towns were parts of a Jahagir belonging to the first Sultan Qasim Barid Shah of Baridshahi dynasty of Bidar. In those days, Kandhar was an important centre of trade and business.

Following are the names of some of the important Dargahs in Kandhar:

- (1) Hazrat Saidoddin Saiquah Sarwar Maqdoom Rafai Dargah (Badi Dargah),
- (2) Sheikh Saiyyad Sang-de-Sultan Dargah,
- (3) Haji Khwaja Kayamuddin Qadari Dargah,
- (4) Hazrat Pir Jalal Dargah,

- (5) Hazrat Haji Maai Dargah,
- (6) Hazrat Saiyyad Saheb Dargah,
- (7) Hazrat Palaki Dargah,
- (8) Hazrat Pir Musa Dargah,
- (9) Pir Shamsuddin Dargah,
- (10) Hazrat Shah Dargah,
- (11) Hazrat Suleman Pir Dargah,
- (12) Pir Bahauddin Sufi Dargah,
- (13) Pir Dervish Dargah,
- (14) Pir Saalav Dargah,
- (15) Hazrat Maulavi Saiyyad Shah Rafiyoddin Dargah (Amir Hamza, 1903:192-80).

Every year, annual festivals are held in the first three Dargahs mentioned above. Devotees belonging to all religions participate in these festivals popularly called 'Urs'. Because of these festivals even today, Kandhar is an important religious centre of both Hindus and Muslims. Through Silsila tradition, all these Dargahs are affiliated to Sufi centres in Parbhani, Jalna, Ambad, Nanded in Maharashtra, Bidar and Gulbarga in Karnataka and Hyderabad in Andhra Pradesh. The Dargahs developed in Kandhar during the rule of the Nizam. Even today, some of these Dargahs follow the traditional method of appointing a successor of Sajjadanish. The presence of Hindu Mathadhipatis during the inaugural ceremonies of succession, or Sajjadanishi, is considered to be of great significance. The Mathadhipati gives new clothes to the new successor. Substantial financial turnover takes place during the annual Urs in Kandhar, in which a large number of Hindu and Muslim devotees actively participate.

The Second Chapter of this Dissertation deals with the spread of Sufism in Deccan, the geography and political overview of Deccan and discusses the spread of various orders of Sufism in Deccan.

The Third Chapter of this Dissertation deals with the establishment of Sufi Dargahs in Kandhar, the geographical and historical nature of Kandhar, the arrival of Sufis. It also focuses on Sufi orders in Kandhar and their tradition and customs in the present days. The Chapter also provides important information published in periodicals and collected during the visits to different Dargahs. The Fourth Chapter deals with Sufi traditions and customs, Malfuz literature, Silsilas or Tariqa of Sufism, Dargah's administrative bodies and economy, Urs festivals and women devotees of Dargahs.

The Fifth Chapter brings out the conclusions of the present study.

1.4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The information and the research work on the Sufi saints of Kandhar and Dargahs created by their followers as well as the annual Urs. This research work attempts to throw light on the Sufi traditions and the Dargahs in Kandhar.

1.5 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The researcher aims to use historical method of research for the present study. Visits to the field of research involve the gathering of data, its analysis, classification. Interviewing the related personalities comes under oral history, which has been used as a means to fill the gaps in the written documents. The study has also presented the history and the conceptual basis of various Sufi Silsilas in Kandhar and used the Malfuz literature to cover the Kandhar Sufi traditions.

The study aims to provide information on the establishment and formation of Sufi Dargahs in Kandhar. It has also attempted to throw light on the socio-religious

festivals and traditions of Sufi Dargahs in Kandhar to give an account of important Sufi centres or Darghas and described the life and teachings of the leading Sufis and their disciples. The Sufis of Kandhar were the natural socio-religious guides of the people from whom men and women from all cross-sections of society solicited spiritual guidance and worldly advice. The research work also gives an account of Urs and other socio-religious traditions and customs in Kandhar during the present times.

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