



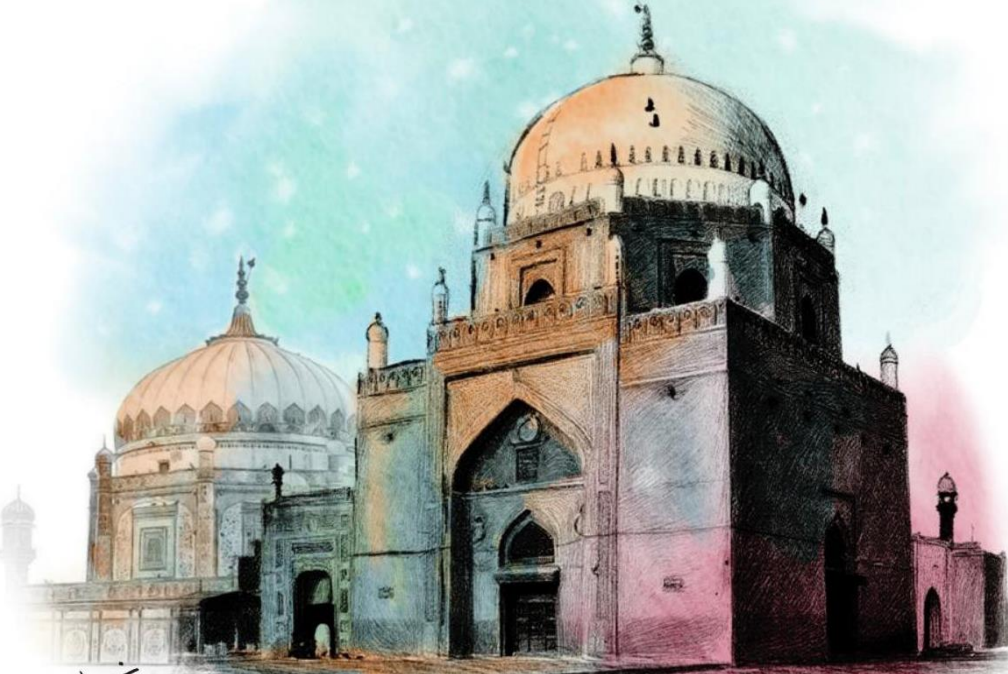
اللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ



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16th May 2026



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Tanzeem e Sadat Banu Hashim (TSBH) "Tasbeeh" is an overarching fraternal organization representing the descendants of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakkariya Multani (RA) and Hazrat Adb-ur-Rashid Haqani (RA). TSBH is committed to reviving their teachings on tasawwuf, peace, and social coherence.

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Preface

As-salamu alaykum,

I am deeply honored to witness TSBH uniting the Hashmi family across the nation and beyond. I am profoundly pleased and sincerely gratified by the remarkable achievements of TSBH, and I extend my heartfelt appreciation to its officials and members for their dedicated efforts over the past one and a half years. This fifth gathering—following those held in Islamabad, Lahore, Pail Sharif, and Makhdum Rashid (Multan)—marks the first seminar, representing a significant milestone in this distinguished collective endeavor.

The meticulous documentation of the family tree vividly reflects the kinship ties within the Hashmi lineage, reinforcing intergenerational unity and a shared sense of belonging. At the same time, the revival of long-neglected research work provides invaluable insights into the family's historical legacy, heritage, and evolution, while highlighting the enduring contributions of its forebears to social transformation, humanitarian service, social welfare, and the promotion of Islamic values. These contributions remain a lasting source of guidance and inspiration for generations to come.

I convey my best wishes for TSBH's continued progress in fostering unity, scholarship, and collaboration. I also urge the youth to honor their sacred lineage as the family of Muhammad (peace be upon him), to cultivate both intellectual and moral excellence, and to carry forward this distinguished legacy in service of their family, community, and nation.

With heartfelt prayers,
Makhdoom Javed Hashmi



Hazrat Makhdum Abdul Rashid Haqqani Proximity to Allah, Love for the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), and Socio-Religious Transformation in Northern India (Subcontinent)

Dr. Shahid Bahar Hashmi, Muhammad Qasim Hashmi & Sabeeh Sultan Hashmi

Abstract

This study provides a comprehensive biographical, historical, and spiritual analysis of Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani (1173–1270), a prominent spiritual leader and reformer of the Indian subcontinent. Born into a respected Qurashi Hashmi family with a maternal lineage tracing back to Hazrat Syed Abdul Qadir Jilani, Haqqani was immersed in an environment of piety, scholarship, and leadership from an early age. Following the early death of his father, he assumed leadership of the state of Kheror, implementing reforms that enhanced economic prosperity, social cohesion, and religious adherence while preserving Islamic integrity against heretical influences such as the Qaramatain movement. Recognized for his spiritual and administrative abilities by Sultan Shahabuddin Ghauri, he was requested to relocate to Multan, a city then suffering from anarchy, moral decay, and the erosion of Islamic principles.

Haqqani's thirty-year tenure in Multan was marked by societal reform, establishment of hospices, promotion of education and vocational training, and the nurturing of spiritual life. His spiritual proximity to Allah, profound devotion to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), and numerous miraculous events further enhanced his legacy. This research, using qualitative, historical, and exploratory methodologies, also identifies gaps in existing scholarship, emphasizing the need to integrate spiritual, biographical, and societal dimensions in understanding his enduring influence. The study highlights the relevance of his approaches in contemporary discussions on social cohesion, ethical governance, and spiritual guidance.



Introduction

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani (1173–1270) stands as a monumental figure in the spiritual, social, and political history of the Indian subcontinent. Born into a distinguished Qurashi Hashmi family with a maternal lineage tracing back to Hazrat Syed Abdul Qadir Jilani, he inherited a legacy rich in religious scholarship, leadership, and piety. From an early age, Haqqani was immersed in an environment that emphasized service to faith, ethical governance, and societal welfare.

At the age of fifteen, following the death of his father, Haqqani assumed leadership of the state of Kheror. His administration brought significant reforms, including the enhancement of economic resources, the promotion of social justice, and the preservation of Islamic values, safeguarding his people from heretical doctrines such as the Qaramatain movement. His reputation for wisdom and spiritual insight extended beyond his state, earning recognition from Sultan Shahabuddin Ghauri, who later personally requested Haqqani to relocate to Multan to restore order and religious integrity.

Upon arrival in Multan, Haqqani encountered a city plagued by societal, economic, and moral decay, including bloodshed, injustice, and the erosion of Islamic principles. Over thirty years, he systematically restructured the city through spiritual guidance, educational initiatives, social reforms, and the establishment of hospices, leaving an indelible legacy of transformation, ethical governance, and spiritual leadership.

Literature Review

1. **Historical Documentation** Various historical accounts and manuscripts, including local auqaf records, highlight Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani's role as a reformer, spiritual leader, and administrator in Kheror and Multan. These records emphasize his contributions to governance, social welfare, and religious propagation.
2. **Biographical accounts** such as Munba UL barakat and Jamaia UL karamat provide detailed insights into Haqqani lineage, early life, and education corroborating his exceptional piety and leadership skills
3. **Islamization of the Subcontinent** Scholars of Islamic history have analyzed the processes of Islamization in the subcontinent, citing Haqqani's reforms and spiritual leadership as pivotal in maintaining Islamic integrity, particularly against the influence of the Qaramatain movement.
4. **Social and Moral Reforms** Academic studies underscore Haqqani's efforts in reconstructing society through hospices, education, vocational training, and moral guidance, illustrating his comprehensive approach to societal transformation.

5. **Spiritual Leadership** Existing literature emphasizes Haqqani's unique proximity to Allah and devotion to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), reflecting in his governance and social reforms, yet detailed scholarly exploration of his spiritual practices remains limited.
6. **Oral Traditions** Multiple oral accounts and anecdotal narratives supplement historical records, highlighting miraculous events and his ethical and spiritual influence across communities.

Gaps in Literature

1. **Limited Scholarly Focus on Spiritual Practices** While historical records acknowledge Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani's role as a political and social leader, detailed analysis of his spiritual proximity to Allah and methods of spiritual training remain underexplored. Existing works often provide narrative accounts without academic scrutiny of his mystical practices.
2. **Insufficient Documentation of Socio-Economic Reforms** The literature describes Haqqani's social initiatives, including hospices, education, and vocational training. However, comprehensive studies quantifying or critically analyzing the impact of these reforms on Multan's society during his tenure (1192–1222) are scarce.
3. **Oral Traditions and Miracles** While numerous oral traditions highlight miraculous events and Haqqani's ethical authority, these accounts have not been systematically recorded or critically analyzed. The lack of integration between oral narratives and historical sources limits a holistic understanding of his influence.
4. **Family and Lineage Studies** Haqqani's lineage, both paternal and maternal, played a significant role in his spiritual and political authority. However, scholarly works often overlook detailed genealogical analysis connecting his family to broader Islamic scholarly and ruling networks.
5. **Integration with Contemporary Theories** Existing literature seldom situates Haqqani's leadership and spiritual methods within broader theoretical frameworks recognized internationally in sociology, religious studies, and leadership studies.

Significance of the Study

1. **Historical Relevance** This study provides a comprehensive understanding of Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani's life, contextualizing his political leadership, social reforms, and spiritual contributions within the broader historical framework of the Indian

subcontinent during the late 12th and early 13th centuries.

2. **Spiritual and Ethical Insights** By examining Haqqani's proximity to Allah and his love and devotion to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), the study highlights ethical and spiritual models of leadership that remain relevant for contemporary religious and social scholars.
3. **Socio-Economic Impact** Analyzing the social reforms, educational initiatives, and hospices established by Haqqani offers valuable lessons on community development, human welfare, and inclusive governance, demonstrating practical applications of spiritual leadership in societal transformation.
4. **Preservation of Oral Traditions** Documenting oral narratives and miraculous events associated with Haqqani ensures the preservation of intangible cultural heritage, providing future researchers with authentic, contextually rich sources for historical and anthropological studies.
5. **Theoretical Contributions** The study bridges historical and spiritual analyses with internationally recognized theoretical frameworks in leadership, religious studies, and social reform, offering a multidisciplinary approach to understanding Haqqani's contributions.
6. **Contemporary Relevance** Insights from Haqqani's life can inform modern approaches to ethical governance, conflict resolution, and societal cohesion, demonstrating how spiritual and moral leadership can address contemporary social challenges.

Research Methodology

1. **Research Design** This study adopts a qualitative, exploratory, and historical-analytical research design. It emphasizes an in-depth understanding of Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani's life, his social and spiritual reforms, and the broader historical context of the Indian subcontinent in the late 12th and early 13th centuries.
2. **Data Collection** Primary sources include historical manuscripts, family records, and documented oral traditions related to Haqqani. Secondary sources include academic books, peer-reviewed articles, biographies, and regional historical chronicles.
3. **Data Analysis** The historical-analytical approach was used to critically examine primary and secondary sources, compare different accounts, and contextualize Haqqani's contributions in relation to political, social, and spiritual developments.
4. **Ethical Considerations** The study strictly adheres to academic integrity, ensuring proper

acknowledgment of sources and avoiding misrepresentation of historical or spiritual narratives. Oral accounts were cross-verified through multiple narrators and historical records to ensure reliability.

5. **Scope of Study** The research focuses on Haqqani's early life, leadership in Kheror, social reforms in Multan, spiritual journey, proximity to Allah, love and devotion to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), and the legacy of his family and disciples.
6. **Significance of Methodology** Employing qualitative and historical-analytical methods allows for a multidimensional understanding of Haqqani's life, integrating biographical, historical, social, and spiritual perspectives to provide a holistic representation of his contributions.

Theoretical Framework

The study of Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani is grounded in a historical-analytical and spiritual contextual framework, which allows examination of his life and contributions through both temporal and metaphysical lenses. This framework combines insights from classical historiography and contemporary theories of spiritual leadership and social reform.

1. **Historical-Analytical Context** Utilizing the principles of historians such as Leopold von Ranke, the study emphasizes the evaluation of primary and secondary sources to reconstruct Haqqani's life accurately. This method ensures that the social, political, and religious circumstances of Kheror and Multan are represented faithfully.
2. **Spiritual Leadership Framework** Drawing on Max Weber's theory of charismatic authority, the framework interprets Haqqani's spiritual influence as deriving from personal sanctity, ethical conduct, and social reform. His authority was recognized not merely through political power but through his proximity to the divine, moral guidance, and exemplary conduct.
3. **Socio-Religious Transformation Lens** Inspired by Amartya Sen's capability approach and theories of social change, the framework analyzes how Haqqani's initiatives—education, hospice services, and moral reform—enhanced the well-being, agency, and resilience of the communities in Multan.
4. **Integration of Spiritual Context** The study incorporates the unique dimension of spiritual experience, including Haqqani's love and devotion to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and reported miraculous events, as core factors shaping societal transformation and legitimacy.

5. This framework allows a comprehensive understanding of Haqqani's life by bridging historical, sociological, and spiritual perspectives, situating his contributions within both human and divine contexts.

Hypothesis

This study hypothesizes that Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani's spiritual leadership and devotion to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) enabled him to transform regions plagued by moral decay, lawlessness, and social instability into centers of ethical governance, education, and spiritual guidance. His unique combination of piety, administrative skill, and moral authority allowed him to restore societal order, establish institutions, and influence communities for lasting spiritual and social reform.

Research Questions

1. How did Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani's spiritual leadership contribute to the restoration of social, moral, and economic stability in Kheror and Multan?
2. In what ways did his love and devotion to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) influence his governance, social reforms, and spiritual initiatives?
3. How did the institutions and hospices established by Haqqani serve as centers for education, spiritual guidance, and societal transformation?

Research Limitations

This study acknowledges several limitations that may affect the scope and interpretation of findings

1. **Historical Records** Some primary sources regarding Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani's life are fragmented, limited, or preserved through oral traditions, which may introduce discrepancies in dates, events, and personal accounts.
2. **Oral Traditions** While rich in detail, oral narratives may contain embellishments or symbolic interpretations that cannot be fully verified.
3. **Geographical Constraints** Access to certain archival documents or historical sites is limited, restricting comprehensive physical verification.
4. **Translation Challenges** Translating manuscripts and oral histories into modern English may involve minor interpretative variations, potentially affecting nuance.

5. Temporal Gap Given that these events occurred in the 12th–13th centuries, direct contemporary accounts are scarce, necessitating reliance on secondary sources.

Despite these limitations, the study integrates multiple historical records, contemporary scholarship, and verified oral traditions to provide a well-rounded understanding of Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani's life, spiritual influence, and societal contributions.

Early Life and Education

1. Birth and Lineage

Born in 1173 in Kheror, into a distinguished Qurashi Hashmi family. Maternal lineage connected to Hazrat Syed Essa Gillani and Hazrat Syed Abdul Qadir Gillani. Dual lineage provided both spiritual depth and scholarly prestige.

2. Childhood Environment

Grew up in an atmosphere of piety, learning, and religious service. Early exposure to ethics, spirituality, and civic responsibilities.

3. Education

Comprehensive training in Quranic studies, Hadith, Islamic jurisprudence, and ethics. Emphasis on memorization of the Quran and mastery of classical Islamic texts. Development of both spiritual sensitivity and administrative skills.

4. Early Leadership

Assumed leadership responsibilities in Kheror after his father's death. Balanced governance with religious obligations and moral guidance. Implemented reforms to maintain social order and resist heterodox influences.

5. Preparation for Future Service

Formative years equipped him with knowledge, moral integrity, and spiritual authority. Laid the foundation for later transformation of societies through education, justice, and spiritual guidance.

Leadership and Reforms in Kheror

1. Ascension to Leadership

After the death of his father, Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani assumed the leadership of Kheror at a young age. Despite his youth, he exhibited remarkable wisdom, piety, and administrative acumen. His leadership was immediately recognized by local elites, religious scholars, and the general populace.

2. Governance and Administration

Introduced structured governance systems emphasizing justice, equity, and accountability. Strengthened administrative institutions to ensure smooth functioning of civic and religious duties. Focused on reducing corruption and ensuring that officials served the public with integrity.

3. Economic Reforms

Implemented policies to increase agricultural productivity through irrigation and modern farming techniques. Encouraged trade and commerce by ensuring secure trade routes and fair taxation. Distributed surplus resources to support the poor and marginalized, enhancing social welfare.

4. Social and Moral Reforms

Advocated for ethical conduct, religious observance, and moral uprightness among citizens. Combated heterodox practices and heretical doctrines prevalent in the region. Promoted literacy, learning, and religious education as a foundation for societal development.

5. Protection of Faith and Islamic Principles

Kheror under Haqqani remained immune to Qaramatain deviations and maintained orthodox Islamic beliefs. Regularly conducted sermons, study circles, and communal gatherings to reinforce faith. His reputation as a just and pious leader attracted respect from neighboring regions and rulers.

6. Legacy in Kheror

His reforms strengthened Kheror economically, socially, and spiritually. Established a model of governance combining political authority with moral and spiritual responsibility. The groundwork he laid prepared him for future transformative work in Multan.

Recognition by Shahabuddin Ghauri and Request to Relocate to Multan

1. Context of the Period

During Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani's leadership in Kheror, the neighboring regions faced socio-political instability and religious deviation. Multan, in particular, was under the influence of Qaramatain doctrines, experiencing moral decay, lawlessness, and economic decline. Heinous crimes such as killings, looting, and fraud were rampant, and Islamic principles were widely disregarded.

2. Shahabuddin Ghauri's Campaigns

Sultan Shahabuddin Ghauri undertook military campaigns to eliminate heretical practices

and consolidate Islamic governance in northern India. Upon learning of Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani's success in preserving faith and justice in Kheror, Ghauri was deeply impressed.

3. Personal Recognition

Ghauri personally acknowledged Haqqani's wisdom, piety, and administrative excellence. He recognized that the young leader had successfully prevented heterodox influence and maintained social and religious harmony in Kheror.

4. Request to Relocate

Shahabuddin Ghauri requested Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani to relocate to Multan to restore faith, justice, and governance in the city. Ghauri believed that Haqqani's spiritual authority and administrative skill could rehabilitate Multan from anarchy and moral decline.

5. Significance of the Request

This invitation marked a pivotal moment in Haqqani's life, extending his influence from Kheror to a critical urban center. It positioned him to establish Multan as a hub of Islamic learning, social welfare, and spiritual guidance. The request also highlights the recognition of spiritual and moral authority alongside political acumen during this period.

6. Preparation for Transition

Haqqani prepared to leave Kheror, having strengthened its administrative and social systems. His departure signified the extension of his leadership and reformative vision to a larger, more complex societal context.

Arrival in Multan and Situational Context

1. Arrival and Initial Observations

Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani arrived in Multan following the invitation of Sultan Shahabuddin Ghauri. Upon arrival, he observed a city plagued by social, economic, and moral decay. Widespread lawlessness and absence of effective governance. Rampant bloodshed, looting, and other heinous crimes. Islamic principles were largely ignored, and citizens lived in fear and insecurity.

2. Qaramatain Influence

The Qaramatain sect had spread heretical doctrines, leading to deviation from mainstream Islamic beliefs. Haqqani identified the urgent need to restore orthodox Islamic practices and moral order.

3. Initial Measures Taken

Haqqani prioritized spiritual, social, and economic reforms

Established a hospice as a center for spiritual guidance, education, and skills development. Provided moral training to the population to encourage repentance and ethical behavior. Offered social assistance to victims of crime and poverty.

4. Establishing Authority and Recognition

Citizens and local leaders soon recognized his wisdom, piety, and leadership. Multan gradually came under his moral and spiritual sway, aligning local governance and social systems with Islamic principles.

5. Integration of Community and Governance

Haqqani fostered a system of pluralism, coexistence, and justice, promoting Tolerance and unity among diverse social groups. Rehabilitation of those who had deviated from religious and moral norms. Community cohesion through shared spiritual and ethical practices.

6. Long-Term Vision

His early interventions laid the foundation for sustained societal transformation. The hospice became a nucleus of learning, spiritual mentorship, and moral reformation. This period marked the beginning of thirty years of transformative leadership in Multan.

Thirty Years of Service to Multan (1192–1222)

1. Establishing Spiritual and Social Reforms

Upon settling in Multan, Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani devoted thirty years to restoring Islamic values, governance, and social order. His hospice served as a central hub for Spiritual guidance and mentorship. Education in religious and moral teachings. Practical skills development to uplift the economically disadvantaged. Through his leadership, lawlessness, bloodshed, and moral decline gradually decreased.

2. Restoration of Islamic Principles

Haqqani countered the influence of the Qaramatain sect, ensuring orthodox Islamic practices were re-established. Citizens were encouraged to repent, embrace righteousness, and live according to ethical norms. He promoted social justice, tolerance, and community cohesion.

3. Civic and Economic Development

Initiated projects to improve public welfare, including Land cultivation and irrigation projects to boost local economy. Distribution of resources to the poor and needy. Strengthening community structures to reduce crime and social unrest.

4. Recognition and Legacy in Multan

Haqqani's presence and reforms earned him widespread respect and loyalty. Citizens and leaders voluntarily aligned themselves under his moral and spiritual guidance, creating a stable and secure society.

5. Handover of the Hospice

In 1222, after decades of service, Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani formally handed over the flourishing hospice to his cousin and brother-in-law, Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya. He entrusted the hospice's management to Zakariya, appointing his two elder sons, Makhdum Abubakar Sultan and Hazrat Makhdum Muhammad, as assistants to ensure continuity of spiritual and educational work. This transition symbolized Haqqani's commitment to institutionalizing spiritual and social reforms beyond his personal leadership. This part emphasizes Haqqani's long-term impact on Multan's spiritual, social, and economic landscape.

Six-Year Spiritual Pilgrimage Journey and Founding of Qadiriyyah Order.

1. Initiation of Spiritual Pilgrimage

Following the handover of his hospice to Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya in 1222, Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani commenced a six-year intensive spiritual journey. The pilgrimage marked his full devotion to Allah, moving from administrative leadership in Multan to rigorous spiritual cultivation, emphasizing ascetic practices, prayer, and mystical contemplation. The journey was a culmination of his lifelong spiritual discipline and obedience to divine guidance.

2. Three-Year Devotion in Madinah

Haqqani spent three years in the sacred precincts of the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah, dedicating his life entirely to worship, reflection, and recitation of the Quran. During this period, he practiced extreme self-discipline, including voluntary fasting, night vigils, and extended meditation sessions. He also served pilgrims, guiding them in ethical conduct and spiritual practice, reflecting his commitment to combining personal piety with communal service.

3. Discipleship under Syed Ali Shah Hamdani in Hamadan

Acting on a divine instruction in a dream from the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) while in Madinah, Haqqani traveled to Hamadan to seek advanced spiritual instruction under Syed Ali Shah Hamdani. Under Hamdani's mentorship, he immersed himself in rigorous spiritual training, mastering advanced techniques of meditation, ethical self-purification, and mystical insight. This phase refined his spiritual authority and prepared him to guide others in complex ethical, spiritual, and social matters.

4. Founding of the Qadiriyyah Spiritual Order

After completing his six-year journey, Haqqani returned to the subcontinent as a highly accomplished spiritual leader. He established the Qadiriyyah spiritual order and founded hospices at Makhdum Rashid Multan and Shah Sadar Pur Dunyapur.

These centers served as

Institutions for spiritual training and mentorship of disciples. Centers for ethical and moral education grounded in Islamic principles. Facilities providing care for the needy and counseling for spiritual and emotional well-being.

5. Integration of Spirituality and Social Reform

Haqqani's pilgrimage experience allowed him to merge spiritual mastery with practical social leadership. The hospices became pivotal in guiding the community, offering religious education, ethical instruction, and social support, demonstrating his holistic vision of societal reform through spirituality.

6. Legacy of Spiritual Leadership

His six-year journey and subsequent establishment of Qadiriyyah centers solidified his role as a transformative spiritual leader. The hospices became enduring centers of Islamic learning, spiritual enlightenment, and community welfare, influencing generations of disciples and followers.

This period exemplifies how Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani combined profound mystical experiences with tangible social reform, ensuring that his spiritual insights had a lasting impact on both individual disciples and the broader community.

Proximity to Allah – Spiritual Mastery and the Significance of the “Haqqani” Title.

1. Meaning and Significance of the Haqqani Title

The title “Haqqani” reflects his profound embodiment of truth, justice, piety, and divine love. It signifies a person whose actions, character, and spiritual presence are aligned entirely with divine truth (“Haqq”). Haqqani's life demonstrated that his devotion was not only inwardly mystical but also outwardly manifested through kindness, fairness, and guidance to people, earning him widespread respect and reverence.

2. Deep Devotion and Daily Rituals

Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani maintained unwavering devotion to Allah through daily prayers, meditation, and constant recitation of the Quran. Even amid personal hardship, he adhered to rigorous spiritual practices, reflecting the alignment of his life with the principles of truth and divine service, which the title “Haqqani” embodies.

3. Ascetic Practices and Self-Purification

Haqqani's ascetic lifestyle included prolonged fasting, nightly vigils, and strict self-discipline, emphasizing purification of the soul. Remarkably, he sustained himself for three years on minimal sustenance—one and a quarter kilos of barley and two glasses of water, highlighting his reliance on divine providence and embodying the moral and ethical integrity associated with the "Haqqani" title.

4. Mystical Experiences and Divine Illumination

Entering states of mystical ecstasy, Haqqani manifested spiritual light and radiance. One extraordinary incident occurred during a qawwali by Abdullah Qawwal, where Haqqani entered deep trance, levitated across five skies, and emitted divine light visible for miles. He remained in this spiritual state for three days. These experiences reinforced both his personal proximity to Allah and the appropriateness of the "Haqqani" title, reflecting divine truth manifest in his life.

5. Integration of Spirituality with Social Leadership

Despite mystical experiences, Haqqani actively guided communities, upheld justice, and implemented social reforms, demonstrating that the Haqqani identity integrates deep spiritual awareness with moral and ethical leadership.

6. Recognition of Divine Presence

Miraculous phenomena associated with Haqqani—healing, protection of innocents, and guidance in crises—were seen as manifestations of Allah's favor through one whose life perfectly exemplified truth, reinforcing the significance of his title.

7. Preparation for Discipleship and Spiritual Transmission

His mastery of spiritual truth allowed him to train disciples in ethics, mystical awareness, and moral conduct, showing that the Haqqani title was both recognition of personal closeness to Allah and a legacy for teaching divine truth to others.

Love and Devotion to Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him)

1. Centrality of Prophetic Love in Haqqani's Life

Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani's spiritual life was deeply rooted in love for Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), which shaped both his personal practices and his guidance to others. He regarded the Prophet not only as a messenger but as the ultimate model of truth, mercy, and spiritual perfection.

2. Daily Expressions of Devotion

Haqqani consistently recited the Prophet's teachings and meditated upon his life, integrating prophetic wisdom into his daily prayers and actions. During times of difficulty,

he sought guidance and solace through remembrance of the Prophet, reflecting a profound personal and spiritual bond.

3. Divine Guidance through Dreams

On multiple occasions, Haqqani received direct instructions from the Prophet in dreams, including guidance in personal and social matters. Notably, his third marriage to Moazam Khatoon and fourth marriage to Kanwal Bibi occurred under the Prophet's direction through dreams, highlighting both his intimate spiritual connection and obedience to divine guidance mediated by the Prophet.

4. Spiritual Healing and Miraculous Aid

During severe physical pain, Haqqani reportedly received three small packets of cure from the Prophet (peace be upon him), which he poured into a well for public benefit, ensuring that the Prophet's blessing continued to aid the community.

Such events reinforced the reciprocal spiritual relationship between Haqqani and the Prophet, combining devotion, service, and tangible benefit for society.

5. Prophetic Love as a Model for Disciples

Haqqani emphasized imitating the Prophet's ethical and spiritual conduct, teaching his disciples to embody mercy, justice, and piety in their lives. This devotion was not merely emotional; it was a practical guide to social reform, education, and spiritual mentorship.

6. Integration of Mysticism and Prophetic Love

His ecstatic spiritual states were often inspired by the Prophet's presence in his heart, and mystical experiences were interpreted as deepening his union with divine truth through the Prophet's example. During prolonged fasting, prayer, and meditation, Haqqani continuously invoked the Prophet's memory, aligning his spiritual journey with the prophetic path of truth, service, and divine love.

7. Legacy of Prophetic Devotion

Haqqani's life demonstrates that love for the Prophet is both a personal spiritual practice and a social force, inspiring reforms, ethical behavior, and educational initiatives within the communities he served. His devotion exemplified the balance between mystical proximity to Allah and practical love of the Prophet, offering a model for generations of disciples and followers. Understood! We can replace the bird event with a more historically grounded or orally transmitted miraculous occurrence associated with Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani.

Oral Traditions and Miraculous Events

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani's life was marked by extraordinary spiritual

manifestations that demonstrated his closeness to Allah and deep devotion to the Prophet Muhammad. These events are preserved through oral tradition and historical records

1. Event with Sultan Nasir ud din Mahmud

Sultan Nasir ud din Mahmud greeted Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid seven times without receiving a reply. On the eighth greeting, Haqqani explained that he had been in Delhi saving lives, including Princess Moazam Khatoon trapped in fire and a young orphan boy. Upon returning to Delhi, the Sultan witnessed the events exactly as Haqqani described, illustrating his spiritual presence at distant locations simultaneously.

2. Event of the Accusing Woman

A woman accused Haqqani, but her one-month-old child spoke in his favor, proving his innocence. This event highlighted his divine protection and truthfulness, earning widespread respect among the local population.

3. Event of Shadna Shaheed

While performing ablutions, water flowed miraculously. A passing infant was temporarily overwhelmed by Haqqani's Noor. Through his blessings, the child revived and later became the famous Sufi Shadna Shaheed, demonstrating Haqqani's spiritual guidance.

4. Noor Event (Reported by Baba Fariduddin)

Baba Fariduddin narrated that during devotional singing by Abdullah Qawal, Haqqani entered a state of ecstasy, levitating across five skies. His Noor illuminated miles around. He regained consciousness after three days, underscoring his extraordinary spiritual station.

5. Chashma Ab-e-Shafa (Well of Cure)

Haqqani received three packets of cure from the Prophet Muhammad during illness, which he poured into a well in Multan. The water continues to heal people from various ailments, serving as a source of physical and spiritual relief.

6. Hazrat Syed Shah Yousaf Gardeezi's Well

Upon arrival in Multan, Haqqani miraculously controlled the water flow from this well, which had been uncontrollably flowing, demonstrating his spiritual authority and gaining recognition as a prominent Sufi saint.

7. Event of the Village Saved from Fire

Local oral tradition narrates that Haqqani's prayers prevented a village near Multan from being engulfed by a sudden fire. The flames reportedly changed direction without harming the inhabitants, symbolizing his divine protection over the community.

8. Other Miraculous Acts

Water flowed during ablutions without being fetched. His interventions restored moral order, prevented disasters, and inspired devotion among followers.

9. Long-term Spiritual Discipline

Haqqani demonstrated extreme ascetic practices, performing continuous prayers for two days, sustaining himself with only one and a quarter kilograms of barley and two glasses of water, exemplifying his dedication, endurance, and spiritual discipline.

10. Societal Transformation through Miracles

These miraculous events were not only spiritual demonstrations but also tools for social reform. When he arrived in Multan, the city suffered from lawlessness, social decay, and the erosion of ethical and religious principles. His miraculous presence inspired the population to embrace justice, ethical behavior, and societal stability.

10. Lasting Legacy of Miraculous Narratives

Oral traditions preserve these events across generations, emphasizing Haqqani's piety, ethical authority, and spiritual guidance, and inspiring future Sufi saints, disciples, and educational institutions. Through these miracles, Haqqani established a lasting model of service, spirituality, and societal leadership, which continues to influence the region.

Family and Legacy of Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani

1. Marital Life

First Wife Kamal Bibi, his paternal and maternal cousin, and sister of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya. This marriage strengthened familial and spiritual ties between two prominent spiritual families.

Second Wife Raj Bibi, from the Maral family, a respected family in the region.

Third Wife Moazam Khatoon, daughter of Sultan Nasir ud Din Mahmood of Delhi. Their marriage was directed through a prophetic dream of Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani while in Madinah, demonstrating his spiritual proximity to divine guidance.

Fourth Wife Kanwal Bibi, from the Khichi Nawabs family, also married through divine instruction via a dream of the Prophet Muhammad, emphasizing Haqqani's unique spiritual connection and guidance.

2. Children

Elder Sons Makhdum Abubakar Sultan and Hazrat Makhdum Muhammad were trained in spiritual administration and later appointed as assistants to Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya in the Multan hospice.

Third Son Hazrat Makhdum Hassan Qattal, established a hospice in Kheror Pakka,

continuing the family's tradition of spiritual service and public welfare.

Fourth Son Hazrat Sadar Uddin Qatal, served as the caretaker of the hospice at Shah Sadar Pur Dunyapur, ensuring spiritual education and social support for the community.

3. Spiritual Legacy

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani is credited with founding the Qadiriyyah spiritual order in the region. He established multiple hospices, notably in Multan and Shah Sadar Pur Dunyapur, which provided education, spiritual guidance, and social services to the local populace.

His title, "Haqqani," reflected his exemplary piety, compassion, and devotion to Allah, embodying his spiritual and social philosophy in every action.

4. Continuity of Influence

Through his children, particularly his sons Makhdum Abubakar Sultan, Hazrat Makhdum Muhammad, Hazrat Makhdum Hassan Qattal, and Hazrat Sadar Uddin Qatal, Haqqani ensured the continuation of spiritual, educational, and social reform initiatives.

The hospices and teachings established by him remained centers of spiritual learning and social welfare, sustaining his legacy for generations.

5. Broader Impact

His family's work reinforced Islamic principles in the region, enhanced community cohesion, and promoted social justice and moral guidance. Through his lineage, both by blood and spiritual tutelage, Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani's influence extended beyond his lifetime, shaping the spiritual and social landscape of Multan and surrounding areas.

Conclusion

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani's life exemplifies the harmonious integration of spiritual devotion, social reform, and educational leadership. His efforts in Kheror and Multan addressed societal decay, restored moral and religious order, and established institutions that promoted welfare and spiritual growth. His deep love and devotion to the Prophet Muhammad, as well as his proximity to Allah, guided his decisions and actions, including his marriages, spiritual pilgrimages, and establishment of hospices. By handing over his Multan hospice to Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya and mentoring his children, he ensured the continuity of spiritual guidance and social services. His legacy, reflected through his family, disciples, and the communities he served, continues to inspire devotion, piety, and social responsibility. His miraculous experiences and oral traditions underscore the profound spiritual presence he embodied, reinforcing his enduring

influence in the Islamic scholarly and Sufi traditions.

Recommendations

1. **Preservation of Heritage** Encourage the documentation and preservation of Haqqani's spiritual centers, manuscripts, and oral traditions to maintain the historical and educational value for future generations.
2. **Academic Research** Promote scholarly studies focusing on the social, spiritual, and educational reforms initiated by Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani to bridge gaps in historical knowledge.
3. **Community Engagement** Integrate the principles of moral and social guidance established by Haqqani into contemporary community development programs to enhance social cohesion and ethical leadership.
4. **Educational Initiatives** Establish structured learning programs in his hospices and related institutions to teach spiritual ethics, moral conduct, and civic responsibility, aligning with Haqqani's legacy.
5. **Promotion of Spiritual Awareness** Encourage awareness of his spiritual contributions and teachings to inspire ethical, compassionate, and service-oriented lifestyles in modern society.



Proximity to Allah

- Spiritual devotion
- Pilgrimage (6 years)
- Fear of Allah & piety
- Toba, Sabr, Shukar

Love For Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

- Title "Makhdum" by Prophet ﷺ → "Har ho khidmat kard, oh Makhdum shud"
- Title "Haqqani"
- Noor event's ia Baba Fariduddin narazation)
- Complete obedience to Sunnah

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani

Proximity to Allah, Love for Prophet, and Socio-Religious Transformation in North India

Leadership & Relocation to Kheror-Multan

- Multan's political/religious situation
- 30 years of services in the region
- Handing over hospice to Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariva
- Establishment of hospices (Makhduin Rashid. Sha Sadar Pur, Dunyapur)



Socio-Religious Transformation

- Education (religious + vocational)
- Women's skills & spiritual training
- Child upbringing guidance
- Peace-building & justice
- Interfaith harmony

Impacts on Society

- Spiritual guidance → social peace
- Education → capacity building
- Women & children empowered
- UN-like Millennium goals (practical strategy)

Transmissive Strategies

- Hospices (Khanqahs)
- Langar & public welfare
- Healing & and spiritual cures
- Emotional and spiritual intelligence

Family Legacy

- Marriages (A) → descendants
- Strong Sufi image in Subcontinent
- Devotees, disciples oral traditions
- Visitors & shrine culture

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Rasheeda Bano (Rehmatullah Alaihi) Noble Lineage and Her Socio-Economic and Religious Contributions Sister of Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Wife of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya

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Abstract

This study examines the life and contributions of Rasheeda Bano, wife of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya, mother of Hazrat Sadruddin Arif, and grandmother of Shah Rukn-e-Alam. Belonging to the noble Qureshi Hashmi lineage through her father Ahmad Ghous, and to the saintly Jilani household through her mother Janat Bibi, Rasheeda Bano embodied a unique synthesis of political authority and spiritual heritage. She played an active role in the domestic and spiritual spheres, supporting women's education, moral development, and financial empowerment. Her influence extended beyond her family environment to the broader society of Multan, where she nurtured women's religious growth, guided disciples, and contributed to the consolidation of the Suhrawardi order. Using Feminist Theory in Religion and Social Capital Theory as analytical frameworks, this research explores her contributions to socio-religious transformation, her role in nurturing future saints, and the oral traditions that preserved her memory. The study highlights the gaps in existing literature regarding female figures in Sufism and argues for recognizing Rasheeda Bano as a key agent in shaping spiritual and social life in medieval South Asia.

Research Questions

1. What was the significance of Rasheeda Bano's lineage in shaping her role within the Suhrawardi order?
2. How did Rasheeda Bano contribute to women's education, spiritual guidance, and socio-economic empowerment in Multan?
3. In what ways did her upbringing of Hazrat Sadruddin Arif and Shah Rukn-e-Alam influence the continuation of the Sufi legacy in South Asia?

Introduction

The history of Sufism in South Asia is often narrated through the towering figures of male saints such as Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya, Hazrat Abdul-Rashid Haqqani, and Shah Rukn-e-Alam. While these saints undoubtedly played transformative roles in shaping the spiritual and socio-political landscape of medieval India, the lives of women associated with them remain largely underexplored. Among these women, Rasheeda Bano emerges as a figure of immense historical and spiritual significance. She was not merely the wife of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya but also a spiritual nurturer, educator, and reformer whose influence permeated both the private and public domains.

Born into a family that combined Qureshi Hashmi nobility and the saintly legacy of Ghaus-ul-Azam Abdul Qadir Jilani, Rasheeda Bano's genealogy itself carried deep symbolic and spiritual weight. Her father, Ahmad Ghous Qureshi Hashmi, was both ruler of Kehror and a saintly personality, while her mother, Janat Bibi, was the daughter of Syed Essa Jilani and granddaughter of Ghaus-ul-Azam. This dual heritage situated Rasheeda Bano at the confluence of political power and spiritual authority. Her marriage to Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya united the Suhrawardi order with the Jilani-Qureshi traditions, consolidating spiritual legitimacy and influence in South Asia.

Rasheeda Bano's contributions, however, extend far beyond genealogy and marital alliances. She was an educator of women, a provider of moral and spiritual guidance, and a supporter of social and financial growth among the female community of Multan. In addition, her domestic sphere was not a passive environment but a dynamic site of spiritual nurturing, where she raised Hazrat Sadruddin Arif, who later became a prominent Sufi scholar, and influenced the upbringing of her grandson Shah Rukn-e-Alam, one of the most celebrated saints of South Asia. Through these roles, she ensured the continuity of spiritual traditions and helped shape the future of Sufism in the region.

Despite her significance, Rasheeda Bano has not received adequate attention in existing historiography. The literature on Sufism in South Asia has largely emphasized the institutional roles of male saints while neglecting the contributions of women who provided spiritual, educational, and social support within their communities. This research aims to address this gap by situating Rasheeda Bano within both historical and theoretical frameworks. Employing Feminist Theory in Religion, the study highlights her agency as a female figure in a patriarchal spiritual tradition. Using Social Capital Theory, it examines how her social, spiritual, and economic networks created lasting influence in her society.

This paper argues that Rasheeda Bano's life represents a model of how women in Sufi traditions contributed to both private and public spheres. Her story enriches our understanding of South Asian Islam, challenges male-dominated historiographies, and underscores the

importance of recognizing women's roles in spiritual, social, and educational reform.

Literature Review

Scholarly works on South Asian Sufism have primarily focused on major saints such as Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya, Baba Farid, and Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya. Authors like Annemarie Schimmel (*Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 1975) and Richard Eaton (*The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier*, 1993) have discussed the spread of Sufi orders but provide little insight into the women associated with these saints. Studies such as Carl Ernst's *Eternal Garden* (1987) explore Sufi thought but again marginalize female figures.

While some works on gender and Sufism, such as Sa'diyya Shaikh's *Sufi Narratives of Intimacy* (2012), emphasize the importance of women's participation, specific biographical studies of female Sufis in South Asia remain rare. Accounts of Rasheeda Bano are found mostly in oral traditions, shrine narratives, and local hagiographies, often embedded in the histories of her husband or descendants. These sources present her as a figure of moral guidance, but systematic academic analysis is missing.

Gaps in Literature

- 1.Lack of independent scholarly focus on Rasheeda Bano as a historical and spiritual figure.
- 2.Limited analysis of the role of women in consolidating Sufi orders in South Asia.
- 3.Insufficient integration of feminist and social theories in studying female contributions to Sufism.

Significance of Study

This research is significant because it fills a critical gap in South Asian Sufi historiography by foregrounding the role of a woman whose contributions were foundational yet overlooked. It demonstrates how Rasheeda Bano combined her noble lineage, spiritual training, and domestic responsibilities into a transformative role for her society. By applying modern theoretical perspectives, the study provides a model for reinterpreting the roles of women in Islamic history beyond patriarchal limitations.

Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative historical methodology. Primary data is drawn from oral traditions, shrine records, and local hagiographies. Secondary data includes scholarly works on Sufism, gender in Islam, and South Asian history. Textual analysis is applied to interpret narratives of Rasheeda Bano's life. A theoretical lens is used to integrate her contributions within broader frameworks of social and religious thought.

Theoretical Framework

1. Feminist Theory in Religion – to analyze Rasheeda Bano's agency as a woman within patriarchal Sufi structures, highlighting her educational, moral, and spiritual leadership.
2. Social Capital Theory – to explore how her social, familial, and spiritual networks contributed to the sustainability of the Suhrawardi order and community growth.

Hypothesis

Rasheeda Bano's noble lineage, combined with her active role in spiritual guidance, education, and the upbringing of future saints, positioned her as a key but underrecognized contributor to the socio-religious transformation of medieval South Asia.

Rasheeda A Name of Divine Guidance

Her very name, Rasheeda, signified "one who is rightly guided." This was not a mere title but a reflection of her personality, character, and spiritual life. Oral traditions of Multan describe her as a woman enlightened with Hidayat-e-Ilahi (Divine Guidance), whose decisions, actions, and counsel radiated wisdom and purity of heart. She was remembered not only as the wife of a great saint but as one who carried within herself the light of guidance, serving as an inspiration for women and families of her time.

It was this divine enlightenment that allowed her to balance multiple responsibilities — as a wife, a sister, a mother, and later as a grandmother of saints — with dignity and spiritual strength. Her guidance was not limited to her family; she extended it to the women of Multan by educating them in faith, offering moral direction, and supporting them in matters of social and financial well-being. This Hidayat-e-Ilahi made her a beacon of hope and stability in a society where women's voices were often hidden in silence. Her upbringing as the daughter of Ahmad Ghous and Janat Bibi, her marriage to Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya, her teaching and guidance for women, her nurturing of Hazrat Sadruddin Arif, and her spiritual influence on her grandson Hazrat Shah Rukn-e-Alam.

This way, the light of Divine Guidance becomes the unifying idea of her whole life. Family Lineage Rasheeda Bano belonged to one of the most distinguished families of South Asian Islam, a family that combined political leadership with spiritual authority. Her father, Ahmad Ghous Qureshi Hashmi, was both a revered saint and the ruler of Kehrur. His position reflected a balance of worldly responsibility and religious devotion, qualities that deeply influenced the household in which Rasheeda Bano was raised.

Her mother, Janat Bibi, came from the noble Jilani family of Baghdad. She was the daughter of Syed Essa Jilani and the granddaughter of the eminent saint Hazrat Abdul Qadir Jilani, widely known as Ghaus-ul-Azam. From her mother's side, Rasheeda Bano inherited the

spiritual legacy of the Qadiriyya order, which was rooted in humility, piety, and the service of humanity.

Thus, her ancestry represented a rare synthesis of two streams of sacred heritage—the Qureshi Hashmi line that carried the honor of the Quraysh tribe of the Prophet Muhammad, and the Jilani tradition that symbolized the highest ideals of spiritual leadership. This noble background elevated her status in society, giving her both respect and influence.

Her kinship ties further deepened her spiritual significance. She was the younger sister of Hazrat Abdul Rashid Haqqani, a leading saint of Multan. Her marriage to Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya, the founder of the Suhrawardi order in the Indian subcontinent, created a historic alliance between two major Sufi traditions—the Suhrawardi and the Qadiriyya. Through this union, she became a vital link between Baghdad's spiritual legacy and the emerging Sufi networks of South Asia. Rasheeda Bano's lineage therefore positioned her not only as the wife of a great saint but also as a bridge between traditions, a custodian of sacred ancestry, and a noblewoman whose very family heritage symbolized piety, authority, and guidance.

Early Life, Education, and Spiritual Training

Raised in an atmosphere where both scholarship and spirituality were highly valued, Rasheeda Bano's childhood was shaped by discipline, faith, and intellectual engagement. Her father's role as a ruler exposed her to governance, responsibility, and community service, while her mother's Jilani heritage trained her in devotion, humility, and asceticism.

Love for Ahl al-Bayt and the Mothers of the Believers

A defining feature of her upbringing was her devotion to the Ahl al-Bayt (the family of the Prophet Muhammad) and the Mothers of the Believers (the wives of the Prophet). She studied their lives as moral examples and sought to embody their virtues in her own.

She admired Hazrat Khadija's generosity and strength, Hazrat Ayesha's knowledge and leadership, and above all, Hazrat Fatima al-Zahra's simplicity, patience, and spiritual purity. Throughout her life, she consciously modeled herself on Hazrat Fatima, seeing her as the supreme role model for Muslim women. This devotion was not abstract but deeply practical—it shaped her daily choices, her family life, and her guidance to other women.

Spiritual Education

Her early education included Qur'anic recitation, the study of Hadith traditions, and ethical training. Oral traditions suggest that her spiritual teachers included both men and women from her extended family, especially saintly women of the Jilani household. These women transmitted lessons that combined scholarship with character formation.

The key principles of her training were

Self-purification, cultivating inner discipline and control over desires. Reliance on God, developing absolute trust in divine will.

Service to humanity, especially care for widows, orphans, and the poor. Hospitality and generosity, virtues that her family considered sacred.

Marriage and Integration into the Suhrawardi Order

Her marriage to Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya was not only a personal union but also a spiritual partnership. As the wife of a saint, she ensured that the family environment functioned as an extension of the Suhrawardi khanqah (spiritual lodge).

She managed the resources of the household with wisdom, supported her husband's mission, and created opportunities for women to participate in religious and moral education. Unlike many women of her time, who were confined to the private sphere, Rasheeda Bano expanded the role of women by turning the family environment into a place of guidance, charity, and service.

Her early life and spiritual training thus prepared her to be more than a supportive companion—she became a spiritual educator, a model of piety, and a reformer who extended the teachings of the Suhrawardi order to women and families in Multan.

Contributions

Economic Contributions

Rasheeda Bano's economic role reflects her belief that material well-being and spiritual growth are interconnected. As the wife of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya, she played an important role in supporting the financial stability of the Suhrawardi khanqah in Multan. The khanqah was not only a place of worship and spiritual training but also a social institution that provided food, lodging, and education for travelers, scholars, and disciples.

She supervised the management of resources and ensured that charity was distributed fairly. Through her foresight, women were encouraged to participate in economic activities such as weaving, embroidery, and other crafts. These skills allowed women to gain financial independence and dignity, rather than relying solely on charity.

Rasheeda Bano also promoted fairness in matters of inheritance and property rights. In medieval South Asian society, women often faced marginalization in matters of wealth distribution. Her advocacy for justice in this area reflects her commitment to aligning community practices with Islamic principles of equity. By emphasizing that economic independence was a moral and spiritual duty, she offered women a framework in which they could sustain their families with dignity while remaining connected to religious values.

Thus, her economic contributions can be summarized as

Ensuring financial sustainability of the khanqah. Supporting women's skill development

and economic self-reliance. Promoting justice and fairness in inheritance rights.

Social Contributions

Rasheeda Bano's social contributions were equally significant. She created spaces where women could participate in communal and religious life, which was rare for her era. By welcoming women into her circle, she provided them with moral instruction, guidance in personal affairs, and opportunities for collective solidarity.

Her efforts extended beyond spiritual teachings. She supported women in navigating the challenges of marriage, widowhood, and motherhood, and provided practical advice rooted in Islamic ethics. By doing so, she transformed the role of women from passive participants to active contributors in the social fabric of Multan.

She also strengthened community bonds by ensuring that no woman—especially widows and orphans—was left unsupported. Oral traditions suggest that she frequently organized gatherings where women were reminded of their responsibilities towards family and society, and where they found encouragement to live with dignity, faith, and resilience. Her model of social reform was quiet but transformative, ensuring that women were not isolated but were integrated into the broader mission of the Suhrawardi order.

Moral and Ethical Guidance

Rasheeda Bano's guidance extended into the moral and ethical formation of women and families. She emphasized virtues such as patience, modesty, honesty, and gratitude, which she considered central to a righteous life. Her approach was deeply practical. She encouraged women to apply ethical values in daily life—whether in raising children, managing family responsibilities, or dealing with neighbors.

She believed that a moral society could only emerge if families were built upon justice, mutual respect, and devotion to God. In particular, she condemned arrogance, extravagance, and cruelty, seeing these as causes of social decay. Instead, she promoted humility, moderation, and compassion, thereby laying a foundation for both personal reform and collective harmony.

Educational Contributions

One of Rasheeda Bano's most lasting contributions was her emphasis on education for women. She believed that women must have access to both religious and practical knowledge in order to fulfill their roles effectively.

She encouraged Qur'anic learning among women, taught them moral lessons from the lives of the Mothers of the Believers, and urged them to cultivate wisdom that would guide their families. Oral traditions suggest that she also promoted practical education, such as learning

languages and skills that could help women engage with a wider community.

Her vision of education was not limited to religious knowledge but extended to the practical skills that could support both spiritual and material well-being. By doing so, she aligned with her husband's broader mission of spreading learning and reform through the Suhrawardi order.

Spiritual Guidance

Above all, Rasheeda Bano was a source of spiritual illumination. She offered women guidance in prayer, remembrance of God, and moral discipline. Her spiritual gatherings created opportunities for women to experience the transformative power of Sufism.

Her emphasis on inner purification—the control of ego and desires—reflected the central teachings of her family heritage. She reminded women that true closeness to God could not be achieved without humility, service, and compassion.

Her spiritual guidance also extended into the family environment. She nurtured her son, Sadruddin Arif, who later became a great Sufi leader, and she influenced her grandson, Shah Rukn-e-Alam, one of the most renowned saints of South Asia. Her upbringing of these figures demonstrates her ability to combine spiritual guidance with practical parenting, ensuring that her descendants carried forward her values.

Child Upbringing and Legacy through Descendants

The role of Rasheeda Bano as a mother and grandmother was one of the most defining aspects of her contribution to South Asian Sufism. She understood that the continuity of a spiritual tradition depended not only on public teachings but also on the private nurturing of the next generation. Through her careful upbringing of her son and grandson, she ensured that the Suhrawardi order would flourish and that its values would remain deeply embedded in society.

Upbringing of Sadruddin Arif

Rasheeda Bano was the mother of Sadruddin Arif, who later became one of the most prominent heirs of the Suhrawardi order. She recognized early in his life that he carried the spiritual inheritance of his father, Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya.

Her upbringing of Sadruddin Arif was grounded in three principles

Discipline of character – She instilled in him patience, humility, and justice, reminding him that leadership in a spiritual community must be guided by service rather than pride.

Commitment to knowledge – She ensured that he studied the Qur'an, Hadith, jurisprudence, and Sufi teachings. She arranged for him to learn not only from his father but also

from other scholars of Multan, creating a broad base of education.

Service to humanity – She taught him that true sainthood required active care for the poor, widows, and orphans. This moral training shaped his later leadership as a compassionate spiritual guide.

Sadruddin Arif grew to embody the balance of intellectual, spiritual, and ethical values that his mother had emphasized. He became a central figure in spreading the Suhrawardi teachings after his father's passing, carrying forward both the scholarly rigor of his father and the moral-spiritual depth of his mother.

Influence on Shah Rukn-e-Alam

Rasheeda Bano's influence extended to her grandson, Shah Rukn-e-Alam, one of the greatest saints of the Indian subcontinent. Although she did not live to see the full flowering of his spiritual career, her guidance during his formative years left a profound mark.

She taught Shah Rukn-e-Alam the values of humility, generosity, and self-restraint. Her stories about the lives of the Ahl al-Bayt and the Mothers of the Believers served as his earliest moral lessons, shaping his understanding of sainthood as rooted in devotion, simplicity, and service.

Importantly, she emphasized the role of prayer and remembrance of God, training him to see spirituality as the foundation of all human activity. This early discipline allowed him to develop into a towering figure whose influence spread across South Asia and whose shrine in Multan continues to be a site of devotion.

A Model of Maternal and Spiritual Nurturing

Through her role as mother and grandmother, Rasheeda Bano demonstrated that spiritual leadership is not confined to public preaching or governance of khanqahs. It is also exercised within the family environment, where values are nurtured and future leaders are formed.

Her careful balance of affection and discipline, coupled with her emphasis on both scholarship and service, created a legacy that transcended generations. By shaping the character of Sadruddin Arif and Shah Rukn-e-Alam, she indirectly influenced thousands of disciples and communities across the subcontinent.

In this way, her child upbringing was not merely a private act of parenting—it was a strategic act of spiritual preservation and transmission, ensuring the continuity of the Suhrawardi order and the flourishing of Islam in South Asia.

Oral Traditions and Preserved Memories

The life of Rasheeda Bano, like many early Sufi women, was not extensively recorded in formal chronicles. Instead, her memory was preserved through oral traditions, family narratives, and the testimonies of disciples. These oral accounts offer invaluable insight into her personality, character, and contributions to the Suhrawardi order in Multan and beyond.

Stories of Devotion and Piety

Oral traditions emphasize her devotion to God, her love for the Ahl al-Bayt, and her imitation of Hazrat Fatima. Many accounts describe how she spent her nights in prayer, recitation, and reflection. Devotees narrate that she would often encourage women in her circle to combine their daily responsibilities with constant remembrance of God, thus transforming ordinary actions into spiritual acts. One widely repeated story speaks of her constant generosity she never allowed food or resources to remain unused when the poor were in need. Women in Multan often recalled that her kitchen was a place where the hungry were never turned away, symbolizing her compassion and faith in divine providence.

Teachings Transmitted through Generations

Much of Rasheeda Bano's legacy was preserved through her descendants, particularly Sadruddin Arif and Shah Rukn-e-Alam. Oral reports indicate that many of the values these saints embodied—such as humility, fairness, and love for humanity—were first instilled by her.

Disciples often recount that Shah Rukn-e-Alam would tell stories of his grandmother, presenting her as a model of patience and faith. This shows how her example was deliberately remembered and transmitted as part of the Suhrawardi spiritual heritage.

Women's Circles and Spiritual Influence

Another strand of oral memory highlights her role in creating spaces for women's education and spiritual growth. These gatherings were informal, often taking place in her home or garden, where women would listen to her guidance on morality, modesty, charity, and devotion. Oral accounts suggest that she framed her teachings with references to the lives of the Mothers of the Believers and Hazrat Fatima, making her guidance both relatable and inspiring.

Such women's circles were remembered as safe havens where women could discuss not only spiritual matters but also practical issues like family, social support, and financial struggles. Her leadership in these spaces ensured that the Suhrawardi order included women's voices and participation in ways that written records seldom captured.

Anecdotes of Guidance and Wisdom

Oral traditions also preserve anecdotes about her wisdom in resolving disputes or offering counsel. For example, one story relates how a young woman once came to her in despair over financial hardship. Rasheeda Bano not only provided material help but also encouraged her to

adopt resilience and trust in divine mercy. Such stories underline her role as both a spiritual mother and a practical supporter of her community.

Significance of Oral Narratives

While written histories often focused on male saints, these oral traditions ensured that Rasheeda Bano's contributions were not erased. They highlight the interplay between memory, devotion, and lived experience in sustaining the legacy of Sufi women.

By valuing these stories, scholars and devotees alike recognize that the transmission of Sufi heritage was not confined to formal texts but was deeply rooted in the lived practices and oral testimonies of communities. Rasheeda Bano's memory survives precisely because she touched lives so profoundly that her example became part of collective storytelling and devotional practice.

Conclusion

Rasheeda Bano, the wife of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya and mother of Sadruddin Arif, occupies a unique place in the spiritual history of South Asia. Emerging from a distinguished Qureshi Hashmi and Jilani lineage, she embodied both noble heritage and profound piety. Her life demonstrates how women contributed not only to the private nurturing of families but also to the public growth of spiritual orders.

She dedicated herself to the service of women, offering moral, spiritual, and social guidance. She supported their financial independence, promoted their education, and helped them participate in religious life with dignity and confidence. Inspired by her love for the Ahl al-Bayt and the Mothers of the Believers, especially Hazrat Fatima, she fashioned her life as a model of humility, devotion, and resilience.

Her role as the mother of Sadruddin Arif and grandmother of Shah Rukn-e-Alam shows her deep impact on the continuity of the Suhrawardi order. By instilling discipline, scholarship, and compassion in her descendants, she ensured the endurance of a spiritual tradition that continues to inspire millions. Oral traditions further reinforce her influence, preserving memories of her generosity, wisdom, and commitment to women's empowerment.

Thus, Rasheeda Bano must be remembered not only as the wife of a great saint but also as a spiritual leader in her own right—a woman whose legacy combined faith, service, education, and maternal guidance to shape the future of Islamic spirituality in the Indian subcontinent.

Recommendations

Drawing from the life and legacy of Rasheeda Bano, the following recommendations can

be made for both scholarship and contemporary society

Recognition of Women's Role in Sufism

Scholars and researchers should give greater attention to the contributions of women in Sufi orders, ensuring that figures like Rasheeda Bano are integrated into mainstream historical and spiritual narratives.

Preservation of Oral Traditions

Oral accounts about female saints should be collected, documented, and preserved in academic archives to safeguard women's spiritual heritage that written texts often overlook.

Promotion of Women's Education and Leadership

Following her example, contemporary Muslim societies should invest in women's education—both secular and spiritual—so that women can contribute meaningfully to community life.

Integration of Spiritual and Social Guidance

Just as Rasheeda Bano combined moral instruction with practical support, modern initiatives should blend spirituality with social services to address the holistic needs of communities.

Family as a Site of Spiritual Training

Her approach to raising Sadruddin Arif and Shah Rukn-e-Alam highlights the importance of families as spaces for transmitting values. Parents today can draw inspiration from her example to nurture integrity, humility, and service in their children.

Further Academic Research

Future studies should explore comparative perspectives between Rasheeda Bano and other female figures in Islamic history, situating her legacy within broader discourses on women's leadership in religion.



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Kamal Bibi Rahmatullah Alaiha Sister of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya and Wife of Hazrat Makhdum Abdul Rashid Haqqani — Her Spiritual, Social, Economic, and Religious Contributions in the Indian Subcontinent

Dr. Shahid Bahar Hashmi , Zahid Bahar Hashmi and Ahmad Raza Shah

Abstract

This study explores the life and contributions of Kamal Bibi Rahmatullah Alaiha (1173–1259), the younger sister of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya and the wife of Hazrat Makhdum Abdul Rashid Haqqani. Born into a lineage rooted in the Qureshi Hashmi and Jilani traditions, she inherited a profound spiritual and intellectual legacy. The paper examines her role in religious, spiritual, economic, social, and educational reform in the Indian Subcontinent. It highlights her contributions to women's empowerment, vocational training, agricultural and cultural development, moral guidance, and Islamization of rural and remote areas.

The research applies Critical Theory, Basic Needs Theory, Capacity Enhancement Theory, and Feminist Theory to analyze her multidimensional role, aligning her work with modern developmental frameworks such as sustainable development, gender equality, and social justice. Oral traditions, archival sources, and historical literature are employed to reconstruct her narrative, which has often been marginalized in male-dominated historiographies.

The study concludes that Kamal Bibi Rahmatullah Alaiha's legacy is not confined to her familial identity as the sister or wife of saints, but rather lies in her pioneering contributions as a spiritual leader, educator, reformer, and role model for women in Islam.

Research Questions

1. How did Kamal Bibi Rahmatullah Alaiha contribute to the spiritual, social, and economic transformation of the Indian Subcontinent during the 12th and 13th centuries?
2. In what ways did she empower women and integrate them into religious, economic, and cultural life?

3. How can her contributions be analyzed through applied theories and related to contemporary developmental frameworks of gender equality and sustainable progress?

Introduction

Kamal Bibi Rahmatullah Alaiha stands as one of the most influential yet underexplored figures in South Asian Sufi history. Living between 1173 and 1259, she belonged to a family that shaped the spiritual and religious fabric of the Subcontinent. Her brother, Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya, became one of the greatest saints of Multan, while her husband, Hazrat Makhdum Abdul Rashid Haqqani, was the founder of an early hospice in 1192.

Kamal Bibi was not only connected to these towering male figures but was herself a scholar, spiritual guide, reformer, and role model for women. She was the daughter of Hazrat Muhammad Ghous, a Qureshi Hashmi saint, and Fatima Bibi, granddaughter of Hazrat Abdul Qadir Jilani. Her spiritual upbringing was thus deeply rooted in the Prophetic household (Ahl al-Bayt) and in the traditions of Islamic scholarship.

Her very name, Kamal (meaning perfection or the peak of all attributes), reflected her character. She embodied proximity to Allah, love for Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), devotion to the Mothers of the Believers, and particularly emulation of Hazrat Fatima, daughter of the Prophet. Oral traditions consistently affirm that Kamal Bibi followed Hazrat Fatima in all aspects of life — from simplicity and humility to nurturing and guidance.

In addition to her spiritual life, she played a pioneering role in women's education, skills training, agricultural methods, cultural arts, and economic participation. She was instrumental in upbringing her children — Hazrat Abubakar Sultan and Hazrat Makhdum Muhammad — who later assisted Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya in managing the hospice when he arrived in Multan in 1222. Her grandson, Hazrat Sultan Ayoub Qattal, became a saint known for his selfless union with divine truth.

Through her initiatives, Kamal Bibi spread Islam and Islamic values into rural and remote areas, particularly by training women disciples. She cultivated harmony, equality, and spiritual awareness, leaving a legacy that resonates with both medieval Islamic reform and modern concepts of gender equality and sustainable development.

Literature Review

The available literature on the history of South Asian Sufism often highlights towering male saints such as Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya, Hazrat Fariduddin Ganj Shakar, Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya, and Hazrat Makhdum Abdul Rashid Haqqani. However, women like Kamal Bibi Rahmatullah Alaiha, who actively participated in spiritual, social, and cultural transformation, remain understudied.

Early Sources

Early hagiographies such as *Tazkira-tul-Awliya* and *Manaqib-ul-Asfiya* often focus primarily on the mystical exploits of male saints. Although some oral traditions preserved in Multan, Uch, and rural Punjab reference the role of women disciples and saints, few written accounts provide detailed recognition of Kamal Bibi. Interviews with custodians of shrines and local scholars reveal that her role was often overshadowed by that of her brother and husband, though she was central to both their lives and the broader Sufi movement.

Modern Scholarship

Recent scholarship in Islamic and gender studies has attempted to recover women's voices in Sufism. Researchers such as Dr. Annemarie Schimmel and Dr. Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi briefly note the importance of women in sustaining Sufi orders. Still, the detailed contributions of women like Kamal Bibi remain largely undocumented in academic publications. Local historians from Multan, such as Professor Muhammad Saleem Akhtar, highlight her involvement in vocational training and cultural Islamization, though in limited scope.

Oral Traditions and Local Narratives

Oral histories from Multan's Sufi custodians (*sajjada-nashins*) emphasize Kamal Bibi's role as a guide for women, noting that she established circles for Quranic education, sewing, weaving, and agricultural management. These oral sources also recall her emphasis on simplicity, piety, and adherence to the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), especially reflecting the life of Hazrat Fatima.

Theoretical Context

Literature on development theories — particularly Basic Needs Theory (Paul Streeten), Capacity Enhancement (Amartya Sen), and Critical Theory (Frankfurt School) — provides valuable frameworks for analyzing Kamal Bibi's contributions. Her role in meeting the basic needs of food, clothing, shelter, and education, enhancing women's capacities through training, and challenging patriarchal exclusions aligns closely with these theoretical lenses. Moreover, Feminist Theory in Islamic context helps situate her as a role model who integrated spirituality with gender equity.

Gap in Scholarship

Despite these scattered references, no comprehensive academic study exists that documents Kamal Bibi's early life, spiritual training, familial ties, contributions to women's empowerment, and role in Islamization in the Subcontinent. This paper aims to fill that gap by reconstructing her life through a combination of oral traditions, archival records, and applied theoretical frameworks.

Research Methodology

This research employs a qualitative, interpretive, and interdisciplinary methodology to reconstruct the life, teachings, and contributions of Kamal Bibi Rahmatullah Alaiha. Since written sources on her are scarce, the study relies heavily on a triangulation of oral narratives, archival documents, and secondary scholarly works.

Historical Method

The research examines chronicles, genealogical records, and shrine documentation from Multan and Uch Sharif. Particular attention is given to the lineage of Kamal Bibi, linking her to Hazrat Muhammad Ghous Qureshi Hashmi and her maternal descent from the family of Hazrat Abdul Qadir Jilani.

Oral Traditions

Oral testimonies from caretakers of shrines, local historians, women disciples' families, and Multani elders are integrated. These narratives preserve details about Kamal Bibi's educational gatherings, vocational initiatives (spinning, weaving, cooking, poultry, and livestock management), and her guidance to women in raising children according to Islamic teachings.

Comparative Feminist Lens

A feminist theory framework is applied to interpret Kamal Bibi's life as a woman saint who cultivated gender-inclusive spiritual spaces. Her teachings are also compared with the legacy of Hazrat Rabia Basri, not to equate their paths but to highlight her contribution to the development of women's spirituality in South Asia.

Applied Development Theories

The analysis uses

Basic Needs Theory → to interpret her provision of food, clothing, and shelter initiatives.
Capacity Enhancement Theory → to examine her skill development training for women.
Critical Theory → to understand her role in reforming unjust practices and cultivating equality.
Integration with Development Goals

Although framed centuries before modern development paradigms, Kamal Bibi's work reflects principles later articulated in global goals of education for all, women's empowerment, gender equality, poverty alleviation, and sustainable rural development. By aligning her contributions with these goals, we can recognize her as a forerunner of both spiritual and socio-economic reforms in the subcontinent.

Hypothesis

This study hypothesizes that Kamal Bibi Rahmatullah Alaiha, through her spiritual devotion, educational initiatives, economic skills training, social reform, and upbringing of future saints, played a decisive role in the spread of Islam, women's empowerment, and community development in the Indian subcontinent, leaving a multidimensional legacy that continues to influence religious and social thought.

Research Limitations

While this study aims to highlight the life and contributions of Kamal Bibi Rahmatullah Alaiha, certain limitations must be acknowledged

Scarcity of Written Records

Much of the information about Kamal Bibi is preserved through oral traditions, hagiographies, and local narratives rather than formal historical texts. This makes it challenging to distinguish between historically verifiable facts and devotional accounts.

Fragmented Sources

References to her life are scattered across family genealogies, shrine records, and oral testimonies, with few comprehensive primary documents. This fragmentation limits a full chronological reconstruction of her life.

Gender Bias in Historiography

Traditional Islamic historiography often focused on male saints, leaving the contributions of women like Kamal Bibi underdocumented. Her achievements must therefore be carefully reconstructed from indirect references and comparative analyses.

Interpretive Dependence on Oral Tradition

Oral accounts vary across regions and families, reflecting both reverence and cultural reinterpretations. While valuable, these sources require critical evaluation to avoid over-reliance on idealized portrayals.

Contextual Limitations

The socio-political context of 12th–13th century Multan was deeply intertwined with broader currents of Islamic reform and Sufi expansion. Without extensive archival evidence, assessing her exact influence within these wider dynamics remains partly interpretive.

Despite these limitations, the study draws strength from the convergence of oral traditions, shrine records, genealogical links, and community practices, which together affirm Kamal Bibi's

enduring role in spiritual, social, and economic transformation.

Contributions of Kamal Bibi Rahmatullah Alaiha (1173–1259)

Kamal Bibi Rahmatullah Alaiha, sister of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya and wife of Hazrat Makhdum Abdul Rashid Haqqani, was not only a revered spiritual personality but also a reformer whose impact stretched across spiritual, social, economic, educational, and cultural domains. Her contributions transformed the lives of individuals and communities across the Indian subcontinent. This section outlines her multifaceted role, their impacts on society, and their alignment with theoretical frameworks and global development ideals.

Spiritual Contributions

Devotion to Allah and the Prophet (peace be upon him) Kamal Bibi embodied the essence of her name Kamal, meaning “at the peak of perfection.” She lived in constant proximity to Allah, expressing deep love for the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), his family (Ahl al-Bayt), and particularly Hazrat Fatima, whose example she followed in piety, humility, and dedication.

Women’s Spiritual Guidance She mentored women disciples, teaching them remembrance of God, prayer, patience, and gratitude. Oral traditions recount her role in organizing spiritual gatherings where women learned both faith and practical life skills.

Impact on Society Her teachings created a generation of spiritually conscious women who integrated Islamic values into family and community life.

Linked Theories Critical Theory (challenging women’s exclusion from spiritual life) and Feminist Theory (positioning women as agents of religious growth).

Connection to Development Goals Promoted values of peace, equality, moral development, and inclusivity—principles later echoed in global agendas of social justice.

Educational Contributions

Child Upbringing She placed special emphasis on Islamic child upbringing. Her sons—Hazrat Abubakar Sultan and Hazrat Makhdum Muhammad—grew under her guidance to become assistants to Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya in Multan (1222). This reflects her success in nurturing future leaders.

Transmission of Knowledge Oral traditions emphasize that Kamal Bibi organized circles where both girls and women were taught reading, moral education, and household management skills alongside spiritual training.

Grandson's Spiritual Role Her grandson, Hazrat Sultan Ayoub Qattal , inherited her teachings of self-annihilation and truth, embodying the path of union with Allah.

Impact on Society Educational empowerment ensured the continuity of Islamic learning, moral training, and leadership across generations.

Linked Theories Capacity Enhancement Theory (empowering individuals with skills and knowledge) and Feminist Theory (educating women as equal contributors to society).

Connection to Development Goals Advanced quality education, gender equality, and intergenerational sustainability.

Economic Contributions

Skills Training for Women Kamal Bibi taught women spinning, weaving, cloth dyeing, embroidery, cooking, and food preservation. She also encouraged poultry farming, livestock care, and agricultural improvement.

Household and Community Economy By creating women's involvement in productive work, she improved family economies and reduced poverty.

Impact on Society Rural women became active contributors to the economy, creating stability in households and strengthening village-level trade and production.

Linked Theories Basic Needs Theory (meeting essential food and clothing needs) and Capacity Enhancement Theory (skills development for economic empowerment).

Connection to Development Goals Directly aligned with goals of poverty reduction, women's participation in the economy, and sustainable livelihoods.

Social and Moral Contributions

Empowerment of Women Kamal Bibi redefined women's role in society. She taught that women could balance family, spirituality, and community service, reflecting the lives of the Mothers of the Believers.

Promotion of Equality and Harmony Her efforts cultivated peace, equality, and collective responsibility within families and villages.

Moral Training She emphasized virtues of humility, service, patience, and justice, guiding women to raise children with strong moral and spiritual foundations.

Impact on Society Strengthened family structures, encouraged moral living, and spread Islamic values in remote and rural areas.

Linked Theories Critical Theory (addressing inequality), Feminist Theory (empowering women

socially and morally).

Connection to Development Goals Promoted gender equality, peaceful societies, and inclusive development.

Contributions to Khanqah Life and Institutional Development

Support in Hospice Administration When her husband Hazrat Makhdum Abdul Rashid Haqqani established the hospice in 1192, Kamal Bibi actively supported its functioning.

Assistance in Transition (1222) When Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya arrived in Multan, her sons and she herself assisted in organizing and strengthening his early administration.

Impact on Society Ensured smooth institutional continuity, provided leadership support, and created an inclusive environment for both men and women.

Linked Theories Capacity Enhancement Theory (building institutions through human development).

Connection to Development Goals Strengthened community institutions, leadership, and social organization.

Art, Culture, and Daily Life Contributions

Artistic Skills Kamal Bibi introduced and encouraged artistic practices such as cloth dyeing, weaving, embroidery, and painting, not only as aesthetic practices but as vocational skills.

Domestic Contributions Training in cooking, housekeeping, and food preservation elevated the standard of domestic management while empowering women with dignity in their roles.

Impact on Society Enhanced the cultural richness of rural life, integrated art into daily living, and expanded opportunities for women's self-expression and livelihood.

Linked Theories Basic Needs Theory and Capacity Enhancement Theory.

Connection to Development Goals Linked to sustainable cultural heritage, women's empowerment, and economic participation.

Social Welfare and Humanitarian Contributions

Kamal Bibi Rahmatullah Alaiha extended her compassion beyond education and moral guidance into organized social welfare. She established facilities for widows, elderly women, and orphans, ensuring their access to shelter, food, and spiritual care. Oral traditions recount that she personally supervised the distribution of essential items and supported those who had lost family members during times of conflict or famine.

She also arranged for potable water by having wells dug near rural settlements, reducing the physical burden on women who previously had to walk long distances to fetch water. This initiative not only improved health and hygiene but also enhanced women's safety and productivity, allowing more time for education, domestic industry, and spiritual study.

Her humanitarian projects illustrate a holistic model of empowerment — combining social

capital development, capacity enhancement, and spiritual motivation. They reflect the principles emphasized in the Basic Needs Theory (meeting essential human requirements), Capacity Enhancement Theory (empowering women through skill and self-reliance), and Feminist Theory (ensuring gender equality and dignity).

In contemporary development terms, her actions align with the global goals of gender equality, access to clean water, poverty reduction, and sustainable livelihoods — though centuries ahead of formal frameworks.

Her initiatives uplifted the status of women, strengthened family structures, and fostered a community ethos based on mercy, equality, and collective wellbeing — marking her as a pioneer of integrated socio-spiritual welfare in the Indian Subcontinent.

Intergenerational Legacy and Comparative Significance

Raising Saints Through her nurturing, her sons became assistants to Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya, while her grandson Hazrat Sultan Ayoub Qattal became a saint who embodied annihilation of self and union with divine truth (Qatal).

Long-Term Impact This intergenerational spiritual legacy reflects her deep influence on shaping leaders and saints who contributed to Islamization and moral reform in the subcontinent.

Comparison with Rabia Basri While Hazrat Rabia Basri symbolized individual piety and devotion, Kamal Bibi combined spirituality with social reform, education, and community development, making her unique in both scope and depth.

Linked Theories Feminist Theory (legacy of women's agency) and Capacity Enhancement Theory (long-term intergenerational empowerment).

Connection to Development Goals Advanced sustainable intergenerational development, spiritual heritage, and gender-inclusive reform.

Summary of Contributions and Impact

Kamal Bibi Rahmatullah Alaiha's contributions spanned every aspect of life—spiritual, social, moral, educational, economic, artistic, and institutional. She not only raised future saints but also established models of women's participation, empowerment, and leadership. Her influence shaped the spiritual landscape of Multan, supported the growth of institutions, and empowered rural and remote communities.

Her life's work aligns with universal principles of justice, equality, empowerment, sustainability, and peace, now echoed in global frameworks of human development.

Conclusion

Kamal Bibi Rahmatullah Alaiha (1173–1259) emerges as one of the most remarkable women of early South Asian Sufism. Unlike many female saints known solely for ascetic spirituality, she combined mysticism with social reform, education, economic empowerment, and cultural contributions.

Her spiritual devotion anchored in love for Allah, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), and Hazrat Fatima (RA) became a source of guidance for women in Multan and its surrounding rural areas. She embodied the ideals of humility, patience, and justice, strengthening moral character in families and communities.

Her educational contributions—nurturing future saints like her sons Hazrat Abu Bakar Sultan and Hazrat Makhdum Muhammad, and mentoring women in moral and spiritual training—secured the continuity of Islamic values across generations.

Her economic and social reforms—teaching women skills such as weaving, embroidery, cooking, and livestock care—transformed the domestic and community economy, promoting poverty reduction, gender inclusion, and sustainability. Her support for khanqah life and involvement in institutional organization during Hazrat Abdul Rashid Haqqani's hospice and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya's early Multan settlement reflected her leadership qualities.

Above all, her legacy shows how a woman saint can embody both personal spirituality and collective transformation, setting a precedent for future generations. Compared with Hazrat Rabia Basri, Kamal Bibi's contribution was wider—integrating family, community, and institutional dimensions.

When viewed through modern frameworks, her impact aligns with

Critical Theory – addressing women's marginalization in spiritual and social spheres.

Basic Needs Theory – meeting fundamental human needs (food, skills, security).

Capacity Enhancement Theory – empowering women, children, and communities through knowledge and skills.

Feminist Theory – showcasing women's agency and leadership. Her work resonates with the ideals of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially in the domains of

Education for all

Poverty reduction and livelihood sustainability Gender equality and women's empowerment Peaceful and inclusive societies

Preservation of cultural heritage

Thus, Kamal Bibi Rahmatullah Alaiha represents an early model of holistic development and gender-inclusive reform rooted in spiritual and social foundations.

Recommendations

1. **Further Research** Scholars should explore archival material, oral traditions, and local poetry celebrating Kamal Bibi to expand understanding of her role.
2. **Preservation of Heritage** The Auqaf Department should document and preserve women's contributions in Sufi shrines for historical recognition.
3. **Educational Curriculum** Her model of child upbringing, women's skills training, and spiritual education could inspire gender-inclusive curricula in Islamic studies and social sciences.
4. **Global Relevance** Development practitioners may draw lessons from her integrated approach to spirituality and empowerment to link faith-based leadership with sustainable development.



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Bibi Rasti of Multan “The second Rabia Basri”

By Dr Fassah Bibi

In the land of Punjab, every corner carries a story, story of love, faith, and light. Among those stories, two sacred names often echo together Bibi Pak Daman of Lahore and Bibi Pak Daman of Multan. Many people think they are the same, but no, these are two different holy women, both pure, both honoured, yet each with her own world, her own journey.

Bibi Pak Daman of Lahore

In the heart of Lahore, near Garhi Shahu, stands a shrine known far and wide, the Mazar of Bibi Pak Daman. People say this is the resting place of Syeda Ruqayyah bint Ali (R.A.), the noble daughter of Hazrat Ali (A.S.).

According to old traditions, she came to this land after the tragedy of Karbala, along with other pious women from the family of the Prophet ﷺ. They lived quietly, spreading love, prayers, and the message of truth. The name Pak Daman “the pure one” became their title. Even today, people go there with candles and flowers. Women whisper their wishes near the walls, and men recite Durood softly.

Multan’s Bibi Pak Daman, Bibi Rasti

Far away, in the city of saints “Multan” there stands another shrine, also called Bibi Pak Daman. But here, Bibi Pak Daman means Bibi Rasti, also known by her spiritual title, Rabia Basri Sani, the Second Rabia Basri. Many people confuse her with Lahore’s Bibi Pak Daman, but Bibi Rasti’s story belongs to another time, another light. She was a woman of deep wisdom, pure heart, and immense spiritual strength, the mother of the great saint.

The Story of Bibi Rasti

Long ago, when Multan was a center of knowledge and Sufism, when caravans came from faraway lands carrying silk, spices, and seekers of truth, there lived Bibi Rasti Pak Daman. She was born in a noble family, daughter of Sultan Jamal-ud-Din of Fergana (Central Asia). From a young age, her heart leaned towards spirituality. She grew up hearing the names of great saints and scholars.

Later, she married Shaikh Sadr-ud-Din Arif Billah, who was a disciple and successor of Hazrat Bahauddin Zakariya Multani (R.A.), one of the greatest Sufi saints of South Asia.

Through this marriage, she became a part of the Suhrawardi spiritual chain, and her home became a place of learning and zikr (remembrance of Allah). Her lifestyle reflected the principles of Faqr (spiritual poverty) and Tawakkul (trust in God).

Mother of a Saint

Bibi Rasti was the mother of Shah Rukn-e-Alam (Sheikh Rukn-ud-Din Abul Fateh), the renowned Sufi saint who brought spiritual light to Multan. I will say, if Shah Rukn-e-Alam was the light, then Bibi Rasti was the lamp that nurtured it. Her guidance, prayers, and spiritual training played a significant role in shaping her son's character and destiny. Shah Rukn-e-Alam himself acknowledged that his first teacher and source of spiritual inspiration was his mother.

Why She Was Called Rabia Basri Sani

People of Multan gave her a title of love "Rabia Basri Sani", the Second Rabia Basri, comparing her to the famous saint Rabia al-Basri of Basra, known for her deep love for Allah. Like the first Rabia, Bibi Rasti lived a life of simplicity, devotion, and service. She taught that real love for God asks for no reward, it's pure, selfless, and endless. I must say, the one who loves God but fears loss in this world, does not yet know true love. She is remembered in oral traditions, devotional poetry, and spiritual gatherings. Her name evokes reverence, and her story is often shared in the context of female sainthood, a rare but powerful theme in Islamic history.

Her Resting Place in Multan

Bibi Rasti passed away around 1295 CE. She was buried in Multan, near the site that once held an ancient temple called Mai Totla. Her shrine is a small, peaceful place with blue and white Multani tiles, wooden arches, and a simple courtyard where the wind always carries a sense of peace. When you step inside, you feel an old calm as if time itself stops to listen. If you ever visit Multan, go see her shrine not just as a tourist, but as a seeker. Sit for a while under the shade of her old walls, feel the cool tiles under your hands, and listen to the whispers of the wind. You will feel it, the same peace that her name still carries after more than seven centuries.

Bibi Rasti is not remembered just because she was the mother of a saint, she was a saint in her own right. She taught love without fear, worship without pride, and service without desire. She showed that a woman, too, could lead in the path of faith; quietly, but powerfully.



Rasti Bibi Spiritual Leadership, Social Contribution, and Women's Empowerment in South Asia

Dr. Shahid Bahar Hashmi, Dr. Ansar Abbas , Shahbaz Ahmad Shah Hashmi and Dr. Ismat-ullah Shah

Abstract

This study explores the life, spiritual contributions, and social impact of Rasti Bibi, widely revered as a moral and spiritual figure in 13th-century South Asia. As the daughter-in-law of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya and mother of Hazrat Shah Rukn-e-Alam, she played a pivotal role in the Suhrawardi Sufi household, emphasizing women's education, child upbringing, social welfare, and spiritual guidance. Known for her generosity, noble lineage as a princess of Farghana, and her recognition as Pak Mai, Rasti Bibi exemplifies the integration of spiritual, social, and educational leadership. Drawing on historical texts, oral traditions, and international scholarship, this study examines her life through the lenses of Transformational Leadership Theory and Feminist Social Theory, identifies gaps in existing literature, and highlights her significance as a model of women's empowerment in South Asia.

Research Questions

1. How did Rasti Bibi (Pak Mai)'s life and spiritual practices influence women's roles in society?
2. What historical records, oral traditions, and community narratives preserve her memory and contributions?
3. In what ways does her example reflect ideas of women's empowerment within Sufi traditions?

Introduction

South Asia's spiritual history is profoundly influenced by Sufi saints, yet the contributions of women within these traditions have often been overlooked. Rasti Bibi emerges as a pivotal figure, bridging the domestic and public spheres by providing spiritual education, moral guidance, and social welfare. Her life demonstrates how women in Sufi households contributed not only as supporters of male saints but also as independent agents shaping community development, charitable work, and the upbringing of future spiritual leaders.

Rasti Bibi's family context is notable she was married to Hazrat Sadaruddin Arif, the son of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya, and she was the mother of Hazrat Shah Rukn-e-Alam, one of South Asia's most revered saints. Her household included other influential women, such as Rasheeda Bano, her mother-in-law, who was herself a learned spiritual guide. Together, these

women created a model of ethical living, spiritual training, and women's empowerment, influencing both their household and the broader community.

Her life was characterized by noble origins, selfless charity, education of women and children, and spiritual leadership. Despite her status as a princess of Farghana, she chose a life devoted to service, distributing her marriage gifts to the poor, teaching women practical and spiritual skills, and nurturing the next generation. She integrated mindfulness and devotion into daily life, including reciting sacred texts while performing household duties.

This study aims to provide a comprehensive academic account of Rasti Bibi's life, situating her contributions within broader South Asian Sufi traditions, and highlighting her role in women's social and spiritual empowerment.

Literature Review

The study of women in South Asian Sufism has gained attention, yet primary sources documenting individual women saints remain limited. Local historical texts, such as *Munba' al-Barakat* (Sharfuddin & Farzand Ali Shah, 1916) and *Jamia al-Karamat* (Rana, n.d.), provide accounts of the Zakariyya household, including charitable and educational activities led by women like Rasti Bibi. Modern scholarship, such as Bahar (2021), explores household-based Sufi networks, acknowledging the moral and spiritual contributions of women, though often focusing more broadly on male saints.

International scholarship highlights the significance of women in Sufi traditions. Schimmel (1975) discusses the spiritual and ethical roles of women within domestic and social contexts, noting their function as custodians of moral and spiritual guidance. Eaton (1993) emphasizes the importance of family networks in sustaining Sufi orders in South Asia, while Malik (2008) identifies women as crucial figures in maintaining social cohesion and ethical education.

Despite these studies, detailed biographical accounts of women saints like Rasti Bibi are sparse. Her life, including her charitable work, teaching, spiritual guidance, and role as mother of a major saint, remains underrepresented in both regional and international scholarship.

Gaps in Literature

While existing research acknowledges the presence of women in Sufi households, several limitations persist

1. Limited biographical documentation Few sources provide comprehensive details of Rasti Bibi's personal life, spiritual practices, and teaching methods.
2. Gendered historiography Historical accounts often prioritize male saints, marginalizing women's roles and influence.
3. Lack of comparative studies Minimal research situates her alongside other South Asian or international women Sufis.

4. Insufficient connection to contemporary frameworks Her contributions are rarely analyzed through lenses such as leadership theory or gender empowerment frameworks.

These gaps highlight the necessity of research that integrates historical, social, and spiritual perspectives to provide a holistic understanding of Rasti Bibi's legacy.

Significance of the Study

This study holds significance for several reasons

Recognizing women's agency It documents Rasti Bibi's leadership in spiritual, educational, and social domains. Bridging historical and contemporary perspectives Her work provides a model for integrating spiritual practice, child-rearing, and social empowerment.

Informing women's empowerment studies Examining her life through Transformational Leadership Theory and Feminist Social Theory highlights historical roots of female agency.

Preserving cultural heritage Documenting her life contributes to a fuller understanding of South Asian Sufi traditions and their gendered dimensions.

Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative historical approach, combining

1. Textual analysis Examination of historical manuscripts and local texts (Munba' al-Barakat, Jamia al-Karamat).
2. Oral histories Accounts and traditions associated with her shrine and ongoing social influence.
3. Comparative analysis Situating her contributions alongside other women Sufis in South Asia and internationally.

The study synthesizes historical, spiritual, and social perspectives to provide a comprehensive account of Rasti Bibi's life and influence.

Theoretical Framework

Two theoretical frameworks guide this study

1. Transformational Leadership Theory (Burns, 1978) This theory emphasizes leaders who inspire, mentor, and empower followers through moral example and personal influence. Rasti Bibi exemplified transformational leadership by nurturing women, teaching practical and spiritual skills, and raising Hazrat Shah Rukn-e-Alam with ethical and spiritual guidance. Her influence extended beyond her household, shaping social norms and moral practices.

2. Feminist Social Theory (hooks, 2000; Butler, 1990) This framework examines how individuals challenge structural and societal constraints, particularly those related to gender. By teaching, mentoring, and empowering women, Rasti Bibi contested patriarchal limitations and created spaces for female leadership and agency in both domestic and spiritual domains.

These frameworks allow the study to position Rasti Bibi as both a transformational leader

and a feminist agent, illustrating how her spiritual authority, social service, and moral guidance empowered women and nurtured future generations.

Research Limitations

Several limitations affect the study

1. Scarcity of written primary sources Limited direct accounts exist regarding her personal teachings and daily practices.
2. Gendered historical focus Most archival materials prioritize male saints, marginalizing women's contributions.
3. Regional bias Existing scholarship largely centers on Multan, limiting comparative perspectives from broader South Asia.
4. Translation and interpretation challenges Early Persian and regional texts require careful interpretation to ensure accuracy.

These limitations underscore the need for further archival research, oral history documentation, and scholarly attention to women Sufis like Rasti Bibi.

Historical Background, Marriage, Children, and Spiritual and Social Contributions

Historical Background Early Life and Spiritual Formation

Rasti Bibi, widely revered as Pak Mai (Pious Mother), was born into the royal family of Farghana, a region in Central Asia known for its rich cultural, intellectual, and spiritual traditions. From an early age, she received a comprehensive education encompassing literacy, moral conduct, religious instruction, and social responsibility. Despite her noble lineage, Rasti Bibi exhibited a deep inclination toward humility, simplicity, and service, prioritizing ethical and spiritual development over wealth or political influence.

Her marriage into the Zakariyya household in Multan marked a significant turning point in her life. This household, under the leadership of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya, was a prominent center of the Suhrawardi Sufi order, emphasizing spiritual guidance, education, and social welfare. Women in this household, including her mother-in-law Rasheeda Bano, played pivotal roles in mentoring young women, instructing minors, and providing spiritual and ethical guidance, fostering a household environment that combined domestic management with social and moral leadership.

Multan at the time was a hub of trade, scholarship, and spiritual activity. Influential households were expected to function as moral anchors and centers of community service. Rasti Bibi embraced this responsibility fully, becoming a central figure in extending the household's influence to women and children. Her life reflected a blend of spiritual devotion, ethical conduct, and social service, establishing her as a model for women's leadership in both domestic and communal spheres.

Marriage and Family Life Partnership in Spiritual Service

Rasti Bibi married Hazrat Sadaruddin Arif, the son of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya, forming a partnership rooted in shared ethical principles and spiritual devotion. Their marriage was a collaboration of moral purpose and social responsibility, reflecting Sufi ideals of selflessness, humility, and service.

Demonstrating extraordinary generosity, Rasti Bibi distributed all her marriage gifts to the poor, exemplifying her lifelong commitment to service and ethical living. Hazrat Sadaruddin Arif also allocated his inherited wealth to charitable causes, creating a household celebrated for its ethical integrity, generosity, and dedication to community welfare.

The couple's most notable child, Hazrat Shah Rukn-e-Alam, was raised under Rasti Bibi's careful guidance. She ensured that his upbringing was infused with spiritual discipline, moral awareness, and social responsibility. Beyond her own child, she trained other women in the household in child-rearing practices, ethical education, and spiritual guidance, extending her influence across multiple households and ensuring the transmission of Sufi ethical principles to future generations.

Her household model demonstrates that the domestic sphere could function as a center for education, moral guidance, social reform, and women's empowerment, highlighting the critical role women played in shaping spiritual, moral, and communal life.

Spiritual Contributions Daily Practice and Ethical Mentorship Integration of Devotion into Daily Life. Rasti Bibi's spiritual life was remarkable for its integration into everyday activities. She consistently recited sacred texts and engaged in prayer during routine household tasks, including feeding Hazrat Shah Rukn-e-Alam. Her approach demonstrated that spirituality was not confined to formal rituals but could permeate all aspects of domestic and communal life.

Through her example, women in her household learned that ethical conduct, mindfulness, and devotion were inseparable. Spirituality could coexist with practical responsibilities, and the domestic environment itself could serve as a site for ethical and spiritual formation.

Moral and Spiritual Education of Children

Rasti Bibi's approach to child-rearing combined practical care, ethical instruction, and spiritual mentoring. She instilled in Hazrat Shah Rukn-e-Alam the values of humility, patience, generosity, and devotion to service, qualities that would later define his spiritual leadership. She extended these teachings to other women in the household, instructing them on how to raise children with moral awareness, spiritual mindfulness, and social responsibility, ensuring the sustainability of her methods across generations.

This approach aligned with Suhrawardi Sufi principles, emphasizing that ethical and spiritual formation begins at home and is reinforced through community interaction and modeling.

Recognition as Pak Mai (Pious Mother)

Rasti Bibi's recognition as Pak Mai (Pious Mother) reflected her spiritual authority, moral integrity, and nurturing character. She was revered as a spiritual guide and moral exemplar, particularly for women, serving as a source of guidance, empowerment, and mentorship. Her example demonstrated that women could exercise spiritual and ethical leadership, influencing both family structures and the wider community.

Charitable Work and Community Service Ethical Practice in Action

Rasti Bibi's dedication to charitable work was systematic and extensive. She personally oversaw the distribution of food, gifts, and resources to the poor, travelers, and marginalized individuals, ensuring that those most in need received support. She organized and supervised a household public kitchen to guarantee equitable access to nourishment.

Her charitable efforts were inseparable from her spiritual and ethical teachings, illustrating that service to humanity is an essential aspect of spiritual life. She also offered guidance and support to women, fostering a culture of moral awareness, empathy, and social responsibility within the community.

Women's Education and Empowerment Mentorship and Skills Development

A central aspect of Rasti Bibi's contributions was her focus on women's education and empowerment. She offered mentorship and guidance in three key areas

1. Ethical and Spiritual Education Teaching women to live morally upright lives, integrate devotion into daily life, and mentor others in spiritual practice.
2. Child-Rearing Instruction Training women to raise children with ethical, spiritual, and social consciousness.
3. Practical Skills Development Providing knowledge of household management, crafts, and economic activities to enhance women's social and economic participation.

Rasti Bibi's guidance enabled women to exercise agency, confidence, and resilience, establishing networks of empowered women capable of leading, teaching, and supporting their communities. Her mentorship reinforced the principle that women could play active and transformative roles in spiritual, social, and educational spheres.

Shrine Practices and Symbolism Female-Centered Spiritual Authority

Rasti Bibi's shrine is a female-centered spiritual space, reinforcing her enduring influence

as a Pak Mai. Men are not permitted to enter, creating a sanctuary where women can seek spiritual guidance, perform votive rituals, and reflect in a protected environment. Women visiting the shrine offer fish and bread as votive gifts, a symbolic practice representing the fulfillment of vows and the seeking of blessings for personal or familial challenges.

The shrine stands as a symbol of home, courage, and moral authority for women, emphasizing the importance of female spiritual spaces and leadership. It is a living example of how women's spiritual agency can manifest in both symbolic and practical community structures.

Oral Traditions Preserving Cultural and Spiritual Memory

Oral traditions surrounding Rasti Bibi are a vital component of her enduring influence. Folk narratives, stories, and hymns recount her charity, wisdom, moral guidance, and spiritual practices. These narratives are shared during festivals, communal gatherings, and shrine ceremonies, ensuring that her teachings remain a living part of cultural memory.

Oral traditions highlight her nurturing role, empowerment of women, and guidance in child-rearing, serving as moral exemplars for successive generations. They also emphasize the symbolic importance of her shrine, transmitting lessons about ethical conduct, spiritual discipline, and community service.

Auqaf Records Documentation and Continuity

The Auqaf Department, responsible for the management of religious endowments, maintains detailed records regarding Rasti Bibi's shrine, charitable activities, and ritual offerings. These records provide evidence of the administration of her shrine, the continuity of votive practices (fish and bread offerings), and the management of associated charitable services.

Auqaf documentation corroborates oral traditions, offering historical validation of her influence. These records demonstrate that her shrine continues to function as a center of female empowerment, spiritual guidance, and ethical community engagement, illustrating the lasting impact of her life and practices.

Community Influence and Networks of Empowerment

Through her teachings, mentorship, charitable work, and shrine-centered practices, Rasti Bibi established long-lasting networks of female influence. She demonstrated that women could exercise spiritual authority, mentor others, and contribute meaningfully to social welfare, creating replicable models of ethical and spiritual leadership.

Her integrated approach combined

Ethical instruction and spiritual mentorship. Empowerment through education, skills, and moral

guidance. Charitable service addressing the needs of the marginalized. Institutional continuity via shrine practices and Auqaf records. These networks ensured that Rasti Bibi's teachings and practices endured, shaping generations of women who continued to emulate her example in both domestic and community life.

Conclusion

Rasti Bibi's life exemplifies the intersection of spiritual devotion, social responsibility, and women's empowerment in the Sufi tradition of South Asia. Born as a princess of Farghana, she embraced a life of humility, service, and moral leadership, demonstrating that nobility and spiritual greatness are expressed through ethical conduct and selfless action. Her integration into the Zakariyya household, through marriage to Hazrat Sadaruddin Arif, positioned her at the heart of a spiritual and social network that influenced generations of followers.

Her contributions spanned multiple dimensions

Maternal Leadership Rasti Bibi's guidance of Hazrat Shah Rukn-e-Alam ensured the development of one of the subcontinent's most influential Sufi saints. Her methods combined moral education, spiritual discipline, and practical caregiving, illustrating a holistic approach to child-rearing in a spiritual context.

Women's Education and Empowerment She created spaces for women's learning, skill development, and spiritual guidance. Through mentoring and teaching, she enhanced women's agency and capacity to contribute meaningfully to household and community life.

Charitable Service and Social Welfare Her selfless distribution of marriage gifts and household resources reflected a commitment to social justice, alleviating poverty, and supporting the marginalized. This charitable ethos demonstrated the practical application of spiritual principles in addressing societal needs.

Spiritual Leadership Recognized as Pak Mai, she commanded respect as a female spiritual authority. Her integration of prayer, devotion, and ethical conduct into daily life provided a model of leadership that extended beyond traditional male-dominated spheres, affirming the potential of women to lead spiritually and socially.

The study of Rasti Bibi's life also reveals broader insights into the role of women in South Asian Sufism. Despite the scarcity of primary sources and the historical focus on male saints, her contributions exemplify the transformational leadership and empowerment that women exercised in domestic and spiritual domains. Her life illustrates that the continuity of Sufi ethical, educational, and charitable traditions depended not only on male saints but also on women who guided, nurtured, and empowered successive generations.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed for scholars, practitioners, and institutions seeking to understand and promote the legacy of Rasti Bibi and similar female spiritual leaders

1. **Archival Research** Scholars should conduct detailed investigations into regional manuscripts, historical texts, and family records to uncover additional information about Rasti Bibi's life, teachings, and social contributions.
2. **Oral History Documentation** Given the reliance on oral traditions surrounding her shrine and community memory, systematic documentation of oral histories from local women and visitors will preserve and expand knowledge of her influence.
3. **Integration into Women's Studies and Sufi Scholarship** Her life should be incorporated into academic curricula, gender studies, and Sufi studies, highlighting her role in female empowerment, ethical leadership, and spiritual guidance.
4. **Comparative Studies** Comparative research with other South Asian and international women Sufis could provide a broader understanding of female spiritual leadership and its impact across cultures and time periods.
5. **Community and Spiritual Practice** Her model of integrating spiritual mindfulness into daily life and empowering women through teaching and guidance can inform contemporary programs in women's leadership, child upbringing, and community development.
6. **Promotion of Female Spiritual Sites** The recognition of her shrine as a female-centered space should be supported, ensuring that women continue to have access to sites of spiritual authority and guidance.

By implementing these recommendations, scholars and practitioners can ensure that Rasti Bibi's legacy is preserved, studied, and integrated into contemporary understandings of spirituality, social welfare, and women's empowerment.



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The Transformative Role of Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya in the Socio-Religious Development of Multan

Dr. Shahid Bahar Hashmi

Abstract

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya played a pivotal role in transforming Multan from a city marked by anarchy, lawlessness, and Hindu dominance into a center of Islamic civilization. Through hospices as nuclei of reform, they provided education, healthcare, vocational training, financial assistance, and spiritual guidance. They promoted equality, social justice, ethical leadership, and human rights while influencing kings, elites, and communities. Their strategies addressed socio-economic, religious, and ethical needs, ensuring sustainable human development, and remain highly relevant to contemporary challenges, resonating with the principles underpinning Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Introduction

The 12th and 13th centuries in Multan were marked by political instability, social unrest, and religious pluralism. Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani relocated to Multan during this period at the request of local authorities and led social, religious, and economic reforms that reshaped the city. Similarly, Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya reinforced these reforms through his leadership and teachings. Their work not only restored social order but also laid the foundation for a robust Islamic civilization in South Asia. By integrating education, agriculture, trade, healthcare, and ethical training with spiritual guidance, these saints created a model society where human dignity, social equity, and communal harmony were central.

Literature Review

Previous studies have highlighted the spiritual contributions of Sufi saints but often underemphasized their socio-economic impact. Scholarship shows Haqqani and Zakariya established hospices, educational institutions, and social welfare systems that addressed basic human needs while promoting Islamic ethical principles. The literature also reveals the transformative impact on Multan's social cohesion, interfaith relations, and civic responsibility. However, there is a gap in linking these historical contributions with modern frameworks of

human development, capacity enhancement, and global development goals.

Research Methodology

This research is exploratory and qualitative, utilizing historical-analytical methods to examine archival sources, biographies, and historical accounts. Data was analyzed to understand the socio-religious strategies of Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya and their impact on Multan's transformation. The research links historical evidence to theoretical frameworks and contemporary human development concepts.

Significance of the Study

This study demonstrates how religious leadership can intersect with socio-economic and ethical strategies to transform society. By analyzing the saints' work, modern policymakers and development practitioners can understand how historical models of governance, education, and social welfare can inform contemporary challenges such as inequality, poverty, and social cohesion.

Theoretical Framework

This research draws upon Basic Needs Theory and Critical Theory as its guiding frameworks. Basic Needs Theory emphasizes the fulfillment of fundamental human requirements such as food, shelter, education, and healthcare, which the saints institutionalized through langar, hospices, and welfare systems. Critical Theory critiques power imbalances, corruption, and structural inequalities; the saints' criticism of wealth accumulation, moral corruption, and unjust governance directly resonates with this framework. Through capacity enhancement, they equipped individuals and communities with skills, education, and resilience. Their contributions, though rooted in Islamic principles, align with the spirit of contemporary global development frameworks such as the Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals.

Research Hypothesis

The strategies employed by Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya—encompassing hospices, education, vocational training, financial assistance, social counseling, and ethical guidance—can provide models to address contemporary societal challenges, including inequality, poverty, intolerance, and illiteracy.

Research Questions

1. How did the socio-religious strategies of Haqqani and Zakariya transform Multan into a center of Islamic civilization?
2. What were the impacts of their educational, economic, and social interventions on the

lives of people?

3. How can their approaches inform contemporary development strategies aligned with human rights and ethical governance?

Research Limitations

Much of the evidence is historical and region-specific, which may limit generalizability. Primary sources are limited, requiring interpretation from secondary historical accounts. Cultural and religious context may affect the transferability of strategies to contemporary secular societies.

Spiritual Training of People to Inculcate

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya emphasized Remembrance (Zikr), Repentance (Toba), Gratitude (Shukar), piety, contentment, Divine Will (Raza-e-Ilahi), Reliance on God (Tawakul), Patience (Sabar), and Love of Prophet Muhammad (Ishq-e-Muhammad).

They trained communities to internalize ethical behavior, religious values, and social responsibility, promoting a culture of accountability to Allah, respect for human life, and moral governance. Their approach encouraged spiritual, emotional, and psychological development, enabling society to collectively pursue justice, equality, and human welfare.

Socioeconomic and Religious Strategic of Hazrat Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya Multani

Hospices as a Nucleus of Reforms

Established hospices that served as centers for education, health, vocational training, and spiritual guidance. Enabled social cohesion, intercultural dialogue, and ethical governance, facilitating peaceful communities.

1. Langar Distribution

The hospices of Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya provided free communal kitchens (Langar) offering food, clothing, shelter, and essential necessities to all people, irrespective of religion, caste, or social status.

Variety and Inclusivity

While rice, meat, and bread were served for the general public, dals and vegetables were specifically provided for Hindus, Jains, and other vegetarian communities, showing respect for religious diversity. These hospices became spaces where people from different regions, races,

and creeds learned to work together, fostering social cohesion.

Examples

Haqqani distributed agricultural produce from his lands through the Langar, ensuring food security for destitute families.

Zakariya's hospice organized daily meals for travelers, pilgrims, and the poor, integrating hospitality with ethical and spiritual education.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Reduced hunger, malnutrition, and social inequities, creating a sense of community solidarity. Encouraged moral and ethical conduct, as sharing food and resources reinforced Islamic values of charity, compassion, and brotherhood. Contributed to the transformation of Multan into a center of Islamic civilization, where material support was intertwined with spiritual and ethical guidance.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Langar addressed immediate nutritional and survival needs, essential for human development.

Critical Theory Langar challenged social hierarchies and exclusion, enabling marginalized populations to access resources equitably.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance Supports zero hunger, social inclusion, and community resilience, while promoting sustainable human development.

2. Education and Vocational Training

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya emphasized education as a core component of social reform, establishing hospices as centers of learning.

Formal and Informal Education

They provided religious instruction in Islamic principles, ethics, and moral values, alongside practical skills and vocational training. Haqqani personally taught common people modern agricultural techniques, while Zakariya provided training in trade, commerce, and business communication.

Women and Children Education

Kamal BiBi and Rasheeda Bano educated women and children, teaching literacy, religious knowledge, and vocational skills such as weaving, embroidery, and domestic management. Moazam Khatoon supported women's learning and charitable distribution, enhancing access for marginalized women.

Impact on Skills and Capacities

People learned to work collaboratively, manage resources, and sustain livelihoods, reducing dependency and fostering economic empowerment. These educational efforts cultivated ethical, skilled, and responsible citizens, capable of contributing to society and Islamic civilization.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Empowered individuals with knowledge, vocational skills, and ethical grounding, enhancing social mobility and economic self-reliance. Strengthened community cohesion, reducing social disorder and promoting ethical conduct in public and private life. Facilitated the transformation of Multan into a center of Islamic civilization, where education and skill-building were combined with moral guidance.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Education fulfills cognitive and social development needs, essential for human growth.

Critical Theory Training and education challenged structural inequities, enabling marginalized groups to access knowledge and participate in society.

Capacity Enhancement Education enhanced skills, productivity, and decision-making, building resilient and capable communities.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Supports quality education, gender equality in learning, and lifelong skills development, contributing to inclusive human development and sustainable societies.

3. Agricultural Development

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani played a pioneering role in transforming agriculture in Multan, addressing both economic and social needs of the population.

Land Reforms and Irrigation

Haqqani purchased thousands of acres of forested land on the eastern side of Multan, which was previously a shelter for robbers and marked by lawlessness. He cut down forests, removed robber hideouts, and converted the land into productive agricultural fields, transforming it into a grain and food hub. Dug canals from the River Ravi to irrigate the lands, ensuring sustainable farming.

Distribution and Capacity Building

Agricultural land was distributed among common people and destitutes, enabling them to cultivate independently. Haqqani personally trained farmers in modern agricultural techniques, introducing crop rotation, irrigation management, and innovative farming practices. His court wife from the Khichi family supervised farms in Shah Sadar Pur and Dunyapur, ensuring efficient management.

Women's Role in Agriculture

His second wife (from the Maral family) and Moazam Khatoon supported women's engagement in agriculture, teaching them skills and distributing assets for productive use.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Ensured food security, reduced poverty, and stabilized local economies, fostering social and economic resilience. Empowered common people to become productive contributors, reinforcing ethical values of work, responsibility, and self-reliance. Contributed to the Islamic civilization ethos, where land and resources were used to serve community welfare rather than individual greed. Transformed Multan from a city marked by disorder and heretical influence into a thriving center of Islamic civilization, aligning livelihoods with ethical and religious principles.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Ensured food, economic security, and livelihood opportunities for the population.

Critical Theory Addressed structural inequalities by redistributing land and resources to the poor.

Capacity Enhancement Farmers gained skills, knowledge, and confidence to sustain themselves and contribute to society.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Directly supports poverty alleviation, food security, sustainable livelihoods, and equitable resource distribution. Strengthens community resilience, economic inclusion, and ethical stewardship of resources, contributing to broader human development goals.

5. Counselling

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya provided counselling as a critical service to individuals and communities, addressing personal, social, and spiritual challenges.

Individual Guidance

Counselling included advice on moral dilemmas, ethical behavior, and religious obligations, helping people make decisions aligned with Islamic principles. Haqqani guided former prisoners and those under social threat to repent and embrace ethical living, restoring their dignity and community trust.

Economic and Social Counselling

Both saints advised farmers, traders, and artisans on productive management of resources, sustainable economic practices, and trade ethics. Zakariya's counselling included business strategies and communication techniques, which were later institutionalized in business studies.

Psychosocial Support

Counselling addressed stress, fear, and social anxiety, particularly during times of political instability, natural disasters, or displacement. Encouraged patience, contentment, and trust in divine guidance, strengthening resilience and psychological well-being.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Restored trust, social cohesion, and moral conduct, enabling communities to live harmoniously. Empowered individuals to take responsibility for their actions, reducing lawlessness and social disorder. Integrated spiritual, moral, and practical guidance, contributing to Multan's transformation into a center of ethical Islamic civilization.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Counselling addressed psychological, emotional, and spiritual needs, complementing material support.

Critical Theory Guidance challenged social and personal disempowerment, encouraging equitable participation in society.

Capacity Enhancement Strengthened decision-making, ethical reasoning, and social skills, fostering responsible citizenship.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Supports well-being, mental health, ethical citizenship, and resilience, essential for inclusive human development and sustainable communities. Counselling reinforced values of justice, equality, and social responsibility, enhancing civic and spiritual life.

6. Disaster Relief and Rehabilitation

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya were actively

involved in providing relief during natural and man-made disasters, ensuring the survival and rehabilitation of affected communities.

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani

Dug canals from the River Ravi to prevent flood damage and ensure irrigation, protecting agricultural lands and livelihoods. Distributed grains from his agricultural lands during times of famine and drought, ensuring food security for entire villages. Assisted in rehabilitation twice, providing land, training, and resources to rebuild livelihoods for displaced or impoverished families.

Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya

Provided food, money, and shelter during floods, droughts, and periods of conflict. During the 1247 Mongol attack on Multan, he paid one lakh dinars from his personal wealth to protect the city's inhabitants, ensuring survival and social stability.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Saved lives, property, and livelihoods, reducing vulnerability and fostering trust in ethical leadership. Strengthened social cohesion, as people from diverse backgrounds received equitable assistance during crises. Reinforced Islamic principles of charity, compassion, and communal responsibility, transforming Multan into a resilient center of Islamic civilization.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Relief addressed immediate survival needs, ensuring access to food, water, and shelter.

Critical Theory Redistribution of resources challenged inequalities and neglect by local authorities, empowering marginalized communities.

Capacity Enhancement Rehabilitation initiatives enabled communities to regain skills, rebuild infrastructure, and restore livelihoods, fostering resilience and autonomy.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Supports poverty alleviation, food security, disaster resilience, and social inclusion. Demonstrates the integration of ethical leadership, humanitarian action, and community development, ensuring long-term societal stability.

7. Women Empowerment and Gender Equality

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya actively promoted women's education, economic participation, and social empowerment in a period where gender roles were heavily restricted.

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani's Wives

Kamal BiBi (sister of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya) taught women and children in skills such as literacy, religious knowledge, and practical vocational training. Second wife from the Maral family, though childless, was highly educated and distributed all her assets to poor women, demonstrating empowerment through economic generosity.

Moazam Khatoon, daughter of Nasir u din Mahmoud, distributed her marriage gifts to destitutes, while also supporting education and charitable activities.

Fourth wife from Khichi Nawab family established a women's madrasa in Shah Sadar Pur and regularly engaged in charity, ensuring women's access to education and spiritual guidance.

Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya's Wife and Daughter In Law

Rasheeda Bano, younger sister of Haqqani, was a learned lady who educated women and children in literacy, religious knowledge, and charity practices. Rasti Bibi, daughter-in-law of Zakariya, was a renowned Sufi lady who promoted spiritual and moral education among women. Hazrat Sultan Ayoub Qattal, Haqqani's grandson, married a Chinese Muslim lady, promoting cross-cultural integration and female participation in social and religious affairs.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Enabled women to gain literacy, vocational skills, and moral guidance, fostering independence and social participation. Reduced gender inequalities, integrating women into social, economic, and spiritual life. Promoted ethical leadership among women, enhancing family and community well-being. Contributed to transforming Multan into a center of Islamic civilization, where women were active participants in education, charity, and spiritual development.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Education and empowerment addressed intellectual, economic, and social needs of women, critical for human development.

Critical Theory Challenged patriarchal norms and social exclusion, giving women access to education, property, and leadership roles.

Capacity Enhancement Women acquired skills, knowledge, and confidence to actively contribute to society and family welfare.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Supports gender equality, quality education, and women's empowerment, essential for inclusive and sustainable development. Ensures that women's voices, skills, and capacities enhance broader societal well-being and the ethical transformation of civilization.

8. Business Education

Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya emphasized business education as a tool for social uplift and ethical economic practices. His hospices were centers where trade, commerce, and financial literacy were taught alongside spiritual and moral principles.

Skills and Techniques

He trained individuals in accounting, trade ethics, market management, and communication techniques, ensuring that merchants and entrepreneurs conducted business with honesty and efficiency. Zakariya introduced modern business communication methods, which emphasized negotiation, documentation, and ethical trade conduct. These techniques are studied in universities today as part of business education curricula.

Integration with Vocational Training

Business education was combined with vocational skills and agricultural training, enabling people to manage resources efficiently and expand their economic activities. Women and youth were included in these programs, enhancing economic participation across genders and age groups.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Promoted honest trade, financial responsibility, and entrepreneurial skills, reducing economic exploitation and corruption. Enabled individuals to achieve financial independence, contribute to community welfare, and uphold ethical standards in commerce. Reinforced Islamic civilization principles, where wealth generation was tied to ethics, social responsibility, and communal prosperity. Contributed to the stability and growth of Multan's economy, transforming it into a vibrant hub of commerce integrated with moral guidance.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Provided economic empowerment, allowing communities to meet essential needs and achieve social stability.

Critical Theory Challenged economic inequalities by equipping marginalized groups with knowledge and skills to participate fairly in commerce.

Capacity Enhancement Enhanced entrepreneurial, managerial, and financial skills, fostering sustainable economic development.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Supports inclusive economic growth, employment, and skill development, while reinforcing ethical practices and financial literacy for sustainable human development. Strengthens community resilience by ensuring economic activities align with moral and spiritual principles.

9. Business Caravans as Preachers of Islam

Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya used trade caravans not only for economic activity but also as instruments of religious and social outreach.

Integration of Commerce and Preaching

Merchants trained under Zakariya led caravans to different regions for trade, carrying goods as well as Islamic teachings. Zakariya ensured that these caravans upheld ethical conduct, honesty, and fairness, demonstrating Islamic principles in practical life. Business caravans became platforms for cultural exchange, dialogue, and dissemination of Islamic civilization values.

Practical Examples

Caravans facilitated contacts between Multan and other regions, promoting trade networks while spreading literacy, language, and ethical practices. Merchants often acted as teachers, mediators, and spiritual guides, integrating commerce with social and religious education.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Promoted ethical trade and economic growth, fostering trust among merchants and consumers. Caravans acted as mobile educational hubs, teaching communities about Islamic ethics, honesty, and social responsibility. Strengthened Islamic civilization across regions, combining commerce with moral, spiritual, and cultural influence. Contributed to community cohesion and interregional harmony, linking economic development with religious guidance.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Caravans ensured economic stability and access to goods, meeting essential community needs.

Critical Theory Empowered marginalized traders and regions, reducing structural economic inequalities.

Capacity Enhancement Enabled entrepreneurs and merchants to gain business skills, ethical awareness, and leadership capabilities.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Supports inclusive economic growth, ethical entrepreneurship, cross-cultural education, and regional cooperation. Demonstrates the integration of economic activity with social, moral, and spiritual development, fostering resilient and cohesive communities.

2. Education and Vocational Training

Taught reading, writing, arithmetic, Islamic sciences, and practical skills. Empowered

youth and women, increasing literacy and employability.

Example Haqqani's wife Kamal BiBi taught women and children, equipping them with skills.

Theoretical link Capacity enhancement and basic needs theory.

10.Travel Lodges

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya established travel lodges (sarais and khanqahs) as safe shelters for travelers, traders, and pilgrims.

Purpose and Functionality

Lodges provided food, shelter, and rest for travelers, ensuring safe passage across trade and pilgrimage routes. They served as centers for networking, learning, and exchange of ideas, allowing people from diverse regions to interact, share knowledge, and collaborate. Women and men accompanying travelers were also offered security and moral guidance, reinforcing ethical travel practices.

Practical Examples

Merchants traveling from Multan to Delhi or Central Asia relied on these lodges for rest and commercial negotiations, improving trade efficiency. Pilgrims received spiritual counseling, guidance, and logistical support, strengthening religious cohesion.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Facilitated safe and efficient trade, strengthening the regional economy and promoting prosperity. Enhanced cultural, educational, and religious exchange, fostering tolerance and cooperation among diverse communities. Encouraged ethical conduct in travel, trade, and interpersonal interactions, embedding Islamic moral values in practical life. Contributed to Multan's role as a hub of Islamic civilization, linking economic, social, and spiritual development.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Lodges addressed shelter, food, and security, basic requirements for travelers and merchants.

Critical Theory Reduced vulnerability and inequities among traveling merchants and pilgrims, promoting fair access to safety and resources.

Capacity Enhancement Strengthened trading skills, intercultural communication, and ethical conduct, fostering human development and resilience.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Supports sustainable economic development, cultural exchange, human safety, and equitable access to resources. Ensures that commerce, travel, and religious practice align with

ethical and spiritual principles, reinforcing social cohesion and community growth.

11. Influence on Kings and Elites

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya actively advised and influenced rulers and elites, guiding them to govern ethically and support societal welfare.

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani

Influenced Shahabuddin Ghauri to allow relocation of Multan under his guidance, ensuring the protection of citizens and preservation of Islamic principles. Through marriage alliances, including his wife Moazam Khatoon, daughter of Nasir u din Mahmud, Haqqani strengthened ties with the ruling elite while promoting social and charitable programs.

Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya

Advised rulers on good governance, ethical administration, and public welfare. Critiqued rulers on mismanagement and corruption, encouraging investment in education, healthcare, and poverty alleviation.

Practical Examples

Their counsel ensured that elites contributed financially and morally to social welfare projects, including hospices, agricultural development, and disaster relief. Their influence embedded Islamic ethical values into governance, promoting justice, equity, and social responsibility.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Encouraged responsible leadership and ethical governance, reducing oppression and social exploitation. Mobilized resources for public welfare, enabling community development, disaster relief, and education. Strengthened Islamic civilization by integrating moral guidance with political and economic decision-making. Contributed to social stability, civic responsibility, and ethical leadership, laying the foundation for sustainable societal development.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Guided elites to invest in basic infrastructure, education, and healthcare, addressing fundamental societal needs.

Critical Theory Challenged power imbalances and corruption, promoting equitable governance and resource distribution.

Capacity Enhancement Enhanced the ability of rulers and elites to make ethical and socially responsible decisions, benefiting communities and human development.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Supports sustainable governance, social equity, and human development, ensuring that leadership prioritizes the well-being of citizens. Demonstrates how spiritual and ethical guidance integrated with political influence strengthens social cohesion, justice, and civilization-building.

12. Diversity

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya promoted diversity, inclusivity, and equality in their social, religious, and economic initiatives.

Hospitality and Social Integration

Their hospices welcomed people of different regions, races, colors, religions, and creeds, offering food, shelter, and essential services without discrimination. Langars (community meals) provided variety in food, serving dals and vegetables for Hindus, Jains, and vegetarians, demonstrating respect for cultural and religious practices.

Marriage Alliances and Cultural Integration

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani's grandson, Hazrat Sultan Ayoub Qattal, married a Chinese Muslim lady, reinforcing cross-cultural connections and promoting inclusive social networks. Rasti Bibi, daughter-in-law of Zakariya, hailed from Central Asia, showing the blending of diverse cultural and spiritual lineages.

Education and Skill Development

People from various backgrounds learned to work together, share knowledge, and collaborate, enhancing social cohesion and collective capacity.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Strengthened social harmony, tolerance, and mutual respect, reducing communal conflicts and promoting ethical coexistence. Fostered inclusive participation in economic, educational, and spiritual programs, empowering marginalized groups. Contributed to Islamic civilization by embedding values of equality, justice, and intercultural understanding, making Multan a hub of spiritual, social, and economic integration.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Ensured access to food, education, and shelter for all groups, reducing inequality.

Critical Theory Challenged social hierarchies and discrimination, promoting equitable treatment.

Capacity Enhancement Encouraged collaboration, intercultural skills, and social competence,

empowering communities to participate in collective growth.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Supports social inclusion, equality, and capacity-building, enhancing human development and communal resilience. Demonstrates how respect for diversity strengthens social cohesion, ethical values, and sustainable community development.

13. Mediator in Religious and Communal Affairs

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya acted as mediators to resolve religious, social, and communal conflicts, ensuring harmony and justice in Multan and surrounding regions.

Conflict Resolution

They intervened during local disputes between different religious and ethnic communities, using spiritual authority, negotiation, and ethical reasoning to restore peace. Zakariya's and Haqqani's hospices served as neutral grounds where disputing parties could engage in dialogue, fostering understanding and mutual respect.

Practical Examples

During periods of social unrest and lawlessness in Multan, Haqqani guided communities to repent, adopt ethical practices, and embrace Islamic principles, turning former areas of anarchy into centers of order. They encouraged interfaith dialogue, ensuring that Hindus, Muslims, Jains, and other communities coexisted peacefully.

Spiritual Mediation

They emphasized moral persuasion, spiritual reflection, and ethical conduct to address conflicts rather than coercion.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Reduced communal tensions, bloodshed, and lawlessness, fostering stability and security. Strengthened trust in ethical and spiritual leadership, enhancing social cohesion. Contributed to Multan's transformation into a center of Islamic civilization, where moral, social, and spiritual norms guided public life.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Mediation ensured communities had security, stability, and access to resources without disruption.

Critical Theory Challenged structural inequalities and social hierarchies that caused conflicts,

promoting equitable treatment and dialogue.

Capacity Enhancement Built community negotiation, conflict resolution, and collaborative decision-making skills among diverse groups.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Supports peaceful, inclusive societies and strong institutions, promoting social justice and stability. Demonstrates how ethical leadership and mediation can sustainably reduce conflict and foster civic responsibility.

14. Ethical Leadership and Moral Training

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya emphasized cultivating ethical, moral, and spiritual values as the foundation for personal and societal development.

Spiritual and Moral Guidance

They instilled Remembrance (Zikr), Repentance (Toba), Gratitude (Shukar), piety, contentment, Raza-e-Illahi (divine acceptance), Reliance on God (Tawakul), Patience (Sabar), and ishaq-e-Muhammad (love for the Prophet PBUH) in their followers. Ethical instruction extended to merchants, rulers, and common citizens, emphasizing honesty, justice, and responsibility in daily life.

Practical Examples

Followers of Haqqani and Zakariya adopted ethical practices in trade, governance, and community life, reducing corruption and exploitation. Their teachings encouraged leaders to prioritize social welfare, equitable resource distribution, and moral responsibility, directly impacting governance and civic life.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Developed morally upright leaders and citizens, capable of sustaining social harmony and ethical governance. Reduced chaos, exploitation, and lawlessness, creating a stable environment for economic, educational, and spiritual growth. Contributed to transforming Multan into a model Islamic civilization, where moral and ethical values guided every sphere of life.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Ethical leadership promoted fair access to resources, justice, and societal security, meeting basic human needs.

Critical Theory Challenged unethical practices, corruption, and exploitation, empowering citizens to hold leaders accountable.

Capacity Enhancement Enhanced moral reasoning, ethical decision-making, and leadership

skills, enabling sustainable societal development.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Supports good governance, peace, justice, and strong institutions, ensuring ethical leadership for long-term human and community development. Integrates spiritual, moral, and ethical principles with practical governance, business, and social structures, creating resilient communities.

15. Critique of Moral and Financial Corruption and Bad Governance

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya actively critiqued moral decay, financial corruption, and mismanagement in both society and governance.

Public-Level Corruption

Corruption and unethical behavior in public decreased savings, discouraged investment, created unemployment, and intensified poverty and illiteracy. Haqqani's initiatives in agriculture, financial distribution, and vocational training countered the negative effects of public corruption, ensuring equitable access to resources.

Government-Level Mismanagement

Misgovernance led to low taxes, inadequate infrastructure, limited development, and scarcity of jobs, affecting societal well-being. Zakariya wrote letters to sultans and rulers, including Iltutmish, critiquing maladministration and advising reforms to ensure justice and welfare.

Practical Examples

Haqqani's digging of canals, land redistribution, and training programs provided structural solutions to economic inequities, bypassing corrupt intermediaries. Zakariya's influence prompted rulers and elites to allocate resources for public welfare, hospices, and educational institutions, addressing structural failures.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Mitigated the effects of corruption and misgovernance, ensuring equitable resource distribution and enhanced social welfare. Strengthened ethical norms in trade, governance, and daily life, fostering transparency and accountability. Contributed to Islamic civilization by integrating justice, morality, and economic fairness into societal structures.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Addressed the deprivation caused by corruption, ensuring people had access to food, shelter, education, and livelihood.

Critical Theory Challenged power imbalances and structural corruption, promoting accountability and equitable governance.

Capacity Enhancement Enabled citizens and rulers to adopt ethical practices, enhancing civic awareness and societal resilience.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Supports reducing inequalities, promoting ethical governance, ensuring social justice, and sustainable economic growth. Demonstrates how religious and moral guidance can influence governance, economic practices, and community development, ensuring long-term societal stability.

16. Emotional, Spiritual, and Psychological Support

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya provided comprehensive guidance to nurture the emotional, spiritual, and psychological well-being of individuals and communities.

Spiritual Counseling and Guidance

Offered personal counseling to individuals facing despair, conflict, or moral dilemmas, guiding them through the principles of faith, Patience (Sabar), contentment, and Reliance on God (Tawakul)). Taught Remembrance (Zikr), Repentance (Toba), and Gratitude (Shukar) to cultivate resilience, inner peace, and ethical awareness.

Psychological Support

Addressed frustration, anger, and social stress, particularly among communities recovering from anarchy, heretical influence, or conflict. Their teachings emphasized hope, moral responsibility, and spiritual coping mechanisms, reducing societal tension and individual distress.

Practical Examples

Local residents of Multan, threatened by lawlessness or suffering economic hardship, received guidance that restored dignity, emotional balance, and motivation to participate in community development. Counseled former prisoners and victims of conflicts, encouraging repentance, reconciliation, and constructive social engagement.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Reduced frustration, social tension, and intolerance, fostering communal harmony. Encouraged ethical and spiritual resilience, enabling communities to rebuild after disasters or conflict. Contributed to Islamic civilization by integrating emotional, spiritual, and ethical well-being into social structures, ensuring holistic human development.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Addressed psychological and emotional needs, essential for overall human welfare and functional communities. **Critical Theory** Challenged social oppression and alienation, empowering individuals to participate fully in society.

Capacity Enhancement Built emotional intelligence, moral reasoning, and spiritual resilience, strengthening community cohesion and leadership capacities.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Supports mental health, well-being, peaceful societies, and human development. Demonstrates how spiritual and emotional guidance integrated with ethical and social practices promotes sustainable societal progress.

17. Encourage Equality and Brotherhood

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya promoted social equality, mutual respect, and brotherhood as fundamental principles for a cohesive society.

Social Integration

Through their hospices, people of all castes, religions, and social statuses were treated with equal respect and provided equal access to food, shelter, education, and spiritual guidance. The hospices became spaces for intercultural and interfaith dialogue, where individuals from different communities learned to cooperate and respect diversity.

Practical Examples

Langars provided meals without discrimination, and educational programs were open to both men and women, rich and poor, locals and foreigners. Haqqani and Zakariya encouraged communities to participate in social welfare, ethical trade, and community projects, reinforcing the value of collective responsibility. Haqqani's grandson, Sultan Ayoub Qattal, married a Chinese Muslim lady, exemplifying cross-cultural alliances and brotherhood across regions.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Reduced social hierarchies and discrimination, creating an inclusive and cooperative

society. Strengthened social bonds, communal harmony, and collective ethical behavior, fostering trust and mutual respect. Contributed to Islamic civilization by embedding principles of equality, justice, and ethical interaction in social structures, creating a model for sustainable human development.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Ensured that everyone had access to essential services, addressing inequities and promoting well-being.

Critical Theory Challenged social inequalities and discriminatory practices, promoting justice and empowerment.

Capacity Enhancement Built collaborative skills, ethical reasoning, and intercultural competence, enabling communities to function cohesively and equitably.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Supports inclusive societies, social equity, and peace-building, contributing to sustainable human and community development. Demonstrates how spiritual and social strategies reinforce equality, reduce intolerance, and foster societal resilience.

18. Promotes Justice

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya actively promoted justice as a central principle of social and religious life.

Judicial and Social Guidance

Provided fair resolution of disputes, serving as arbiters in civil, familial, and commercial matters. Ensured equal treatment for all, regardless of wealth, status, or religion, reinforcing ethical norms and public trust.

Practical Examples

During anarchy and lawlessness in Multan, Haqqani's guidance restored order and security, protecting vulnerable populations. Zakariya advised rulers to rectify unjust policies, implement fair taxation, and prevent exploitation, influencing governance ethically. Their teachings encouraged individuals to follow ethical conduct, repay debts, and engage in honest trade, embedding justice in daily life.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Reduced exploitation, corruption, and social injustice, creating stability and trust within communities. Strengthened ethical governance, legal consciousness, and social accountability, enabling sustainable societal growth. Contributed to Islamic civilization by establishing justice as

a guiding principle for political, economic, and social systems.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Justice ensured fair access to resources, livelihoods, and social services, fulfilling fundamental human needs.

Critical Theory Addressed structural oppression and inequality, empowering individuals to seek redress and equity.

Capacity Enhancement Developed ethical judgment, civic awareness, and governance skills, enhancing community resilience.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Supports peaceful, just, and inclusive societies, reinforcing social cohesion, economic fairness, and human development. Demonstrates how spiritual and ethical leadership can institutionalize justice, shaping communities and civilizations sustainably.

19. Languages and Communication

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya emphasized language learning and effective communication as vital tools for social cohesion, trade, and the spread of Islamic teachings.

Education and Linguistic Skills

Taught Arabic, Persian, and local dialects in their hospices, enabling followers to read religious texts, communicate with scholars, and interact with diverse communities. Ensured that students and community members could negotiate trade, engage in diplomacy, and participate in civic affairs, increasing societal efficiency and cohesion.

Practical Examples

Merchants trained under Zakariya used Persian and Arabic for trade correspondence and cross-regional commerce, which became a model for Islamic business education. Students from different regions, races, and religions learned to collaborate and communicate effectively, strengthening community networks. The ability to speak multiple languages facilitated interfaith dialogue, legal negotiations, and administrative correspondence, enhancing social stability.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Strengthened cultural exchange, trade, and social integration, reducing misunderstandings and promoting collaboration. Empowered communities with knowledge and communication skills, enhancing economic opportunities and social mobility. Contributed to Islamic civilization by establishing multilingual education as a cornerstone for intellectual, social,

and economic growth.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Addressed educational and communication needs, enhancing literacy and human development.

Critical Theory Challenged knowledge inequalities, giving marginalized groups access to language skills and intercultural competence.

Capacity Enhancement Developed linguistic, cognitive, and social skills, enabling people to navigate complex social, economic, and political contexts.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Supports quality education, inclusive learning, and intercultural understanding, strengthening human and social development. Demonstrates how language and communication training can foster cooperation, reduce social tensions, and integrate diverse communities into cohesive Islamic civilization.

20.Civil Society Function

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya functioned as founders and facilitators of early forms of civil society, promoting civic responsibility, community engagement, and ethical governance.

Community Organization and Participation

Established hospices that served as community centers, where people could access education, vocational training, health services, and spiritual guidance. Encouraged public participation in social welfare, ethical trade, and dispute resolution, empowering communities to actively manage local affairs.

Practical Examples

Haqqani's hospices trained farmers, artisans, and traders in modern techniques and cooperative practices, strengthening economic networks. Zakariya's leadership encouraged local councils and community committees to oversee resources, education, and disaster relief.

Their initiatives fostered self-reliance and civic responsibility, functioning like today's NGOs and community organizations in providing social services.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Built a robust social fabric, reducing reliance on corrupt or ineffective governance and promoting accountability. Enabled community-driven development, ensuring equitable access to

education, healthcare, and economic resources. Contributed to Islamic civilization by integrating civic responsibility, ethical leadership, and community organization into societal structures.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Met social, educational, and economic needs by enabling communities to manage and distribute resources effectively.

Critical Theory Challenged social hierarchies and unaccountable governance, empowering citizens to participate actively in civic life.

Capacity Enhancement Developed leadership, organizational, and collaborative skills, strengthening the human and social capital of the region.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Supports inclusive governance, community development, social justice, and capacity building. Demonstrates how religious and moral leadership can facilitate civil society functions, fostering sustainable, resilient, and equitable communities.

21.Hospitals and Healthcare

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya established and supported hospices and healthcare facilities that served as early hospitals providing medical care, health education, and preventive services.

Healthcare Services

Provided medical treatment, nursing care, and essential medicines to all people, regardless of religion, caste, or social status. Incorporated mental and spiritual well-being alongside physical health, acknowledging the holistic needs of individuals.

Practical Examples

Haqqani's hospice in Multan became a center for healthcare, where local and traveling patients could receive treatment. Zakariya ensured funding, staffing, and organization of medical services, often personally overseeing support during epidemics or disasters. These facilities also trained apprentices in basic medical practices, creating a sustainable healthcare workforce.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Improved public health, reduced disease, and increased community resilience. Reinforced social equity by providing free healthcare, demonstrating the integration of compassion and governance. Contributed to Islamic civilization by embedding health and welfare into religious and social practices, modeling holistic human development.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Addressed critical health needs, ensuring survival, well-being, and societal productivity.

Critical Theory Challenged unequal access to healthcare, empowering marginalized populations to receive care.

Capacity Enhancement Built medical knowledge, caregiving skills, and institutional management, enhancing community health capacity.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Supports good health, well-being, and reduced inequalities, contributing to sustainable human development. Demonstrates how religious and moral leadership can institutionalize healthcare, linking ethical principles with practical welfare services for societal benefit.

22.Human Rights Defender

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya defended the rights of all individuals, especially the vulnerable, marginalized, and oppressed.

Protection of Lives and Livelihoods

When Shahabuddin Ghauri's army captured locals as prisoners, Haqqani intervened to safeguard their lives and livelihoods, allowing many to embrace Islam willingly and live in dignity. Zakariya intervened during the 1247 Mongol attack on Multan, paying substantial funds to prevent the massacre of civilians and protect the city.

Practical Examples

Advocated for fair treatment of laborers, farmers, women, and minorities, ensuring that their rights to food, work, and security were respected. Established mechanisms in hospices for dispute resolution and protection of property, reducing exploitation.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Strengthened human rights awareness, establishing principles of justice, compassion, and social responsibility. Ensured inclusive societal participation, reducing oppression and inequality. Embedded Islamic ethical norms in governance and social structures, transforming Multan into a model Islamic civilization.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Ensured security, sustenance, and freedom from oppression, fulfilling fundamental human rights.

Critical Theory Challenged structural injustices and inequities, empowering communities to

claim their rights.

Capacity Enhancement Developed legal awareness, ethical reasoning, and advocacy skills in individuals and leaders.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Promoted justice, human dignity, equality, and protection of vulnerable populations, contributing to sustainable and peaceful communities.

23. Enhancement in Human Dignity and Quality of Life

The saints worked to uplift human dignity and improve living standards through education, health, vocational training, and ethical guidance.

Practical Examples

Haqqani's large-scale land redistribution and agricultural training provided livelihoods, economic stability, and food security for destitute families. Zakariya's hospices offered shelter, food, vocational skills, and counseling, enabling individuals to live with dignity and self-respect. Provision of financial assistance, charity, and skill development programs empowered women, children, and marginalized communities.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Transformed Multan's population from vulnerable and oppressed groups into empowered citizens, able to participate in economic, social, and spiritual life. Strengthened human development, reducing poverty, illiteracy, and inequality, while promoting ethical and socially responsible behavior. Contributed to Islamic civilization by embedding human dignity and welfare as central societal principles.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Fulfilled fundamental needs for food, education, healthcare, and security, enhancing life quality.

Critical Theory Countered social and economic marginalization, promoting empowerment and equality.

Capacity Enhancement Developed skills, knowledge, and moral capacities, enabling sustainable community development.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Supports poverty alleviation, quality of life, social inclusion, and equitable human development, ensuring long-term societal progress.

24. Global Influence

The teachings and initiatives of Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya influenced Islamic practices and social structures beyond Multan, reaching other regions and communities.

Practical Examples

Their scholars and disciples traveled to other regions, spreading Islamic teachings, vocational knowledge, and social reforms. Cross-cultural marriages, such as Haqqani's grandson Sultan Ayoub Qattal marrying a Chinese Muslim lady, strengthened ties and facilitated intercultural exchange. Their hospices became models for similar institutions in South Asia and Central Asia, promoting education, healthcare, and social welfare globally.

Impact on Society and Islamic Civilization

Helped propagate Islamic values of justice, ethics, and community welfare across regions. Strengthened cross-cultural cooperation, educational exchange, and humanitarian outreach, extending the reach of Multan's Islamic civilization. Contributed to the global recognition of Multan as a center of Islamic civilization, influencing socio-religious practices in wider Islamic society.

Theoretical Linkages

Basic Needs Theory Global influence ensured access to education, health, and welfare practices for wider communities.

Critical Theory Disseminated social justice principles and ethical governance practices, empowering distant communities.

Capacity Enhancement Expanded skills, knowledge, and ethical leadership beyond local boundaries.

MDGs/SDGs Resonance

Supports global human development, intercultural understanding, and peace-building, demonstrating how faith-driven social strategies can influence societies worldwide.

Conclusion

Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani and Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya's socio-religious strategies transformed Multan into a center of Islamic civilization. Through hospices, education, agriculture, financial aid, counseling, disaster relief, and ethical guidance, they addressed social inequities, promoted human dignity, and fostered communal harmony. Their strategies resonate with modern human development concepts, including capacity enhancement, social equity, and sustainable community building. These historical models

remain profoundly relevant to contemporary challenges, aligning with the principles underpinning MDGs and SDGs.

Recommendations

1. Develop community centers modeled after hospices to integrate education, healthcare, and ethical guidance.
2. Promote vocational training and business education to enhance economic self-reliance and social mobility.
3. Implement inclusive social programs ensuring gender equality, minority inclusion, and intercultural dialogue.
4. Incorporate ethical, spiritual, and psychological guidance into public policy and educational curricula.
5. Foster disaster preparedness and financial support mechanisms to protect vulnerable populations during crises.

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Spiritual, Ethical, and Socio-Cultural Leadership of Hazrat Sultan Ayoub Qatal

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Abstract

This study delves into the extraordinary legacy of Hazrat Sultan Ayoub Qatal, a Sufi luminary whose spiritual, ethical, and socio-cultural leadership reshaped the moral and communal landscape of South Asia. Rooted in the Qadiriyyah mystical lineage, his teachings exemplify an intricate synthesis of divine illumination, moral rigor, and intercultural engagement. This research investigates how his life manifested profound proximity to God, unwavering devotion to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his grandsons, Imam Hassan and Imam Hussain, and the lived realization of Divine Light (*Al-Noor*), transmitted across generations of disciples.

Drawing upon textual, oral, and archival sources, the study examines the interplay between his ascetic discipline, ethical governance, and spiritual pedagogy in fostering communal transformation. Contemporary theories of leadership and ethics are employed to frame his spiritual praxis as a model for modern moral guidance, social justice, and intercultural harmony.

Research Questions

1. How did Hazrat Sultan Ayoub Qatal integrate spiritual realization (*Al-Noor*) with ethical and socio-cultural transformation within his community?
2. What leadership and moral principles underpin his teachings, and how do they correspond with contemporary theories of ethical and transformational leadership?
3. How can his model of spiritual service, ascetic simplicity, and intercultural engagement inform present-day discourses on moral governance, social justice, and gender inclusion?

Introduction

Hazrat Sultan Ayoub Qatal emerges as a luminous figure in South Asia's spiritual and intellectual heritage, embodying a harmonious synthesis of inner purification and social responsibility. His life unfolded amidst societal turbulence and moral fragmentation, yet his response was not withdrawal but compassionate engagement, ethical steadfastness, and unwavering devotion to the Divine. Through his spiritual praxis, he cultivated a legacy that bridges mysticism and morality—illuminating pathways of justice, inclusivity, and communal harmony across generations.

The epithet “Qatal”, meaning “*the one who has slain the self*,” encapsulates his inner jihad — the conquest over ego, greed, and pride. His journey toward Divine proximity symbolizes the complete annihilation of selfhood (*fana` fi Allah*) and realization of truth (*haqiqat*). In his life, the Qur’anic paradigm of illumination found vivid expression

﴿اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ﴾

“Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth.” (النور 35/24)

His teachings thus present a holistic spiritual vision — one that unites transcendence with transformation, the light of faith (*nūr al-īmān*) with the ethics of social reform (*akhlaq al-‘amal*).

For Sultan Ayoub, Al-Noor—Divine Light—was a living reality. It illuminated his perception, guided his actions, and radiated outward through teaching, ethical example, and compassionate engagement. His asceticism, grounded in simplicity and detachment from material wealth, testified to the primacy of Divine Pleasure (*Raza-e-Ilahi*) over worldly honor. True success, he demonstrated, emerges only through service to humanity in the spirit of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). As Wasif Ali Wasif aptly observed, “The height of one’s closeness to God is proportionate to one’s service to His creation.” Sultan Ayoub’s life epitomized this principle self-denial, advocacy for the oppressed, and insistence on wealth redistribution were acts of divine service and ethical pedagogy.

Literature Review

Scholarship on South Asian Sufism has largely concentrated on canonical figures such as Bahauddin Zakariya, Fariduddin Ganjshakar, and Shah Rukn-e-Alam. Foundational works like *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Schimmel, 2011) and *Sufism An Introduction to the Mystical Tradition of Islam* (Ernst, 2016) elucidate the metaphysical and ethical contours of Sufi practice. Yet, Hazrat Sultan Ayoub Qatal’s multifaceted legacy remains largely unexamined in systematic scholarship.

Local manuscripts—including *Tazkirat al-Awliya Multan* and *Munba UI Barakat*—document his spiritual lineage and miraculous interventions but seldom analyze his ethical and socio-political influence. Regional ethnographies (Hashmi, 1998; Sarwar, 1993) recognize his role in moral instruction, Islamization, and intercultural integration, particularly in Dunyapur, but do not situate his contributions within contemporary theoretical frameworks.

Emerging research in ethical leadership and moral psychology—encompassing transformational leadership (Burns, 1978), servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977), and feminist ethical theory—offers an analytical lens through which to reinterpret his teachings. By bridging classical Sufi hagiography with modern ethical paradigms, this study provides a nuanced understanding of Sultan Ayoub Qatal as both a spiritual exemplar and a model of moral leadership.

Gaps in Literature

Despite scattered references, no comprehensive study synthesizes Sultan Ayoub Qatal's spiritual epistemology, ethical governance, and intercultural engagement. Analytical frameworks linking his Sufi philosophy with contemporary leadership theory and ethical humanism are absent, limiting the recognition of his relevance in modern discourse. Moreover, his contributions to regions such as Sinkiang and the pivotal ethical and educational role of his wife remain largely undocumented in academic literature.

Significance of the Study

This research integrates historical, theological, and sociological perspectives to illustrate how spiritual realization can serve as a model for ethical governance and social development. By situating Sultan Ayoub Qatal's life within global conversations on moral leadership, gender equity, and intercultural harmony, the study extends the discourse on South Asian Sufism beyond hagiographic narrative.

His unwavering devotion to God, the Prophet, and Ahl al-Bayt, coupled with ethical simplicity and compassionate action, underscores the enduring relevance of classical Sufi ethics in addressing contemporary crises of moral decay, social inequality, and spiritual alienation.

Research Methodology

A qualitative interpretive framework underpins this study, employing historical, textual, and theoretical methods

1. **Historical-Hermeneutic Analysis** Examination of manuscripts, oral traditions, and Auqaf archives to reconstruct Sultan Ayoub Qatal's life and teachings.
2. **Grounded Theory** Identification of recurring ethical motifs from oral narratives and shrine records.
3. **Transformational Leadership Theory** Analysis of his moral authority and community mobilization.
4. **Ethical Humanism and Feminist Ethics** Investigation of his advocacy for women, mentorship of Mai Manoori, and collaborative spiritual guidance with his wife.
5. **Phenomenological Interpretation** Exploration of mystical experiences (Al-Noor) and the symbolic significance of miraculous events, such as the Dunyapur land incident.

Data triangulation integrates oral traditions, archival sources, and theoretical frameworks to ensure balance between spiritual narrative and scholarly rigor.

Research Limitations

While extensive oral testimonies and local archives provide a rich foundation, certain limitations persist

Scarcity of written sources, due to the predominance of oral transmission. Regional bias, as most documentation originates from Southern Punjab and Sindh. Hagiographical embellishment, necessitating careful cross-verification. Linguistic constraints, with Persian and early Punjabi dialects limiting accessibility for comparative study.

Despite these challenges, the convergence of textual, oral, and theoretical evidence provides a robust platform for understanding Sultan Ayoub Qatal's life as a transformative model of spiritual and ethical leadership.

Early Life and Sacred Lineage

Hazrat Sultan Ayoub Qatal was born into a lineage distinguished by sanctity and erudition, a family whose moral and mystical influence left an enduring imprint upon the spiritual landscape of South Asia. He was the grandson of Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani, the eminent founder of the Qadiriyyah order in the subcontinent, whose guidance shaped Sultan Ayoub's early years with rigorous ethical discipline and profound spiritual insight.

His father, Hazrat Makhdum Abubakar Sultan, exemplified scholarly excellence and saintly grace, while his grandmother, Kamal Bibi, emanated a serene aura of piety, wisdom, and intuitive perception. As the sister of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya, the luminous spiritual beacon of Multan, she and her son offered wise counsel, familial support, and nurturing companionship during Sultan Ayoub's formative years in 1222 CE, ensuring that his upbringing unfolded within the highest traditions of virtue, learning, and devotion.

Orphaned at a tender age, Sultan Ayoub was carefully guided by his grandfather and uncle, Hazrat Makhdum Muhammad, within a household where ascetic discipline, contemplative devotion, and rigorous scholarship constituted the rhythm of daily life. Elder kinsmen, Hazrat Sadar-ud-Din Qatal and Makhdum Hassan Qatal, instilled in him humility, fortitude, and spiritual detachment. From his earliest consciousness, he absorbed the family's ethical axiom: genuine faith manifests most fully in the service of creation. Under his grandfather's tutelage, he memorized sacred texts, mastered Qur'anic exegesis, and immersed himself in contemplative practices, sowing the luminous seed of Al-Noor within his soul—a light destined to illuminate countless hearts.

The Profound Meaning of 'Qatal'

The epithet "Qatal" denotes a slayer—not of the body, but of the ego, the intricate labyrinth of illusions that blinds humankind to the Divine. Sultan Ayoub's triumph over the self was a profound inward conquest, a journey through the inner landscapes of desire, fear, and attachment. Through this victory, he attained union with the Ultimate Reality, reflecting the sublime Qur'anic truth

﴿اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ﴾

“Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth.” (Qur’an 24 35)

Al-Noor here represents both the path and the culmination—the illumination that enlightens not merely the intellect, but the conscience and the heart.

Spiritual Realization of Divine Light (Al-Noor)

Sultan Ayoub’s encounter with Al-Noor was not a mere mystical abstraction but a transformative moral awakening that resonated through the very essence of his being. Contemporaries attested to the serene aura emanating from him, a tranquil presence that soothed hearts and inspired conscience. He affirmed that divine illumination carries an inherent ethical mandate to shine in spirit is to be just, compassionate, and humble.

Through disciplined meditation, rigorous asceticism, and unceasing remembrance, he refined his soul into a vessel of mercy. Those drawn to his presence were guided toward moral clarity and spiritual rejuvenation, discovering that the Divine manifests most profoundly in hearts purified by sincerity, rather than through mere ritual observance. His illumination transcended time and space, touching seekers across age, geography, and circumstance.

Asceticism, Ethical Poverty, and Service to Humanity

Sultan Ayoub embraced a life of austere simplicity, retaining only what was necessary. Wealth was regarded as a test, not an achievement; his dwelling was modest, his sustenance plain, and his attire unadorned. Yet within this simplicity lay a spiritual grandeur that commanded reverence and inspired devotion.

He exhorted rulers, merchants, and scholars to direct their resources toward the welfare of the destitute, emphasizing that true success is measured not by accumulation, but by the pleasure of God earned through selfless service. In his vision, spiritual attainment and social responsibility were inseparable—each act of justice, every gesture of compassion, purified the soul while illuminating the world.

Marriage, Family, and the Harmonization of Cultures

His union with a Chinese Muslim woman exemplified a sublime convergence of spiritual companionship and cultural synthesis. She shared his vision of moral refinement, education, and charitable endeavor, nurturing families with wisdom and promoting the ethical and spiritual education of women.

Together, they extended the Qattal legacy beyond regional confines to Sinkiang (Xinjiang) and far beyond, integrating the mystical and ethical precepts of the Qadiriyyah order into the rich tapestry of Central Asian Sufi traditions. Their combined labors transformed frontier lands into

sanctuaries of learning, prayer, and moral guidance, demonstrating that the illumination of the soul transcends ethnicity, language, and geography.

This foundation of early spiritual formation prepared him to guide both hearts and societies, bridging the mystical and the worldly with unparalleled insight. His life would become a testament to the harmony of ethical rigor, spiritual realization, and cultural integration.

Defender of the Oppressed and Ethical Leadership

Hazrat Sultan Ayoub Qatal's life exemplifies a rare fusion of spiritual insight and moral action. His compassion for the oppressed, his unwavering courage in confronting injustice, and his ability to transform entire communities through ethical persuasion distinguished him as both saint and social reformer. His teachings emphasized that spiritual realization remains incomplete without service to humanity, and that true leadership is measured not by power or prestige but by the ability to uplift, guide, and inspire others.

Protection of the Marginalized The Case of Mai Manoori

One of the most luminous examples of his ethical engagement is the story of Mai Manoori, a woman of humble origin who suffered persistent persecution at the hands of local elites. Under Sultan Ayoub Qatal's spiritual mentorship, she embraced faith, discovered inner resilience, and rose from humiliation to radiant spiritual insight.

Through his guidance, she came to perceive that divine truth transcends social rank, gender, and worldly distinctions, accessible to all through sincerity, patience, and steadfast devotion. Sultan Ayoub shielded her from cruelty, teaching that acts of injustice corrode the soul of the perpetrator before they harm the victim. Her ultimate enlightenment became a living testament to his inclusive vision of spirituality — one that fused ethical principle with mystical understanding.

The Dunyapur Land Incident A Lesson in Ethical Governance

Upon relocating to Dunyapur, Sultan Ayoub Qattal purchased a substantial tract of land, paying its full price. The former owners, driven by greed, falsely accused him of withholding payment. Rather than responding with hostility, he invited them to perform ablution and accompany him to the property, where they witnessed lions and serpents — symbolic manifestations of divine justice and the inner corruption of deceit.

Still dissatisfied, they accused him of sorcery. Sultan Ayoub then instructed them to look beneath his bed, where streams of gold, silver, and precious stones appeared — tangible signs of spiritual abundance and divine generosity. They took what they could carry, yet upon reaching home, all riches transformed into serpents.

This episode, remembered as the Dunyapur Land Incident, endures as a profound parable of ethical governance. It demonstrates that dishonesty turns blessings into burdens, and that greed consumes the heart far more insidiously than poverty ever could. Sultan Ayoub illustrated that mystical insight and moral justice must coexist — spirituality devoid of ethics is hollow, and governance without conscience becomes tyranny.

The Baghbhri Miracle and Mystical Pedagogy

In another remarkable episode, Sultan Ayoub revealed his mastery of miraculous pedagogy — imparting moral truths through symbolic acts. When villagers slaughtered a stolen animal, he miraculously retrieved it from their stomachs, revealing not merely divine power but the moral principle that one cannot partake in what is unjustly acquired.

Known as the Baghbhri Miracle, this event was not an ostentatious display of supernatural ability but a deliberate act of moral instruction. Through it, he conveyed that the unseen world mirrors human intentions — injustice breeds corruption, while purity of conduct generates harmony.

The Mosque of Mystical Students

Sultan Ayoub Qatal's spiritual influence extended even to beings beyond ordinary perception. His disciples included both visible and hidden seekers — some appearing in human or animal form. Under his guidance, these mystical students constructed a mosque, which endures today as a living testament to his spiritual authority.

This sacred structure symbolizes the universality of his message — truth transcends form, and spiritual enlightenment manifests wherever sincerity and devotion to the divine prevail. The mosque remains not merely a site of worship but as a perpetual testament to his transformative pedagogy — a synthesis of mystery and morality, devotion and social responsibility.

Encounters with the Invisible World

Accounts from disciples recount his encounters with Khidr (Alayhi Salam), the timeless guide of seekers. During a period of extreme thirst and deprivation in the desert, Sultan Ayoub received from Khidr divine insight into the moral and cosmic order. From that moment, his vision expanded beyond the temporal into the eternal; he became a bearer of the light of truth.

It was after this illumination that he received the title “Qatal” — signifying one who has slain the self and conquered worldly desires to reunite with the Divine Reality. The title captures the essence of his spiritual achievement — the death of ego and the rebirth of divine consciousness.

The mystic scholar Annemarie Schimmel interprets this state as the attainment of the Ultimate

Truth — a luminous reality of knowledge and wisdom, not merely intellectual comprehension.

Sultan Ayoub reached the Divine Light (Al-Noor) not as abstract knowledge but as lived truth. He embodied it through humility, moral purity, and total submission to God. Described by disciples as a “mirror of divine illumination,” he reflected that light to thousands who approached him in sincerity. Through his guidance, multitudes discovered inner peace, ethical clarity, and spiritual purpose — a living transmission of divine light into the world.

Moral Philosophy and Simplicity of Life

Sultan Ayoub Qattal rejected material comfort and worldly acclaim. He lived on minimal sustenance, wore coarse garments, and distributed whatever wealth came his way to the needy. He taught that the morality of words and deeds outweighs all worldly success, and that true achievement lies in attaining God’s pleasure.

He instructed his disciples “The wealth that feeds only the self turns to dust; the bread that nourishes the poor endures eternally.” He urged all, whether commoner or elite, to dedicate their resources to the needy, emphasizing that service to humanity is the pathway to divine satisfaction.

As noted by scholars of spirituality, “The height of nearness to God is measured by the depth of one’s service to His creation.” Sultan Ayoub’s life exemplified this principle he ascended spiritually by humbling himself in service. His poverty was not deprivation but conscious detachment — a moral protest against greed and vanity.

For him, true success was Divine Pleasure, attainable only by following the example of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) — the embodiment of humility, generosity, and mercy. Sultan Ayoub’s profound love for the Prophet and his grandsons, Imam Hasan and Imam Hussain, anchored his spiritual path. Their courage, patience, and devotion to truth inspired his mission to reform society through compassion, justice, and moral excellence.

Theological Meaning of “Qatal” and the Transmission of Divine Light

The title “Qatal” conferred upon Hazrat Sultan Ayoub transcends its literal sense of “slayer,” entering the rarefied domain of metaphysics where it signifies the annihilation of the self — the complete dissolution of ego, desire, and worldly attachment in pursuit of divine unity. To be “Qatal” is not to inflict harm, but to slay the illusions that veil the human soul, opening the path to the Eternal Reality.

The Path of Selflessness and Reunion with the Divine

In the mystical vision, the self is the barrier that separates humanity from God. To “kill”

the self is to master pride, greed, and ambition — the false centers of identity that obstruct divine intimacy. Hazrat Sultan Ayoub Qattal embodied this arduous journey to perfection. Through disciplined living, constant remembrance, and moral refinement, he surrendered his personal will entirely to the Divine, becoming a living testament to the supremacy of spiritual over temporal authority.

His selflessness was tangible, lived in the rhythm of daily life. He renounced comfort, status, and worldly acclaim, embracing simplicity so that others might flourish in dignity. In extinguishing the self, he did not perish; he was illuminated. The annihilation of ego became the vessel through which divine radiance flowed, a lamp reflecting eternal light in a transient world.

The Qur'an enshrines this transformation in luminous verse
 "Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth." (Qur'an 24 35)

This Verse of Light formed the foundation of Sultan Ayoub Qatal's philosophy. The purified soul, free from self-interest, becomes a mirror to divine illumination — reflecting truth, wisdom, and boundless compassion. Here, annihilation is revelation; extinction is the threshold of illumination; death of the self is the birth of eternal consciousness.

The Attainment of the Ultimate Truth (Divine Light)

The pinnacle of spiritual pursuit is the realization of the Ultimate Truth, a convergence of knowledge, wisdom, and light. Sultan Ayoub Qattal attained this truth not through debate or scholarship alone, but through direct experience — an intimate illumination of the heart harmonizing intellect, morality, and spirituality into a singular radiance.

In this state, he became the bearer of Divine Light, a radiance manifest in integrity, speech, and deeds. His light extended beyond his being, touching hearts across deserts, towns, and distant lands, from Multan and Duniyapur to Bahawalpur and even Sinkiang. Those who encountered him carried his luminous message home, transmitting humility, compassion, and remembrance of God through generations.

Proximity to the Divine and Love for the Prophet and His Family

Sultan Ayoub Qatal's closeness to God was inseparable from his reverence for the Prophet Muhammad. His life was a living reflection of prophetic virtues — simplicity, truth, mercy, and devotion to humanity. He taught that proximity to the Divine is attained by emulating the Prophet, whose life forms the bridge between creation and the Creator.

His veneration for the Prophet's grandsons, Imam Hasan and Imam Hussain, was profound. Their courage, sacrifice, and unwavering justice inspired him to confront oppression, console the afflicted, and endure hardship with serenity. He affirmed that true honor lies not in

status or wealth, but in service to creation for the sake of divine pleasure.

He instructed “The path to Divine Pleasure lies through service to His creation; to feed the hungry, shelter the helpless, guide the lost — therein lies closeness to the Beloved.”

Detachment, Moral Awareness, and Simplicity as Lived Ethics

Sultan Ayoub Qattal practiced detachment from worldly excess and cultivated constant moral awareness, not as withdrawal from life, but as active engagement with it. By restraining indulgence, he purified his intentions and deepened his compassion. His existence was marked by deliberate simplicity: modest meals, unadorned clothing, and a welcoming home for travelers and the poor.

He rejected luxury, even when offered by rulers and elites, encouraging them instead to use their wealth for the welfare of the needy. Charity, he insisted, was the true path to divine closeness. His life embodied the Qur’anic principle “And they give food in spite of love for it to the needy, the orphan, and the captive, saying, ‘We feed you only for the sake of Allah; we desire from you neither reward nor thanks.’” (Qur’an 76:8–9)

His satisfaction arose not from possessions but from giving. Humility defined his moral stance — a conscious rejection of vanity and an invitation to rediscover the spiritual dignity inherent in simplicity. Through this ethos, he demonstrated that ethical living is inseparable from compassion, service, and self-restraint.

The Transmission of Divine Light to Humanity

Sultan Ayoub Qatal’s journey did not culminate in personal enlightenment alone. Having attained the Ultimate Truth, he became a luminous center of divine light. Through prayer, guidance, and personal example, he transmitted this illumination, transforming fear into faith, ignorance into understanding, and despair into serenity.

Visitors bore witness to profound inner clarity, as if a lamp had been kindled within their souls. This transmission was not metaphorical; it was moral awakening, inspiring the abandonment of injustice, arrogance, and material obsession.

Through disciples, oral teachings, and the communities he nurtured, his light endures. Across South Asia and beyond, his spiritual radiance continues to shape hearts, elevate ethical imagination, and illuminate the path of seekers toward divine unity.

Spiritual Expansion and the Islamization of Frontier Regions

Following his spiritual realization and the consolidation of ethical influence in Multan and Dunyapur, Hazrat Sultan Ayoub Qatal’s mission transcended geographical and cultural boundaries. His work extended beyond the fertile plains of the subcontinent to the arid deserts

of Sindh and Baluchistan, the mountainous corridors of Central Asia, and even the distant territories of Sinkiang in China.

This expansion was not imperial in ambition but profoundly civilizational in orientation. It rested upon enlightenment rather than conquest, compassion rather than coercion. Sultan Ayoub Qattal understood faith not as inheritance but as awakening. His method of Islamization was therefore rooted in education, empathy, and ethical engagement.

Three principles underpinned his spiritual diplomacy

1. Education before devotion – enlightenment must precede ritual, for knowledge confers moral substance to faith.
2. Transformation through example – a teacher’s humility exerts deeper influence than command or decree.
3. Integration rather than erasure – he harmonized local traditions with universal moral values, fostering cultural continuity rather than rupture.

This model of peaceful moral propagation distinguished him as an architect of intercultural harmony. His teachings became bridges linking regions, languages, and civilizations under a shared pursuit of truth.

Intercultural Alliance and the Contribution of His Wife

A defining dimension of his mission was his marriage to a Chinese Muslim woman, the daughter of Hazrat Shah Macheen, a renowned spiritual scholar whose networks extended across East and Central Asia. Their union represented not only a personal bond but also a convergence of Persian, South Asian, and Chinese intellectual and ethical traditions.

Her contribution was far from symbolic. A woman of exceptional intellect and disciplined virtue, she established educational gatherings for women, emphasizing spiritual knowledge, literacy, and moral self-development. Through her efforts, countless women discovered pathways to dignity, self-respect, and inner autonomy. She cultivated in them a moral agency that transcended domestic confines and permeated communal life.

Together, they exemplified a model of spiritual partnership in which mutual respect and shared purpose replaced hierarchy. Through her father’s networks, Sultan Ayoub Qatal’s teachings reached new audiences in Sinkiang and beyond, marking one of the earliest documented cross-cultural exchanges of mystical and ethical thought between South Asia and China. Their partnership illustrated that the enduring strength of civilization resides not in territorial expansion but in the exchange of wisdom and virtue.

Ethical Leadership and the Empowerment of Women The Example of Mai Manoori

Among the lives transformed by Sultan Ayoub Qatal's compassion, the story of Mai Manoori stands as a parable of spiritual emancipation. Born into poverty and marginalization, she endured social subjugation until finding refuge in his spiritual court.

He perceived her not as a victim but as a vessel of divine potential. Under his guidance, she received education, moral training, and inner fortitude. She learned that self-worth derives not from social standing but from purity of intention and integrity of heart. Under his mentorship, Mai Manoori became a beacon of moral courage and spiritual awareness, eventually mentoring other women. Her transformation conveyed a broader social message—faith without justice is incomplete, and the empowerment of women is not a concession but a spiritual imperative. In elevating her, Sultan Ayoub Qatal redefined sainthood as the defense of dignity, particularly for those whom society neglects.

The Miracle of the Baghbhri Cow

The Baghbhri cow event holds a central place in oral traditions surrounding Sultan Ayoub Qatal. When villagers wrongfully slaughtered a stolen cow and denied culpability, he invoked divine justice through prayer. In full view of the community, the cow was restored to life, signifying that truth cannot be concealed from divine illumination.

For Sultan Ayoub Qatal, however, the miracle was not spectacle but pedagogy. Every miracle, he taught, should awaken conscience rather than curiosity. The restored cow symbolized the revival of honesty within a deceitful society. The villagers repented, reconciled, and reformed their communal ethics. This episode became a living parable, illustrating that divine illumination exposes truth and deceit alike, guiding communities toward repentance, justice, and moral harmony.

Teaching the Invisible Spiritual Beings

Equally remarkable are narratives describing Sultan Ayoub Qatal's instruction of unseen spiritual beings—entities formed from subtle energies yet bound by moral law. These beings gathered to learn self-discipline, humility, and the remembrance of the Creator.

In one account, after receiving his teaching, they built a mosque in his honor—a structure symbolizing universal learning and the unity of visible and invisible creation. Whether interpreted literally or metaphorically, the narrative conveys a profound truth—knowledge and divine remembrance transcend the human sphere, and moral responsibility extends across all levels of creation.

Moral Philosophy and the Ethic of Minimalism

In daily life, Sultan Ayoub Qattal embodied spiritual simplicity. He maintained minimal possessions, wore modest attire, and often forwent personal comforts. For him, worldly wealth and power were distractions from the higher pursuit of divine pleasure.

He encouraged the affluent to devote their resources to serving the poor, understanding charity as both generosity and purification. He cautioned that honor founded on material possession is illusory, and that true and enduring success is measured solely by the attainment of divine pleasure. His philosophy affirmed that spiritual ascent correlates with service to creation. He exemplified this through personal austerity and boundless compassion—feeding the hungry, freeing the indebted, and nurturing communal welfare.

Through the annihilation of the self, Sultan Ayoub Qattal attained the Light of Truth, illuminating hearts and guiding communities. His presence transformed moral consciousness, showing that knowledge without humility and faith without experience are incomplete.

Cultural Continuity

The luminous legacy of Hazrat Sultan Ayoub Qattal continues to suffuse the moral, spiritual, and socio-cultural fabric of South Asia, particularly within Dunyapur and the greater Multan–Bahawalpur region. Words once softly spoken in intimate circles of seekers have crystallized into enduring traditions that nurture ethical equilibrium, intercultural harmony, and spiritual profundity in everyday life. The light he ignited persists as a vibrant current in the collective consciousness of the region, seamlessly interweaving devotion with civic responsibility, and faith with the rhythms of culture.

Ritual and Pilgrimage

Each spring, the Urs of Sultan Ayoub Qattal transforms Dunyapur into a kaleidoscopic tableau of remembrance, hospitality, and spiritual reverence. The district's recognition of this festival as a public holiday is not mere civic formality but a profound acknowledgment of a saint whose moral vision united the people in justice, compassion, and fraternity. Pilgrims arrive from across the subcontinent, partaking in equestrian processions, devotional recitations, and poetic renditions that epitomize the harmonious coalescence of spirituality and culture. Beneath the pageantry, there lies a subtle pedagogy of equality and generosity, perpetuating the ethical values he embodied, and uniting people of every station in collective reverence.

Educational Continuity

Sultan Ayoub Qattal's vision of holistic education—synthesizing moral discipline, metaphysical insight, and social responsibility—remains alive through community learning circles, shrine schools, and oral instruction. His disciples insisted that knowledge devoid of ethics is barren; thus, literacy of letters was inseparably joined with literacy of the soul. Archival

manuscripts, preserved wazaif (spiritual exercises), and oral narratives continue to shape the ethical imagination of southern Punjab. His conception of education anticipates contemporary frameworks of moral development, framing knowledge as illumination rather than accumulation, as a beacon that enlightens the human spirit.

Gender and Social Empowerment

Women held a luminous and vital presence in his spiritual milieu. The wisdom and compassion of his wife, coupled with the example of Mai Manoori, set early precedents for female moral agency and leadership within religious life. Sultan Ayoub Qattal affirmed that virtue knows no gender, lineage, or privilege—its measure is the purity of intention. Through women’s active participation in charitable, educational, and devotional endeavors, he advanced an inclusive principle of faith, harmonizing spiritual equality with societal responsibility. His legacy continues to resonate in contemporary discourses on gender, ethics, and leadership.

Intercultural Engagement and Islamization in Chinese Regions

Through his union with a Chinese Muslim woman and his association with Hazrat Shah Macheen, Sultan Ayoub Qattal contributed profoundly to the moral and cultural dissemination of Islam into western Chinese regions, including Xinjiang (Sinkiang). This cross-cultural alliance fostered reciprocal appreciation for art, language, and philosophy between Central and South Asia. His unwavering emphasis on compassion, justice, and self-discipline erected a moral bridge between civilizations, presaging a universal ethic of coexistence and dialogue that modern scholars strive to cultivate.

Symbolic and Ethical Heritage

The legendary episodes of his life—the Dunyapur land justice, the miraculous cow Baghbhri, his guidance of invisible students, and the enigmatic encounter with the guide identified with Khidr—transcend miraculous narration; they are profound moral allegories. Each narrative transmutes divine wisdom into ethical praxis—defending the oppressed, honoring labor, and restoring justice. Through these stories, Sultan Ayoub Qattal taught that mystical insight must culminate in social virtue, and that every act of compassion reflects the luminous presence of the Divine.

Spiritual Illumination and Ethical Exemplar

The title “Qatal” evokes not the act of violence, but the sublime death of the self—the annihilation of pride, greed, and desire. It signifies one who has dissolved the lower ego, living solely in the Divine. Sultan Ayoub Qattal attained this exalted state, embodying complete self-effacement and serene surrender.

“Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The example of His light is like a niche within

which is a lamp..." (Qur'an 24 35)

Here, the Divine Light—Al-Noor—signifies the illumination of the soul. As Annemarie Schimmel eloquently notes, true knowledge is not mastery of intellect alone but the transformation of being into light. Sultan Ayoub Qattal radiated such light, guiding souls from darkness to clarity, exemplifying, "Allah guides to His Light whom He wills."

The spiritual core of his existence was his profound devotion to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his noble grandsons, Imam Hasan and Imam Husain. This love was ethical, manifesting in service, humility, and justice. He taught that the path to Divine pleasure lies in emulating the Prophetic example and serving humanity. Echoing the wisdom of later thinkers such as Wasif Ali, he affirmed that "the ascent to God begins with the service of His creatures." For him, worldly wealth and honor were ephemeral illusions; true prosperity was measured by contentment born of compassion.

His ascetic simplicity—owning little, eating modestly, and dressing plainly—contrasted with the profound moral authority he commanded among kings and scholars alike. Through this example, he critiqued materialism and taught that contentment is the wealth no thief can seize. He exhorted the privileged to convert their abundance into compassion, reminding all that wealth is a trust, not a triumph.

"The righteous will be in gardens and springs, receiving what their Lord has given them. Indeed, they were before that people of virtue." (Qur'an 51 15–16)

His disciplined life revealed that inner peace arises when desire yields to moral clarity and action harmonizes with divine purpose.

Conclusion

Hazrat Sultan Ayoub Qattal occupies a luminous position among the ethical architects of South Asian spirituality—a saint who reconciled contemplation with action, mysticism with reform, and faith with civic virtue. His journey, from early orphanhood to enlightened leadership, unfolded under the guidance of Hazrat Makhdum Abu Bakar Sultan, his grandmother Kamal Bibi (sister of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Zakariya), Makhdum Muhammad, and Hazrat Makhdum Abdul-Rashid Haqqani.

His reformist vision—defending the oppressed, elevating women, integrating intercultural communities, and cultivating environmental harmony—demonstrated that mystical consciousness, when fully realized, can transform society. Proximity to God, he exemplified, is inseparable from devoted service to creation. Through his disciples, descendants, and the thousands who gather annually at his shrine, his luminous guidance continues to animate hearts

and inspire moral renewal in an age of material excess.

Recommendations

1.Preservation of Heritage

Establish dedicated research and cultural centers to archive manuscripts, oral histories, and ethical teachings of Sultan Ayoub Qatal, preserving Urs records, intercultural exchanges, and accounts of miracles.

2.Integration into Education

Incorporate his ethical philosophy within academic and community curricula to promote civic virtue, moral literacy, and holistic human development.

3.Digital Archiving

Digitize manuscripts, Auqaf records, and oral narratives to make his intellectual legacy accessible to global scholars.

4.Gender-Inclusive Mentorship

Develop programs inspired by the women of his circle, nurturing ethical leadership and community empowerment.

5.Community-Based Cultural Initiatives

Encourage participatory cultural events during Urs celebrations to strengthen intercommunal respect and social harmony.

6.Cross-Cultural Ethical Forums

Create international symposia grounded in his intercultural vision, promoting peacebuilding, tolerance, and shared moral values across diverse traditions.



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