

TAJ MUHAMMAD TAJAL

THE MYSTICAL POET OF BRAHUI

Life and Achievements

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The Islamic world is rich in great religious personalities, mainly poets, who have spoken the mystic thoughts in artistic verses on in simple folk songs, and from the coast of the Atlantic up to the Indian Sub-continent these poets have made an important contribution to the development of the folk languages. The Turkish, the Persian, the Pashto and the Bengali and many other languages are indebted for their higher development to these, who untiringly preached and sung the secret of God's love to their country men, the devotion to the Almighty unspeakable wonderful Beloved. When we see the languages spoken in Pakistan like other mystical poets and saints in the region, Taj Muhammad Tajal, the eminent poet and philosopher of Balochistan, was one of the famous poets of his time. Among the classical poets of Brahui he is well-known for his mystical thought, and due to composing mystical thoughts in his Brahui verses he is also considered as the most popular and prominent Sufi poet of Brahui.

Before discussing his poetic characteristics and distinctions a brief life sketch is given here. Taj Muhammad Tajal was born in 1833 in a small village of Budha near Bhag district Kachhi (Balochistan). According to Muhammad Ibrahim known as Gella Faqir the grandson of Tajal in an interview recorded by this author in 1988, Tajal's father Faqir Muhammad Sadiq was also a Brahui poet and composed some mystical verses in Brahui but neither Gella Faqir recited any verses from his poetry nor did the author find any evidence of his Brahui poetry.

Tajal belonged to the Budduzai sect of Bangulzai the prominent Brahui tribe in Sarawan. Like other Brahui nomads this family also migrated to the plains of Kachhi in the

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winter and back to Mastung (Sarawan) in summer. Like other children Tajal also spent his childhood in the grazing of his flocks. Some time he helped his father in farming and other fieldworks. Taj Muhammad Tajal got his basic Islamic education from his native village Mosques in Kachhi and Mastung.

From early childhood he started composing poetry in Brahui but his poetry became mature after the age of forty when he returned home after long travels to attending the Shrines (*Ziarat*) of famous mystical poets and saints in different parts of India and Sindh.

The Kachhi plain where Tajal spent most of his life is a multilingual region where besides Brahui, Balochi, Sindhi and Siraiki are commonly spoken. Taj Muhammad Tajal has also composed poetry in six languages i.e. Brahui, Balochi, Sindhi, Siraiki, Urdu and Persian. He is known as one of the multilingual poet of Balochistan. He is a contemporary of the eminent Sindhi/Siraiki Sufi poet of Balochistan Syed Rakhel Shah of Kachhi Gandava.

Taj Muhammad Tajal expressed his thoughts and views through poetry. Besides Brahui and Balochi Tajal's many Sindhi *Kafis* are still popular among the people in the plains of Balochistan. The *Kafis*, *si harfies* and *dohhas* composed by Tajal are full of mystic thoughts and divine love. Being a real poet of Brahui, he portrayed the peaceful pastoral life and true culture of Balochistan in his poetry.

In his Brahui poetry Tajal has used a classical language, many Brahui words found in Tajal's poetry are no more used in modern Brahui literature. Many verses in his poetry illustrate that originally he has composed verses in Sarawani dialect but later on the *Faqirs* and followers have attempted to change the language. In his epic poems a lot of material on history, anthropology, culture, economic, social and tribal structure in Balochistan is available. A long epic poem comprising of about 300 verses in Balochi is also masterpiece in his epic poetry.

Taj Muhammad Tajal has composed many verses in Brahui and Sindhi in narration of eminent mystic poets and saints of this region i.e. *Shah Abdul Latif Bhatti*, *Lal Shahbaz Qalandar* and *Sachhal Sarmast of Sindh* *Baba Bhule Shah* and *Khawaja Ghulam Farid* of Punjab and *Jam Durak* of Balochistan. Taj Muhammad Tajal not only introduced the mystical thoughts in Brahui, but also introduced some Sindhi poetic forms, which are much popular among the people. These poems are known by heart to many people in various parts of Balochistan particularly in Sarawan and Kachhi areas. In addition to a *Sufi* poet Taj Muhammad Tajal is also known as an epic poet as well. In a long epic poem in Balochi he has narrated various battles between different tribes in Balochistan.

Tajal's works is divided into two sections. The first section contains poems of various occasions, battle stories and narration of nature's beauty. The second portion is about mystical thoughts like other mystical poets in the region. Tajal also came to discover that God

acts within us, though we find it difficult to locate anywhere. According to his sayings the conscience is the guardian of the every best within us. Tajal, like other poets of the region has also criticized the narrow minded religious scholars saying,.

Let *Mullahs* and *Qazis* to make complain.
They themselves are not clear like a prayer person.
They are good guessers and appraisers.
They will be ashamed before the God.

Taj Muhammad Tajal had two wives. His son namely Muhammad Sadiq died in prime youth and his daughter *Balka* was also a Brahui poet. And some poems in Tajal's collection are believed to be composed by *Balka*. In his last age when Tajal lost his vision, his second wife namely *Lalain* proved to be his best life partner. They both visited village to village and sang Tajal's poetry.

Though major portion of his poetry is in Brahui language, he also composed a considerable quantity of Sindhi, Siraiki and Balochi. Besides a good poet Tajal was a best singer and used to sing his own songs. He composed all tunes by himself for his poems. Most of the poetry of Tajal is a sacred trust to the people and it comprised the entire treasure of literary value. Like other mystical poets the Sindh, Tajal also composed poems in Sindhi and Siraiki on several folk stories of various literatures i.e. *Sassui-Punnun*, *Umer-Marui*, *Moomal-Rano*, *Heer-Ranjha*, *Sohni-Mahinwal* etc. All of these stories have a common theme "Love and its aftermath".

Tajal's poetry composing is purely classical. Tajal has used plain dialect of Brahui language in the Sarawani accent. But most of his *faqirs* and followers have tried to change the language of his verses into Kachhi dialect of Brahui, which they spoke. After thorough study of Tajal's Brahui poetry we can find that Tajal used not only Sindhi and Siraiki but also Arabic and Persian words in his Brahui poems.

The first time, Abdul Rehman Ghaor in the weekly *Tameer-e-Balochistan Mastung* discovered this eminent Brahui poet in the article on 21st May 1954. The Brahui poetry of Taj Muhammad Tajal has been collected and published in book form. The first complete book on Tajal was compiled by Dr. Abdul Rehman Brahui entitled "Taj Muhammad Tajal," and published by Institute of Folklore Islamabad in 1979. The second book about his Brahui poetry entitled "Kalam-e-Tajal" has been compiled by Dr. Abdul Razzak Sabir and published by Brahui Adabi Society Pakistan Quetta in 1988. The complete collection of his poetry "Kuliyat-e-Tajal" (Brahui, Balochi, Sindhi, Siraiki, Persian and Urdu) is under compilation by the author of this article.

The dates of his birth and death are somehow controversial. The date of his death was

previously guessed by this research in his book as 23rd November by the *faqirs* of Tajal. But according to a new research and writing on the date of his death on back page of a religious book by a village mullah, the poet laureate of Brahui Taj Muhammad Tajal passed away on 20th April, 1944. His shrine is in his own family graveyard in the village Wazir Khan near Bhag (District Kachhi). There are many classical singers and faqirs who had sung the songs of Tajal including Toray, Din Muhammad Talani, Chandi Faqir, Muhammad Ibrahim Ghella Faqir, Faqir Hazoor Bakhsh Bangulzai and many others.

Taj Muhammad Tajal in his time was considered not only a poet but he was also a famous saint. In Kachhi and Sarawan many stories about his nobleness were very common among the people. In short Taj Muhammad Tajal is a very prominent and well-known poet of Brahui.

Divine love

Every thing is permissible in divine love whether it is *bhang* or wine.
Though the divine love has nothing to do with the sin.
But those who are fools could call it badness.
In fact, divine love is belief and reward.

The love did not care about any one.
It is not familiar with *sunah* and *farz*.
God forgives every one.

It does not believe on sayings of *Mullahs* and *Qazis*.
Whether the divine love is like melodious song.
But the God and his prophet are kind to it.
It does not know about the praying and fasting.
It has already burnt bodies and emotionally.

Tajal is full of faults.
The God may bestow and forgive.
The spring and autumn are equal for him.
The *Mullah* and *qazis* are not meaningless to this process.

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