AN INTRODUCTION OF PASHTO MANUSCRIPTS IN THE STATE LIBRARY BERLIN, GERMANY

Muhammad Ali Dinakhel

Abstract

Manuscripts of Pashto classical literature are found in various libraries around the world. Many of these Pashto manuscripts have been recorded in published catalogues. The first complete catalogue of Pashto manuscripts was published by James Fuller Blumhardt and D.N. Mackenzie. Before this Blumhardt also included Pashto manuscripts along with other manuscripts published from London in 1905. There are a few rare and ancient manuscripts of Pashto in the State Library Berlin, Germany. These manuscripts have not been catalogued and properly introduced. This article attempts to introduce ten Pashto manuscripts housed at State Library Berlin Germany. Among them one manuscript Majma‘ ul-ash‘ār is new among the Pashtun researchers and literary circles.

Keywords: Pashto Manuscripts, Pashto in Germany, Khayr ul-Bayān, Makhzan ul-Islām, Majma‘ ul-ash‘ār, Afghanistan

Introduction

According to oral tradition and secondary sources, the history of Pashto literature is traced back to the first half of eighth century but the available authentic written sources belong to sixteenth century and onwards. Among the available sources the first complete book in Pashto literature is

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* Lecturer, Area Study Centre (Russia, China & Central Asia), University of Peshawar, Peshawar, Pakistan. Email: alicasc@uop.edu.pk
An Introduction of Pashto Manuscripts in the State Library Berlin, Germany

Khayr ul-bayān of Bāyazid Ansāri. There are only two manuscripts of this book. The oldest one is in State Library Berlin Germany. Including Khayr ul-Bayān, there are ten manuscripts of Pashto poetry and prose in State Library Berlin. These manuscripts cover the history of nearly four hundred years of Pashto literature (16th Century to 19th Century). Most of the Pashto manuscripts in different libraries and collections of the world have been recorded in published catalogues but the Pashto manuscripts in Berlin State Library have not been published in a catalogue yet. Among these ten manuscripts only one manuscript namely Tawārikh-i-Hāfiz Rahmat Khān accession number 214 is entered in a published catalogue of Persian manuscripts. That is why most of the Pashto researchers especially from Pakistan and Afghanistan do not know about these significant and rare ancient manuscripts.

Khayr ul-Bayān

It is the oldest manuscript amongst these ten manuscripts. This manuscript has been wandered in Europe among many people. In 1926 this manuscript was in the possession of George Morgenstierne. He has also published his notes with some extracts from the text of this manuscript. George Morgenstierne was given this manuscript by Sir E.D. Ross, Head of the School of Oriental and African Studies of London University, who had received it from a British military officer. After some time this copy has been returned to E.D. Ross again and thus the Berlin State Library acquired it from him for library. After this short appearance, once again it disappeared from the people and for the second time it was discovered by Mawlana Abdul Qādir in 1959. He got a microfilm of this manuscript and published it in 1967 with the commentaries of Hafiz Muhammad Abdul Quddus Qasmi and introduction by Mawlana Abdul Qādir. In 1353/1975 the facsimile of the manuscript was published in Kabul, Afghanistan. Mawlāna Abdul Qādir, in the edited and published version of Khair ul-bayān, writes that he had discovered this manuscript (Khayr ul-bayān) in the library of Tubengin University. Numerous other scholars have also written in their books, research thesis and articles that the oldest manuscript of Khair ul-bayān is in the library of Tubengin University Germany. It is very surprising that Mawlāna Abdul Qādir has neither written its accession

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1 Wilhelm Pertz, Verzeichniss der Persischen Handschriften der Koniglichen Bibliothek zu Berlin, (Berlin, A. Asher & Co. 1888), 459
2 Bāyazid Ansāri, Khair-ul-bayān (Ms. Or.fol.4093) in Berlin State Library.
3 Berlin Library sources show that it had acquired from E.D. Ross.
number nor he mentioned this manuscript as property of Berlin State Library only he has mentioned transfer of books and manuscripts from Berlin city. Before publishing my article in 2016 about manuscript of Khayr ul-bayān housed at Berlin Library, many people don’t know its location but they were of the opinion that it is located in Tubengin University. Bayazid Ansāri (1524/25-1572/73), the author of Khayr ul-bayān, is among the pioneers of Pashto literature who had his own school of thought and a number of followers who were prominent literary figures of their ages. He was the founder of Roshani Movement. The Berlin copy of Khayr ul-bayān is scribed on 20th Ramazān 1061 A.H. (6th September 1651).

**Makhzan ul-Islām**

It was written by Akhund Darweza to counter Bayazid’s book Khayr ul-bayān. Makhzan means ‘treasury’ so the title means ‘Treasury of Islam’. There are three different manuscripts of Makhzan ul-Islam in the Berlin State Library. Among them two are the most ancient ones. One of these manuscripts is accomplished in 1116 A.H. (1704/5). Makhzan ul-Islām is also a very important literary work in the early history of Pashto literature. Mainly its content is theological and anti-Roshani. The available versions of Makhzan ul-Islam are edited and supplemented by descendents of Akhund Darweza, first by his son Karimdād and then his grandsons Abdul Halim and Mustafa Muhammad. It has acquired its final form in the end of 17th century. We find hardly any other manuscript of classical Pashto literature that has more copies than Makhzan ul-Islām. The reason is that this book was adopted a sort of textbook in madrasas and at homes. Mainly the contents of Makhzan are related to basic duties of Muslims, the laws and directions of Shariat, how to perform prayer and ablution in a correct way and so on. The first European scholar is J. Leyden, who for his investigation of Roshani Movement of Bayazid Ansari, translated one chapter (containing the data about Bayazid’s life) of Makhzan ul-Islam into English. (Leyden, 1812) Professor B. Dorn has also published some parts of this work in his Pashto Chrestomathy. (Dorn, 1847). I have come across two published versions of Makhzan in 19th century but for the first time its complete edition with

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6 Muhammad Ali Dinakhel, *An Introduction to the first Pashto Manuscript ‘Khair-ul-Bayan’ Present in Germany*. Islamabad, Department of Pakistani Languages, Allama Iqbal Open University, Pakistani Zuban-o-adab, Annual Research Journal of Pakistani Languages and Literature, Issue No. 1 (Jan-Dec 2017), 49-77


introduction, was published by Pashto Academy University of Peshawar in 1969.  

**Fawaidu-sh-Shari'at**

It is classical prose work of early time of Pashto literature. This famous book is written by Akhund Qāsim Papinkhel. The title means ‘benefits of Shari’at’. It is basically a theological work. In this manuscript, besides basic beliefs, fundamentals of Muslim law and practices of Islam, many aspects of Pashtun culture and social life have been discussed. There is a preamble by the author. Actually, in this preamble (fol.1b-3a) the author has praised Sayed Ali Tarmizi (Pir Bābā) and Akhund Darweza. They were spiritual guides of the author. It is the first book in Pashto that describes in detail the rights and duties of husband and wife. It also includes a very important chapter on the description of commandments regarding dresses and clothings.

**Diwān-i-Rahmān Bābā**

It is a popular book among Pashtuns. The poet, Rahmān Baba (circa 1650-1712) is the most popular Pashto poet. Structurally Rahmān’s Diwan consists of two portions (daftor). There are an average 350 lyrics/odes in Rahman’s Diwān but the copy housed in Berlin State Library having total of 181 lyrics/odes. Among them are 176 ghazals, four qasidas and one rubai. Usually Rahman’s diwan is in alphabetical order but here in this manuscript the sequence of ghazals is not alphabetical. The scribe/copyist name is Sālih Muhammad Peshāwri. Although the date of finishing of this manuscript is slightly spoiled, presumably it can be 20 Muharram 1175 A.H (21 August 1761). This is one of the oldest manuscripts of Rahmān Bābā’s poetry.

**Diwān-i- Kāzim Khān Shidā**

It is another poetical anthology in Berlin State Library. This manuscript is important on account of its distinctive writing system in Pashto orthography. Muhammad Kazim Khān Shidā (1725-1778) is a prominent Pashto poet. He is descendent of Khushal Khan Khattak. Shidā has his own poetical style characterized by images and complexity of language. This style, on the analogy of Persian poetry, is often referred as “Sabk-i-Hindi” or Indian style. A pencil record on fol.1a shows that it has

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9 (Darweza, Makhzan ul-Islām, muqaddema (preface) by Syed Taqwim ul-haq Kaka Khel, 1969)  
10 Akhund Qāsim, *Fawāid al-shariat Ms. Ms.orient.oct.1251, in Berlin State Library.*  
11 Akhund Qāsim, *Fawāid-I-Shari’at (Ms.or.oct.1251), Fol.2a*  
12 Akhund Qāsim, *Fawāid al-shariat Ms. Ms.orient.oct.1251, in Berlin State Library.* fol.69a-fol.74a  
14 Rahman Baba. *Dewa-e-Rahmān Bābā (Ms. or. oct. 2100) in Berlin State Library.*
been purchased at Agra (India) in 1796 and scribed by Faiz Ali of Delhi. Writing system used in this manuscript is very important. Linguistically this manuscript is also very important. It has its own distinctive dialect features. Shidā has used features of Khattak dialect in this manuscript. Retroflex stops /ṭ/, /ḍ/ and retroflex approximants /ṛ/ and retroflex nasal /ṇ/ are marked with the hamza over the grapheme, besides, dental affricates /c/ and /j/ are marked with the hamza underline with dots. Two dots with underline hamza is used for /c/ and one dot with underline hamza is used for /j/. Retroflex fricative /x/ and plato alveolar fricative /š/ are written alike with traditional <š> because of the phonetic peculiarities of the khattak dialect. Retroflex fricative /ǧ/ and /ž/ are also written like <ž> because of the phonetic peculiarities of Khattak dialect. There is also introduction of the author in the diwān. There are seven sections in this diwān. The first section (fol.11a-34a) panegyric odes praising God, Prophet Muhammad [PBUH], four Caliphs, Bahāuddin Naqashbandi, Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi and Ghulām Ma’sum. In the last masnawi poem, Shidā has described the history of Pashto poetry and its features under the title Hasb-i-Hāl da Pushto da shear) from fol. 25b to fol.34a). The next and the big section is that of alphabetically arranged ghazals (fol.134b-149a). From fol.149b we see qasidas. Among them one is “qasida-i-ahrāriya” and “qasida-i-bahāriya”. On fol.166b there is a rubai. From fol.209a to fol.212b, there are tarikhāt--- “tarikh-i-nawāb-i-Ali Muhammad Khan”. From fol.212b to 221a we see qitaat. At the end of diwān, there is a section of strophic poems (fol. 221b-237a). These include three musaddas and four mukhammas and in some of them tazmin is used with reference of Rahmān Bābā, Abdul Qādir and Khushāl Khān Khattak. In the colophon, on fol. 237a, the name of the scribe is written as Faiz Ali son of Qāsim-bek resident of Shāhjahānābād.

**Majma’ ul-ash’ār**

It is the most significant manuscript because there is no record of this manuscript in the recorded history of Pashto literature. It has only this single copy in State Library Berlin. It consists of two volumes. Each volume contains more than three hundred folios. This manuscript has

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15 Diwān-i-Shidā (Ms.or.fol.308) Fol.1a
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samples of poetry of more than one hundred poets. Majority of them belong to eighteen and nineteenth centuries. This manuscript also include Persian verses of different poets.

Tawārikh-i-Hāfiz Rahmat Khāni

Among the Pashto manuscripts in Berlin State Library, only this manuscript is entered in a catalogue of Persian manuscripts published in 1888. It is the first book written in Pashto language narrates the story of migration of different Pashtun tribes. This manuscript is divided into seven chapters with many sub headings. It describes the countries of Khakhi and Ghorı tribes and especially the Yusufzai, arrival of Yusufzai into Peshawar, focus of the Yusufzai on Swat and arrival of King Babur, arrival of Gıyanyı tribe to Doaba and arrival of Babur from Kabul to Peshawar, war between Gıyanyı and Dalazık, distribution of conquered land among tribes, crossing Landay River by Yusufzai and their war with Ghurya Khel.

Conclusion

From literary, linguistic, religious, and cultural point of view all of the ten Pashto manuscripts housed in State Library Berlin are very significant and valuable. Among these ten Pashto manuscripts housed in Berlin State Library, the oldest one is Khayr ul-Bayān of Bāyazid Ansārī which is the first available complete book in the history of Pashto literature. Writing of Khayr ul-bayān is finished on 20th Ramazan 1061 A.H (6 September 1651). The latest among these manuscripts is Majma’ ul-ash’ār belongs to the 18th century. It is an anthology of poetical works of more than one hundred poets. Majma’ ul-ash’ār is only single copy and has never been mentioned in the recorded history of Pashto literature. Among these ten manuscripts only one is recorded in published catalogue of Persian manuscripts. There is no published and detailed catalogue of the rest of the Pashto manuscripts in State Library Berlin. That is why many scholars and students of Pashto language and literature has no knowledge about the Pashto collection at the State Library Berlin. Each of these manuscripts has its distinctive features in the history of Pashto literature. Among these manuscripts a few are scribed in India and others in (presently) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. One of these manuscripts, Makhzan ul-Islām has remained as text book in Madrasas for centuries. Not limited to, but dominant themes discussed in these manuscripts are related to religion (fundamental beliefs and practices of Islām), literature (various literary genres), linguistics (dialects variation, language change and development, orthographic and script development, phonology etc.), and culture. These manuscripts also help in understanding and analysis of varieties in Pashto

dialects as well as the orthographic and script development of Pashto. Pashto orthography and writing system also developed in this period of Pashto literature.

Analysis of all these manuscripts reflects Pashtun cultural, literary, linguistic and social development. Different phases of literary and orthographic development in the history of Pashto language and literature is covered in these manuscripts.

Besides literary and linguistic development, socio-cultural and intellectual development, changes and evolution in Pashtun society and culture are also found in the deep study of these manuscripts. All of these manuscripts are very important for their contents, language, and period.

**Recommendations**

After finishing my research project, I strongly recommend the following points regarding the digitization and further studies of these manuscripts.

1. A detailed catalogue of Pashto manuscripts of Berlin State Library is needed to be published and circulated online so that students and scholars of Pashto language and literature may know about this collection.
2. All of these manuscripts should be digitized. Among them one manuscript Diwān-i-Kāzim Kāzim Khān Shidā is in very critical condition so it is necessary to digitize that one on priority bases.
3. A long term project (Ph.D or Postdoc) is needed for complete analysis and study of various aspects (literary, linguistic, cultural, historical and religious) of these manuscripts.
4. It is also suggested to provide at least soft copies of these manuscripts to the universities in Pakistan and Afghanistan especially to those universities where Pashto departments are available.

**List of the Manuscripts Analysed in this Project**

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<td>Diwan-e-Kāzim Khān Shidā</td>
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<td>Makhzan-ul-Islam</td>
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A page from the manuscript of *Fawaidu-sh-shariat*
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A page from the manuscript of *Dewan-e-Rahman Baba*
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