

# THEMATIC STUDY OF SHAKIR SHUJAABADI'S POETRY

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### Abstract:

The present research paper covers the topics of *Dohra* of a great Saraiki Poet Shakir Shuja Abadi. *Dohra* is a form of Saraiki poetry which is mostly promoted by Shakir Shuja Abadi among his various topics of his poetry. Shakir Shuja Abadi, a native of Shuja Abad is one of the famous Saraiki poets who excelled in the world of literature through their poetry. Shakir Shuja Abadi not only achieved great success in his poetry, but also succeeded in painting various scenes of the Saraiki community in his *Dohras*. In various subjects of *Dohra*, he took up the concepts of social oppression and empowerment, pain, suffering, separation and especially grief. This research paper and highlights the various issues of Saraiki society which are beautifully expressed by Shakir Shuja Abadi in his poetry.

**Keywords:** Shakir Shuja Abadi, Saraiki Society, Saraiki Poetry, Dohra

Shakir Shuja Abadi is a great name in the tradition of Saraiki *Dohras*. Everyone from different sections of society seems to sing his *Dohras*. He was the one who had the honour to introduce *Dohras* which depicted the innermost feeling and aspirations of the people. In spite of being physically incapacitated, he was fortunate to have a fresh, strong and fertile mind with which he filled the lap of Saraiki poetry with precious pearls that Saraiki poetry would always find itself indebted to him. Shakir Shuja Abadi was born in far off town of district Lodhran's Mauza Sher Pur in 1951. He suffered from typhoid leading to Paralysis in the initial stages of his life. Due to bad economic conditions he could study only few classes. Soon he left education and started working as a labourer. He was deeply interested in poetry so he started his poetry with famous and time-honoured "*Dohra*". He went to many people to seek help and guidance in order to polish his abilities related to poetry but they didn't pay proper attention to him due to his disability and simplicity. At last, being disappointed, he went to the shrine of great mystic poet of Saraiki Wasaib Hazrat Khawaja Ghulam Fareed and expressed his worries by weeping there. After that he embarked on the voyage of poetry by considering Khawaja Sahib as his spiritual guide and became Shakir Shuja Abadi from Muhammad Shafi. Then he started getting tremendous popularity in the Saraiki Wasaib. He started writing poetry in 1986 and since then he has been contributing matchless *Dohras*, Ghazals and unlimited songs. In this way, he continued serving his mother tongue i.e. Saraiki.

So far below mentioned poetic collections have appeared on the scene and got wide acclaim from the public:

- |                        |  |      |
|------------------------|--|------|
| 1. Peely pature        | bazm e shuaa saraiki aHmd pur shurkiya | 1989 |
| 2. Pathar moom         | jhok publishers multan                 | 1996 |
| 3. Ay dakni durdan di  | jhok publishers multan                 | 2004 |
| 4. Lahoo da arq        | jhok publishers multan                 | 2000 |
| 5. Khuda jany          | jhok publishers multan                 | 2001 |
| 6. Dua jany khuda jany | jhok publishers multan                 | 2001 |
| 7. Saraiki daman       | muratb : zaid jaffri , zaid publishers | 2001 |
| 8. Shakir dy dohry     | muratb : zaid jaffri , zaid publishers | 2001 |
| 9. Shakir dy quty      | makhdoom publishers                    |      |

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|---------------------------------|----------------------------|------|
| 10. .Shakir diyan ghazlan       | makhdoom publishers        | 2001 |
| 11. 11.kalam shakir             | wasaiB saraiki adbi markaz | 2002 |
| 12. munafqtaN twN khuda bachawy | jhok publishers multan     | 2005 |

Now days ShakirShujaAbadi is a residing in MuhallaShakir Abad near Raja Ram station (Zareefshaheed Tehsil ShujaAbad,District Multan).

Even though ShakirShujaAbadi has written Ghazals, Kafi's and songs and got enormous public appreciation but the real cause of his fame was Saraiki Dohray. They contain variation of subjects, full force of feelings and sentiments have distinguished him from the rest of the poets. That is why he is popular everywhere in the WasaiB particularly and generallythroughout the country. He has presented his physical limitations in his "Dohras" in such a beautiful manner and artistic excellence that his personal pain has become the pain of society as a whole.

For instance note the beauty of the following Dohra:

*" Raba dehda bethan tor tor ky tedi duniya ty jw thenda py*

*Koi bully shah koi mehr ali baho sultan sadenda py*

*Koi koot mithan da shehzada wich jug dy dekh chumenda py*

*Hik shakir hy tedi dunya wich jerha moyan lekh jenda py* "(Awan, Ahsan, N.D: 35)

Every Muslim believes in the oneness of God that there is only one God and no one is equal to Him. Every Muslim poet has been depicting the oneness of God in his poetry in his own particular style. Same concept of oneness of God finds its expression in poetry of ShakirShujaAbadi with complete certainty. He says about oneness of God in the following manner:

*"Tedi haan vi main , tedi na vi main , inkar vi main iqrar vi main*

*Teda piyar mohabbt naal medy , tedi nufrut da izhar vi main*

*Tediyen neemtan da huqdar vi main , tedi ghzb da kirdar vi main*

*Hay shakir gaal ajeeb jahain teda ghair vi main , teda yaar vi main* (Shujaabadi, 2012:129)

ShakirShujaAbadi is a poet of tradition of *Dohra* and so he keeps tradition of classical *Dohra* to continue. Traditional typical sentiments of love have been reflected with full force and vitality.

Like a true lover, Shakir intends to sacrifice his being, heart and wealth as he himself dives in the sea of suffering but wishes to see his beloved's face shining with everlasting happiness and he may get sorrows of his beloved and even if he has to sacrifice his life for his beloved he will readily do all this like a true lover.

In this connection look at the verses of his following Dohra:

*Mekhon hool na reh jo roonda gy zari khildyen shukle dikhali wunj*

*Matan rah wich povi rat sajan medy khoon da dewa bali wunj*

*Too tor jo aain mekon ni thahndi medy dur to aa ky khali wunj*

*Biya kujh ni shakir kya dewan aehy sah hin yaar sunbhali wunj*

(Shujaabadi, 2009:91)

As discussed before that Shakir was attacked by a disease in the beginning of his life which has become a constant part of his life since then. Strangely enough this disability has helped him to feel bitterness of human attitudes closely. It is only possible to feel this when one passes through observing suddenly changed attitudes of people and when they do not pay attention to some ill or disabled and so these poisonous snakes in the form of people through selfishness and opportunism have been seen pouring their venoms in his very being on every occasion.

God has given him a great poetic talent to give a tremendous worldly form to his heart felt feelings and emotions. Therefore he kept on transferring human attitudes on pieces of papers.

Note the beauty of the following verses in this connection:

*Ay huq bunrda haa sujna da aa dokh da haal wundendy*

*Khary perain thi ty wul wendy cha mint bemar ty lendy*

*Naa dewun ha imdad koi na khair khariat krendy*

*Naa shakir hoondy sujnaN dy lawaris look sadendy*

(Shujaabadi, 2007:52)

Being a civilised and conscientious individual he is not only aware of his surroundings but he also wishes to eradicate social evils and faults through the power of his sin. He seems to be well aware of the fact that poetry is God gifted ability and if this ability is used for the welfare of the people, it becomes unending virtue. That's why we see that ShakirShujaAbadi has kept special focus on moral and reformative aspect and can be seen changing the society for good. This can be seen in the following lines of his Dohra:

*Ay theek ay rub tekon hosn dity per eeda man ghumand na kr*

*Jerhy sok gy hin ajho leh wesin wut sawy yaar khurand na kr*

*Jy saanjh piyar di pati hy taan bhaiwali di wund na kr*

*Mekon by shuk shakir kund kr wunj dil kaba hy eenkon kund na kr*

(Shujaabadi, 2007:83)

It has been the mission of every Saraiki poet to preach the message of great mystic poet Hazrat Khawaja Ghulam Fareed. The elevation of one's self, the search of his inner world and journey from personal elevation to elevation of Almighty has been considered basic message of poetry of Hazrat Khawaja Ghulam Fareed which is called "Khudi" (self). This is a universal message given by every mystic poet. ShakirShujaAbadi is spiritual pupil of Hazrat Khawaja Ghulam Fareed. That's why he is deeply influenced by thoughts of Hazrat Khawaja Ghulam Fareed and there are certain glimpses of poetry of Hazrat Khawaja Ghulam Fareed in his poetry. In his "Dohras" we see that search for elevated Almighty leads to the elevation of his own personal being. In this connection note the following lines of a "Dohra" :

*Tedy dawy hin labrezi dy thiya shoq da piyala adha ni*

*Teda shikwa hy oo ni milda kai shakir ludho wudha ni*

*Hy malik aapni murzi da tedi murzi da oo budha ni*

*Tedi shaeh rug toon vi nery hy tain goliya ni oo ludha ni*

(Awan, Ahsan, N.D: 35)

In the traditional subjects matters of *Dohra* the appearance and get up of beloved is of prime importance. Almost all the poets of *Dohra* has shown the magical power of their artistic excellence to describe the physical appearance of their beloveds, like her hair, face, cheeks,teeth,lips,chin,neck,hands,feet and so to say they have gone to the every extent to prove theirbeloveds as the most beautiful creations has been the favourite subject matter of the poets. Following the same tradition ShakirShujaAbadi has used beautiful similes,metaphors and much more figures of speech to describe the physical appearance of his beloved and has created such matchless "Dohras" which became highly famous and popular among the public of his Wasaib. One of these is given below:

*Jewain sothri hovy jobn wich mahi peela wes wata khrdy*

*Jewain peengh aasman ty aa khurdi oonwain gul wich bochun pa khurdy*

*Jewain kali guncha bun khrdi chun phorly hoont mila khardy*

*Oonkon shakir jannat di hoor samajh kai mulan dhoky kha khrdy*

(shujaabadi, 2012:172)

Remembrance is yet another important subject matter of Shakir's poetry. Bitter memories continue to follow one throughout one's life and so in order to get rid of them one seems to pray to God to take memories back. Sweet memories become the most precious assets of a person's life and he wants to keep them like an important secret and so he wants to live the rest of his life in the memories spent in the beautiful company of his beloved. In the same way, both bitter and sweet memories find their expressions in the poetry of ShakirShujaAbadi. In this way note the following verses of his Dohra:

*Jadan wuta yaad marendi hy dokh denmbhon wangon chir pondin*

*Ghum sooz alam dy bun toly wut medy ghr do phir pondin*

*Medi aas umeed dy kul mooti bun neer akheen toon kir pondin*

*Kujh shakir yaar dy lary hin jerhy aokhy wqt pukir pondin*

(Shujaabadi, 1990:06)

The main reason of popularity of Shakir ShujaAbadi lies in its magnet like attraction for the common public. It is because he being himself a common man ,spent his life in the company of common man;that's why he is truly aware of people's feelings, emotions and problems and so this keen observation enabled him to become a poet of the masses. He always put hand on the painful pulse of the common man and seems to sing of them. He gave expression to the pains and miseries of the people like a true literary genius. That's why people held him in high regard and seem to sing of him quite often in their public gatherings. Due to paralysis, his words are unintelligible for a common man and for that reason they need someone near to him to make them understand what he says but when his words reach to the ears of the people through written form then people pay him tribute. He seems to be well aware of the art of making people weep and laugh. That is why people are eager to catch his single glimpse.Regarding his popularity in the masses a renowned Saraiki critic Dr. Gul Abbas Awan says".

*Shakir shuja badi seh maanon main awami shair hy , mojoda ehd main awam main is ki maqboliyat arroj per hy is ki aik waja dohry ka awami mizaj hy.*

*Is ny apni shairi main awami mizaj ki baat hi nhi ki .balkeh awami mushahdy ki baat shairana andaz aur lehjy main kr ky awam ky dil main apni jaga bnai.*

(Abbas, 2014: 71)

Folktale "Sassi" is written by every Saraiki poet of the Wasaib in his or her own particular style. Sassi belonged to this region so that's why every Saraiki poet seems to be interested in writing about Sassi and Punnon. ShakirShujaAbadi has also established his artistic abilities by writing Dohras about Sassi and presented her pains in such a manner that it goes straight into the hearts of the people. ShakirShujaAbadi's Dohras regarding Sassi became extremely popular.

For instance note the beauty of the following lines of his dohra:

*Tekon ghool ghatan wichory aa medi kun ni jaan churenda  
Ni sokh di nindre naseeb thai wady junglan wich rulenda  
Susi shehr bhanboor di waris koon pain aokhi mout marenda  
Oth aa shakir burbad keti jith pani koi ni denda*

(Shujaabadi, 2012:139)

Separation or parting has been a distinctive and popular subject matter of Saraiki poetry. Every single poet has treated this subject in his particular style and selection of words. Separation from beloved keeps on tormenting heart of lovers consistently. No cure is there for victim of separation of lover from his beloved. As a result of separation from his beloved, a lover is like a half slaughtered cock and when a poet converts his bitter condition arising from separation into words, the readers or audiences also seem to feel the same condition. Not only he himself weeps but he also makes others weep along with him. Regarding separation note following lines:

*Aa mahi aa dekh tan sahi aayan konjan joor qataron wul aa paron  
Sur subz chaman jobun ty dadhi rong hy chodharon wul aa paron  
Rung daar phulan da chadran pa buniyan botiyan lal konwaron wul aa paron  
Hik moonjh wich ro ro shakir dy thendy cholu roz jhabaron wul aa paron*

(Shujaabadi, 2012:139)

Like separation love has also been a favourite subject matter of Saraiki poets. Love is such an illness which compels many Bayards to bow. Whoever takes on the journey of love remains of no other use.

Love has such a power that it makes its victim devoid of peace and sleepless at nights. It has such a potent magical power that it enchants the victims and brings end to pride of big guns who always claim not to be tempted by any temptation in no time. Due to these performances of love Shakir writes his dohra:

*Hik nengar ha fukhrail bahoan jerha kahain ty dhuj na burenda haa  
Hus tnoor moch ty wut rehnda dingy patkey rooz badhenda haa  
Rehndi gurdun hus pintali ty huthain lumbri dang rakhenda haa  
Lagy eenjha ishq da dhuk shakir aj haan ton huth na chenda haa*

(Shujaabadi, 2009: 103)

ShakirShujaAbadi is a credible source of modern Saraiki Dohra. He has played a vital role to popularise Saraiki Dohra. He gave strength to it when it was getting weaker as we see that Ghazal, modern poetry and Saraiki type new genres did damage it. Ahmad khan Tariq and ShakirShujaAbadi took it from Classicism to Modernism and made it equal to the most modern and popular literary genres. Credit goes to Shakir that he expressed his personal deprivation and sufferings in Dohra form and got immense public appeal and the entire wasaib is indebted to him in this connection. In his Dohras, ShakirShujaAbadi has fulfilled his responsibilities by being the true representative of Saraiki public. If we happen to see disappointment and pessimism sometimes in his dohras, it is simply because it is a natural phenomenon that a poet is the most sensitive individual of the society in which he lives and so he depicts what he sees and experiences. As we know that a poet holds a mirror to life. He addresses himself in this regard:

*Her shaair apny ilaqy ka turjman aur apny wqt ka moarikh hota hy. Wo apny klam ky zareyay apny ilaqy, wsib aur watan ki numaindgi krty howy apny zamany ki tarekh*

*Likh raha hota hy .aaj sy wasaib main her truf msail , dukh tkaleef hain . in halat main meri shairi main kurb aur durd na ho to phir kya hoo? Main dukh aur durd ki taar cheer kr mayoos*

*Phelany ki koshish ni krta blkeh mayosi ky halat peda krny walon ky zameer ko jhunjhomy ki koshish krta hoon*  
(Chisti, 2003:13)

Saraiki Dohras of ShakirShujaAbadi reflect a full picture of Saraiki wasabi. We can easily find here different colours and shades of Saraiki culture. He has been able to express his personal pain in the guise of the pain of entire wasaib in a beautiful way.

In spite of his being less educated, his poetry seems to be enriched and decorated with jewels and pearls of wisdom. Deep observation and wisdom is palpable from a single word. Sometimes he goes on to express something in a simple and straightforward manner that readers are stunned to know his intellect. It is said that we can't judge a book by its cover. Same is the case with ShakirShujaAbadi as we can't believe that a man with simple physical appearance

and ordinary get up is so deeply sensible, conscientious and highly intellectual and insightful. Regarding his deep observation of life, note the following verses of his Dohra:

*Itbar na kr inhan sohniyan ty aj kujh hondin kul kujh hondin*

*Moun zoor mizaj dy malik hin ghari kujh hondin pul kujh hondin*

*Inhan husn diyan bhuryan botlan dy tul kujh hondin gul kujh hondin*

*Hin shakir misil krehan di phul kujh hondin phal kujh hondin ”.*(shujaabadi, 2009: 107)

There are very few people who are fortunate enough to get appreciation and recognition in their lives. ShakirShuja Abadi is one of those who reached heights of fame in their lives. Every artist wishes to be famous and get acknowledgement and recognition. So ShakirShujaAbadi not only became popular among the people but also he was acknowledged on governmental level as he got a number of official awards and prizes. The actual honor an artist receives is from the common public because public is neutral and so a better critic or judge to determine the value of his works. ShakirShujaAbadi is one of those fortunate people who find a place in the hearts of the people. A contemporary of ShakirShujaAbadi is renowned Saraiki poet namely Amanda ullah Arshad who says in this connection:

*Ziyada tur achy shoora ky sath yeh hadisa hota hy keh wo apny qaraeen ya samaeen peda nhi kr paty mgr shakir wo khushqismut*

*shair hy keh agr mushairy main jai to log pehly shakir ka naam pochty hain .agr kitabon ki dokan per jain to bhi kitab khareedny wala*

*her bunda pehly shakir ki kitab ka hi pochta hy . yani shakir ko qaraeen aur samaeen dono musar hain .*

(Shujaabadi, 2009:06)

ShakirShujaAbadi tried his hands in all the genre of poetry. His Saraiki Ghazals and poems made him popular among the people but it is Saraiki Dohra where he reigns supreme. Here, he shows his talent of writing with artistic maturity. His Saraiki Dohras occupy a distinctive place in modern Saraiki story. As regards the subject matter of his poetry ShakirShujaAbadi'sdohras are up to date with requirements of the current era. Credit goes to ShakirShujaAbadi that he has left no stone unturned to make Saraiki Dohra as the most effective and popular genre if Saraiki literature. Here, we find traditional subjects like oneness of God, love for beloved, love for mankind along with social, moral, contemporary issues, human behaviours and ethical aspects.

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