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THE SERVICES OF THE FAMOUS PASHTO POET HAFIZ ALPURI IN THE FIELD OF WRITING THE HOLY QUR'AN, (SPECIAL STUDY OF HIS HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPT OF THE QUR'AN)

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ABSTRACT

The Holy Qur'an is the word of Allah Almighty which is safe from all kinds of changes. Reciting it, is worship and understanding its commandments is obligatory. The process of preparing copies of the Holy Qur'an started from the time of the Companions of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him and his family and companions) and Muslims have been writing copies of the Holy Qur'an for their religious needs. In ancient times, manuscripts of the Holy Qur'an were written by hand, some of these manuscripts are still preserved in various libraries, mosques and other places which are the historical heritage of Muslims. One of them is a manuscript of the Holy Qur'an written by Abdul Samad known as Hafiz Alpuri, which was written by hand almost two centuries ago and is still preserved.

The aims of this study is to achieve the following: 1) introduction to Hafiz Alpuri, 2) to know the characteristics of Hafiz Alpuri's manuscript Mushaf in terms of letters, sizes and type of paper, 3) to find out what the manuscript Qur'an has been given in

terms of gilding and decoration. The main method used by the researcher in this study is analytical and descriptive.

This study consists of two parts. In first part, the introduction of Hafiz Alpuri is presented, while in second part, his manuscript of the Qur'an is analyzed. The research findings, suggestions and recommendations are given at the end of the paper.

PART FIRST:

Introduction of Hafiz Alpuri

Real Name

According to his family sources, Hafiz Alpuri's real name is Abdul Samad and known as Hafiz Alpuri.

Ancestry

Hafiz Alpuri belongs to Razar Mandar Yousafzai tribe^[1] (Shah, 1971). The current family of Hafiz Alpuri says that their genealogy is traced back to Hafiz Alpuri through nine and ten generations.

Date of birth and death

Hafiz Alpuri did not write a history in any of his books, from which his era can be definitely known. Due to this, there are many opinions regarding his birth and death which are mutually contradictory:

On the upper part of one of his written poems, someone has also written the date of his death as 1593, which is 1001 AH according to the Hijri year.

In Tawarikh Hafiz Rahmat Khani, the year of his death is recorded as 1011 AH which is 1602 AD in terms of AD.

In Wikipedia, the date of his death is 1810 according to 1225 AH and his age is written as 67 years. In this sense, his date of birth is 1743 according to 1158 AH.

His family is not in favor of the date of death listed in Wikipedia as 1810 AD, they consider his death date to be older than that, but when the evidence is examined, the dates of 1593 AD = 1001 AH and 1011 AH = 1602 AD are far from reality. And the date of 1810 AD = 1225 AH seems closer to reality.

The proof of the refutation of the first and second opinion is that Hafiz Alpuri has mentioned the martyrdom of Maulana Abdul Kareem alias Kareem Dad, the son of Akhund Darweeza, in his poems. Hafiz says:

يو عالم وے بل شهيد شوے عجب دُرّ فرید شوے
د کانجو میان کریم دادہ ما نیولے لمن ستا ده^[2]

Translation: On one hand you were a scholar and on the other hand you were also blessed with martyrdom, which made you strangely unique, Mian Karim Dad of Kanju! I have held your feet spiritually. (Alpuri, 1366 AH)

There are two sayings in the date of Maulana Abdul Karim's death: 1059 AH and 1072 AH, which shows that Hafiz Alpuri died after him, because how can a person who died in 1011 AH mention the martyrdom of a man who died several years after him.

The second proof is that he has mentioned Ahmad Shah Abdali, Mian Umar Chamkani, Haji Bahadur Kohat and Bishonai Akhun in a poem, saying:

چه بند او سند ئے ایلول ایران توران احمد شاه
د سلطنت له باغم لار برخوردار پاتے نه شو
د څوکنو میان غروب وکه لکه نمر د عصر
چه شاه گدا ترے خوشیوئی وره عطار پاتے نه شو
د بیشونری اخون صیقل وه د زنگدارو زرونو
بل د کوہات حاجی بہادر خوش دیدار پاتے نه شو^[3]

Translation: Ahmed Shah (Abdali), the conqueror of India, Sindh, Iran and Turan, has left the garden of the kingdom, Mian Umar Chamkani has set like the evening sun, the perfume-seller from whom the king and pauper used to buy the perfume is no longer, Beshonai Akhun, who polishes rusty hearts, and good like Haji Bahadur of Kohat are no more. (Alpuri, 1366 AH)

Ahmad Shah Abdali died in 1773 AD = 1187 AH, Mian Muhammad Umar Chamkani died in 1190 AH = 1776 AD^[4](Qadri, 1972). And in the date of death of Maulana Muhammad Siddiq Bishonai Akhun, two sayings are found in the books: one in 1189 AH = 1775 AD^[5] (Saleem, Not mentioned). And the other in 1198 AH = 1783-84 AD^[6](Balkhi, 1403 AH). This shows that Hafiz Alpuri died after 1776 or 1784.

Real homeland

According to family sources, Hafiz Alpuri was a resident of Doaba Hashtnagar, from there he came to Khwaza Khela area of Swat for the purpose of acquiring knowledge and then settled in Alpurai district Shangla.

Poetry

The fame of Hafiz Alpuri is due to his poetry, Diwan of his Pashto poetry named "Diwan Hafiz Alpuri" has been published. He was a Sufi poet and is considered unparalleled in this art. His poetry is full of praise,

sermons and advice. Hafiz Alpuri was a poet who created a great place in Pashto literature with a new style, no one has been able to present the concept of Allah's Oneness and Sufism within Pashto literature as presented by Hafiz Alpuri.

Hafiz's Diwan is divided into five parts according to subjects.

- a) Monotheism and prophethood
- b) Divine love (Real love)
- c) Advice for the people of Sufism
- d) Virtual love
- e) General advice (Advice to common people)

Memorizing the Quran

He was a Hafiz of the Qur'an and perhaps because of this he became known as Hafiz Alpuri, so he says about this in one of his poems:

که ئے تنگ دست حافظه خوځ په دا احسان ئے اوسه
چی په سینه کښ د رب خپل مجید کلام ایځے دے^[7]

Translation: Hafiz! If you are poor, then keep loving the favor of Him (Allah) that the Lord has placed His Holy Word in your heart. (Alpuri, 1366 AH)

Tomb and shrine

The shrine of Hafiz Alpuri is located a few steps away from the road in Hafizabad Koza Alpurai District Shangla, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

PART SECOND:

Manuscript Mushaf of Hafiz Alpuri

Preservation of the Holy Mushaf

The manuscript Mushaf of Hafiz Alpuri Baba is still preserved after centuries. The credit for its preservation goes to his descendants who have kept this manuscript Mushaf alive very carefully from generation to generation. Today, this Mushaf is kept by the third wife of late Haji Muhammad Ismail Baba, who is grandmother of Hafiz Alpuri Baba ninth generation grandsons Mr. Mukhtar Ahmad, Dr. Karam Elahi and Maulana Faisal Elahi.

The paper used in Manuscript

The paper used in the manuscript of Hafiz Alpuri is actually the bark of a tree, this tree is found today in Kalam District Swat, which is called "Birij" in Pashto^[8](ZakirUllah, 2022), and "Lish" in the local language of

Matiltan valley^[9] (Aabid, 2022), This manuscript Qur'an is written on the paper of this tree.

Page size

Length: 28.5 cm/ 11.5 inch width: 21cm/ 8.5 inch

Writing area on the page

Length: 20.2 cm/ 8.1 inch width: 14 cm/ 5.6 inch

Number of pages in per portion (Juz)

A portion (Juz) of Qur'an contains average 40 to 42 pages. Hafiz Alpuri has not written the numbers on pages, so this average may change.

Number of lines per page

each page has thirteen lines and in very few places the number of lines is reduced e.g. the last two pages of Portion (Juz) No. 14 and the beginning of surah Maryam, Sad and Al-Shams.

Number of words in a line

In the manuscript Mushaf of Hafiz Alpuri, four to six words are written in a line.

Writing style

The text of the Holy Qur'an is written in "Khat e Thuluth" [Thuluth Calligraphy] and "Khat e Nasakh" [Nasakh Calligraphy] the readings in the same margin are also written in "Thuluth". The Persian translation is written in "Nastaleeq"^[10] (Ali C. W., 2023).

The ink of writing

There are four types of ink used in Mushaf writing: black, red, blue and yellow. The text of Qur'an is written in black ink, the Readings (قراءات) in the margins are often written in red and in some places in blue. Yellow ink has been used in the writing of the word "ALLAH" and in the drawings of the Qur'anic surahs. Among other colors: Musk, saffron, amber and gold water have been used for writing.

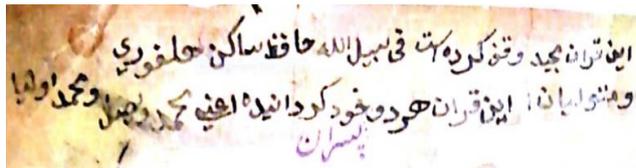
Inner cover

On the inner cover of the Mushaf is written in Persian:

"این قرآن مجید وقف کرده است فی سبیل الله حافظ ساکن هلفوری، و متولیان این قرآن بر دو پسران خود کردانیده اعنی محمد و یصال و محمد اولیاء"

Translation: "This Qur'an is dedicated for the sake of Allah, the Hafiz resident of Halfuri (Alpurai), and the guardians of this Qur'an are each of his two sons, namely "Muhammad Wesal and Muhammad Auliya". The same sentence is also written on the margins of Surah Yasin and Surah Al-Nas.

On this page, a list of the signs that have been used interchangeably in this Mushaf was given. The book binder had pasted a sheet on it with which these signs were hidden, but the guardians of this Mushaf worked hard to cut the paper and revealed these signs.



يا كبيك "ya Kabikaj"

On this inner cover is written a word "يا كبيك". It is written on the first or last folio of the manuscripts. The ancients used it to protect books from natural pests, such as termites, weevils, insects and rodents. However, there are many manuscripts that have this word written on it but have been damaged by insects, which is proof that this word cannot preserve manuscripts.



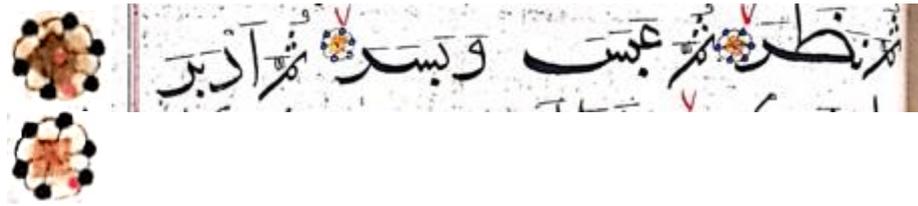
Special writing of the word “ALLAH”

The word “ALLAH” is written in gold water in almost all places. This expresses Hafiz Alpuri’s intense love for Allah. According to Hafiz family sources, there are 1842 places where the word Allah is written in gold water.



The sign of verse completion

A round circle is usually written at the end of the verse and the number of the verse is inserted inside it, but Hafiz Alpuri has made a flower-like shape as a figure at the end of the verse, and the verses not numbered in the entire Mushaf, which is as follows:



Beginning Surah

Surah of the holy Qur'an is started with a beautiful design in which the name of the surah and number of verses are written, but the same method is not adopted for all the surahs, some portions (Juz) designs are made at different places and in every place, Tasmiya is written in the line after the surah figure. A few examples are as follows:

Surah Aal-Imran two hundred verses



Surah Al-Ahzab Seventy-three verses



Surah Al-Waqi'ah ninety-six verses

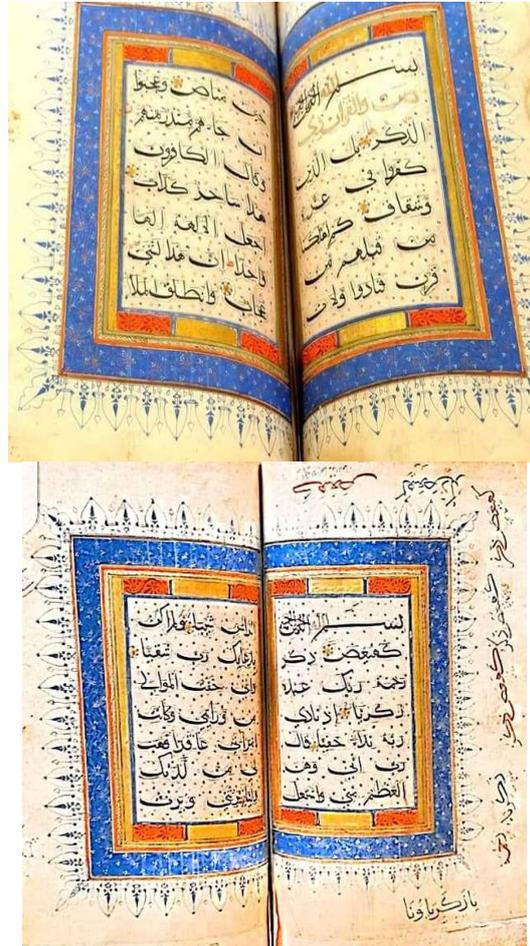


The beginning of surah Al-A'raf, Maryam and Sad

Surah Al-Fatihah, Surah Al-Baqarah, surah Al-A'raf, surah Maryam and surah Sad the opening of these five surahs is different from all other surahs because the design is made on both sides of the page at the beginning of these surahs. See samples:

Surah Sad

Surah Maryam



Surah Al-A'raf



Surah Al-Tawbah

At the beginning of surah Al-Tawbah these words are written on the margin:

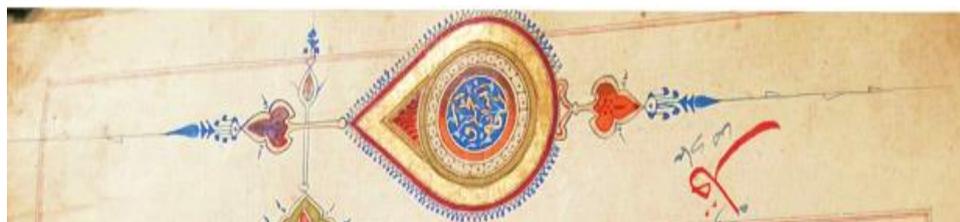
"اعوذ بالله من النار ومن شر الكفار، العزة لله"

Translation: I seek refuge in Allah from the fire and from the evil of the infidels, Glory be to Allah.

Mark for start of Portion (Juz)

Where a new Portion (Juz) begins, the following figure is vertically drawn on the margin to indicate the beginning of the Portion (Juz). In its middle circle is written the number of the Portion (Juz) in Arabic, for example:

"الجزء الحادي عشر"، "الجزء الرابع"



The first line at the beginning of each Portion (Juz) is written in golden water.



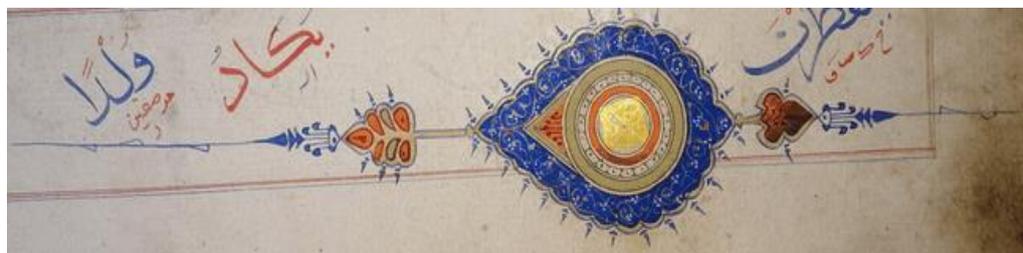
The figure of quarter Portion (Juz)

Where the quarter (one-quarter) of Portion (juz) is completed, the following figure is drawn on the margin and in the middle circle is written in Arabic: "الربع".



The figure of half Portion (Juz)

At the place where the half-Portion (Juz) is completed, the following figure is vertically drawn on the margin and in the circle just in middle of it is written in Arabic: "النصف". The same sign has been used on the occasion of half of the Qur'an.



Mark of three-quarter Portion (Juz)

The same design is used for thuluth Portion (Juz) (three-quarter) as for "Rubu" (one-quarter) except that it has the inscription "ثلاثة أرباع" in the middle.

Pattern of Sajdah e Tilawat

On the occasion of Sajdah, the following figure has been made on the margin, in the middle of which "السجدة" is written.



Quranic Readings

The readings have been recorded in the margin and some symbols have also been written which indicate the readers.

Translation of the Qur'an

Hafiz Alpuri has translated the Holy Qur'an from Surah Al-Baqarah to verse number 113 of Surah Aal-Imran in Persian, which is written in between the lines. At various places the translation has been missed.

Errors and Omissions

No human being is completely perfect, human being is prone to mistakes, so the lack of his actions is the proof of his being a human being. Hafiz

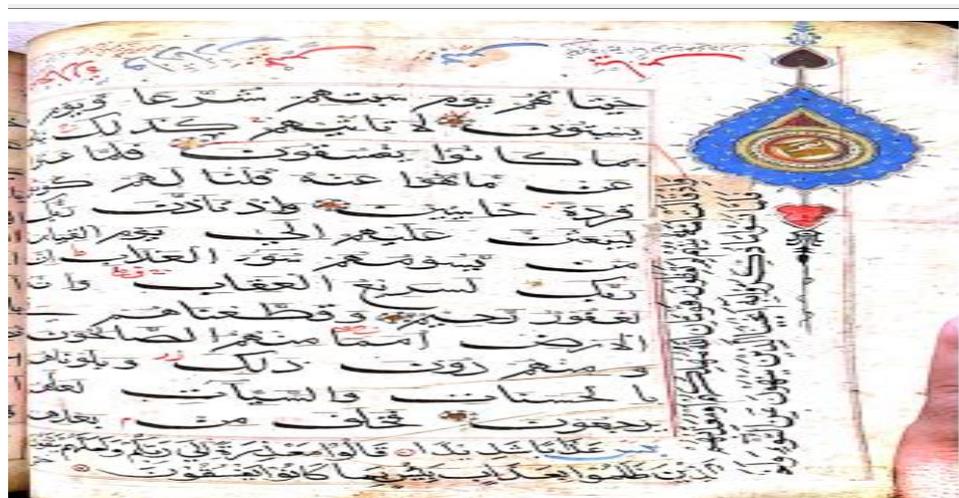
Alpuri has worked very hard in the writing of the Holy Qur'an and worked very carefully, but in spite of this, some mistakes have been made by him in this manuscript of the Qur'an, some of which are as follows:

- a) Hafiz Alpuri has not numbered the pages of the manuscript of the Qur'an, which makes it difficult for a non-hafiz of the Qur'an to find a page in it.
- b) There are no numbers on the verses in this manuscript, due to which it is not possible to find a verse by number.
- c) In some places, the verse mark has been misplaced, for example Surah Al-Falaq verse number three.

d)



e) At some places a few words or verses have been omitted which have been rewritten on the margin of the page, as can be seen in the following images.



f) Some words have been extra written somewhere which are not in the text of the Holy Qur'an and a red line has been drawn over them to erase them.



g) The rules of Qur'anic orthography (ilm-ur-rasam) have not been taken into account in many places, which can be easily detected by the knowledgeable persons.

CONCLUSION

Hafiz Alpuri was the hafiz of Holy Qur'an, the religious scholar and the poet of Pashto. His poetry is a collection of sermons and advice. His manuscript of the Qur'an is a precious heritage which he worked very hard to write. Hafiz dedicated it to his two sons Muhammad wesal and Muhamad Auliya. It is written in Thuluth calligraphy with musk, amber, saffron and the golden water. Useful information and readings have been collected on the margin of manuscript. The word "Allah" is written in gold water. Each Portion (Juz) is about forty pages. The manuscript Mushaf is written on tree bark paper.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Hafiz Alpuri did not put date anywhere in his writings.

Historians have a strong disagreement on the date of Hafiz Alpuri's death. It is also difficult to determine the period of writing of Hafiz's manuscript Mushaf.

There are no pages numbers in this manuscript Mushaf.

Verses numbers are not even added in this manuscript Mushaf.

In many places some words or verses have been left which were later written in the interlinear or in margin.

Suggestions and recommendations

There are a few things worth noting regarding the manuscript of Hafiz Alpuri:

People come to visit this manuscript Mushaf and turnover the pages back and forth in their hands, which is, therefore proper management is needed to protect it so that this historical heritage is not lost.

The life circumstances and biography of Hafiz Alpuri should be collected and combined in a book form, so that people can get to know about his personality and services and also be protected.

This manuscript can be researched from different aspects, for example: its script should be researched in the light of the principles and rules of the Quranic orthography (ilm-ur-rasam), the readings recorded in its margins can be researched, the information written in the margins can also be researched.

In his Diwan, there can be research work on Quranic studies, history and personalities etc.

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