

Al-Hikmat

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OBITUARY**PROF. B. H. SIDDIQUI
Philosopher and Friend***KAISER MAHMOOD**

Professor Bakhtiar Hussain Siddiqui, a famous Professor of Philosophy and former Principal, Government College of Education for Men, Lahore, breathed his last on 27 September 2000 in Lahore. Prof. B. H. Siddiqui, without doubt, was a man of integrity and strong convictions. There would be no exaggeration to say that in the sad demise of Prof. B. H. Siddiqui, we have lost a profound educationist, a prolific writer, and a philosopher of meticulous scholarship.

Prof. B. H. Siddiqui was born in Kanpur (India) in 1926. He did his M.A. in Philosophy and LL.B. at the Muslim University, Aligarh (a nursery of Muslim leaders) in 1947. For a short time, he remained on the staff of Muslim University, Aligarh. He worked as a lecturer under Prof. M. M. Sharif (founder of Pakistan Philosophical Congress). After the division of Indo-Pak, he migrated to Pakistan and joined the Punjab Education Services in 1949. He rendered his meritorious services as Professor of Philosophy at Government College, Lahore (the oldest seat of philosophical learning and development in Pakistan) from 1959 to 1971 and later as Deputy Director Libraries, Section Officer, Director (Humanities), Punjab Textbook Board, Lahore, and retired as Principal, Government College of Education for Men, Lahore, in 1986.

Prof. B. H. Siddiqui was a seasoned writer. His research work cannot be described in a single page. His principal work

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lies in Muslim Philosophy, particularly in Muslim ethics and education. He contributed three chapters to *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, Volume I and II, Wiesbaden, Germany, i.e. *Ibn Tufail* Volume, *Nasir al-Din Tusi* Volume I and *Jalal Din Dawwani* Volume II. These articles clearly represent the author's erudition, skill and approach to Muslim Philosophy which is matchless in nature. Miskawayh was his favourite Philosopher. He has contributed four research articles on Ibn Miskawayh to Journal of the Regional Cultural Institute, Tehran, that is, *Miskawayh's Theory of Spiritual Therapy*, *The Ethical Philosophy of Miskawayh*, *The View of Miskawayh on the Education of Children* and *Miskawayh Life and Works*. These articles still enjoy international status.

Prof. B. H. Siddiqui was an outstanding scholar and influenced a whole generation of young Muslim intellectuals, students and probably more importantly his colleagues. His interests ranged from the classical period to modern times. He was also a keen student of education. He has written three books on education, for example, *Iqbal Bahaisiat-e-Mufakkir-i-Talim*, Iqbal Academy, Lahore, *Musalmanun ki Talim ka Irtiqah*, Institute of Islamic Culture, Lahore and *Barri-Saghir Pak-o-Hind ka Arabic Madaris ka Nizam-e-Talim*, Institute of Islamic Culture, Lahore.

Prof. B. H. Siddiqui's attitude was always very friendly and cordial. He loved to guide his students even his junior colleagues. He had held many offices in Pakistan Philosophical Congress. He was on the Advisory Editorial Board on *The Quranic Horizons*, quarterly journal of the Quran Academy. He contributed many philosophical articles to *The Quest*, a Philosophical Journal of the Philosophy Department, Government College, Lahore. In short, he had contributed scores of articles on Muslim Philosophy, Existentialism and Education to *The Pakistan Philosophical Journal*, *Iqbal*, *Iqbal Review*, *Al-Maarif*, *The Ravi*, *Fikr-o-Nazar*. I remember very well that in 1999 Brett Philosophical Society, Government College, Lahore, arranged a lecture of Prof. B. H. Siddiqui on *The Bogy of Islamic Fundamentalism*. The treatment of Prof. B. H. Siddiqui was

highly philosophical and thought-provoking. He emphasized that we as Muslims must be proud of having faith in the fundamentalism of Islam in the form of the Quran and the Sunnah. The speaker further pointed out that it is the need of the hour to break the chains of intellectual stagnation through the right channel of *Ijtehad*.

No doubt, Prof. B. H. Siddiqui is the identity of the Philosophy Department of the Government College, Lahore. I am very optimistic that on account of the services which have been rendered by Prof. B. H. Siddiqui for the promotion of philosophical, logical and intellectual environment in Pakistan, his name shall remain evergreen and he will be remembered by the academia of Pakistan for a long time.

——— Dr. Absar Ahmad adds:

My acquaintance and friendship with Prof. B. H. Siddiqui goes back to 1966 when I joined Psychology Department of Government College, Lahore, for postgraduate studies under Prof. Dr. Muhammad Ajmal. The Departments of Psychology and Philosophy were then housed in one building and there was close collaboration between the two. I had already got my M.A. in Philosophy from Karachi University and thus felt intellectual affinity with the faculty of Philosophy Department which included luminaries like Prof. M. Saeed Sheikh and Dr. Hameeduddin. As an eminent scholar, educationist and researcher, Prof. Siddiqui impressed me much and I almost took him as my mentor. He won distinction and acclaim as profound scholar and a devoted teacher. Always a man who stood for principle, discipline and justice, he would not submit to any pressure from higher ups when he served as Principal of Government College of Education and at the Punjab Textbook Board. He narrated to me many incidents when he did not comply by the instructions of even the Punjab Chief Minister when he flouted the rules or admission policy decisions. He insisted that things be done according to procedure rather than the fiat of a top bureaucrat or even Chief Minister.

In the late sixties, the peer postgraduate department at the Punjab University had on its faculty Professors C. A. Qadir, Khawaja Ghulam Sadiq, Abdul Khaliq and Muhammad Maruf (the last two at that time engaged also in research studies for their Doctorate). To the best of my recollection the two departments had close liaison under the umbrella of Pakistan Philosophical Congress and the legacy of the academic influence of late Professor M. M. Sharif.

Prof. Siddiqui's published writings cover a wide range of philosophical themes and a number of philosophers both eastern and western. His overriding interest, however, was in various issues of Muslim Philosophy and Ethics. He wrote quite a few articles on Quranic themes including its ontology and epistemology. He did incorporate and buttresses his position with the help of western philosophical ideas, yet he was always careful to note that his reinterpretation must proceed in a spirit of reverence and fidelity to the real and original traditions of the Quran and of the best period of our history.

It was not his style to hold back his religious views whether as writer or speaker. He had been consistently combative in projecting his vision of fundamentalist Islam as consonant with contemporary scientific realities.

Prof. B. H. Siddiqui for a very long time served as external examiner for M.A. Philosophy examinations and also as member of the Board of Studies in Philosophy, University of the Punjab. In the meetings of the Board of Studies his participation was always very active and he contributed a lot in its deliberations. His concern for raising the academic standards of postgraduate teaching in Philosophy was quite visible in his remarks and proposals. After retirement from government service, he used to visit Philosophy Department of the University as an associate teacher. For several years he taught courses in Philosophy of Education, Existentialism and Ethics. In the Department a condolence meeting was held in which all senior teachers spoke at length about their reminiscences of Prof. B. H. Siddiqui. Prof. Dr. Abdul Khaliq was also specially invited to participate in this

meeting. May the departed soul rest in peace in the heavenly abode. Ameen!

Following is a complete statement of his activities and research work:

A. Positions held in Pakistan Philosophical Congress and International Philosophical Association

- Active member of PPC since its inception in 1954.
- President, Philosophy of Religion Section, Peshawar, 1963.
- Joint Secretary, Local Organizing Committee, 12th Session of PPC, Lahore, 1965.
- Member, Executive Committee of PPC, 1968-1971.
- General President, 22nd Session of PPC, Lahore, 1982.
- Founder Secretary, Islamic Philosophical Association, Lahore, 1982.

B. Books (English)

1. Education: An Islamic Perspective. National Academy of Higher Education, University Grants Commission, Islamabad, 1986.
2. Knowledge: An Islamic Perspective. International Institute of Islamic Thought, Islamabad, 1991.
3. Philosophical Thought of Miskawayh.

C. Books (Urdu)

1. *Barr-e-Saghir Pak-o-Hind ke Qadeem Madaris ka Nizam-e-Taleem*. Institute of Islamic Culture, Lahore, 1982.
2. *Musalmanon ki Taleemi Fikr ka Irtiqā*. Institute of Islamic Culture, Lahore, 1983.
3. *Iqbal Ba Hasiyat Mufakkir-e-Talim*. Iqbal Academy, Lahore, 1983.
4. *Islami Falsafa-e-Akhlaq*. Syed Sons, Urdu Bazar, Lahore, 1972.
5. *Mazhariyat wa Wujudiat*.

D. A History of Muslim Philosophy ed. M. M. Sharif, OTTO Harroswitz, Wiesbaden, 1963-1964

- *Ibn-e-Tufail* Volume, pp. 525-540.
- *Nasir al-Din Tusi*, Volume 1, pp. 564-580.
- *Jalal al-Din Dawwani*, Volume 2, pp. 883-888.

E. Miscellaneous Articles: Pakistan Philosophical Congress Proceedings

1. The Philosophy of Hayy Ibn Yaqzan
2. *Ilm al-Akhlaq*
3. Miskawayh's Theory of Psychotherapy
4. Ideology of Pakistan
5. From Hayy Bin Yaqzan to the "Children of Light" (Quakers)
6. *Islam ka Falsafa-e-Talim*
7. Phenomenology
8. Philosophy of History
9. Philosophy and the Community
10. Reorientation of Muslim Philosophy
11. Philosophical Basis of Islamic Resurgence
12. Muslim Philosophy and its Impact on Society
13. Miskawayh's Theory of History
14. Philosophy of Recreation
15. Concept of Value in Islamic Thought
16. Philosophical Activity in Pakistan (*Al-Hikmat*, P.U. Lahore, 1990).
17. Al-Farabi and Miskawayh on the Classification of Sciences (*Iqbal*, January 1964, pp. 58-63)
18. Pakistani Writers Writing on Philosophy
19. Philosophy of History
20. T. W. Arnold: Life and Works (*Iqbal*, Lahore)

21. *Iqbal ka Falsafa-e-Talim* in the book published by Government College of Education for Men, Lahore, 1977, pp. 11-58
22. *Jaddidiyat ka Mizaj aur Uska Mustaqbil*
23. *Islam aur Jaddidiyat: Aik Takabuli Mutalah*
24. *Ilahiyat-e-Islamia ki Tamir-e-Nau*
25. Modernity and Islam: A Dialogue (*The Quest*, GC Lahore, 1995 and *Quranic Horizons*, January-March 1996)
26. *Talim ke Maqasid* (Suffa, Quran College, 1993)
27. Quran College, Lahore (Prospectus Quran College)
28. Muqaddima, Dr. Absar Ahmed's *Falsafa-e-Akhlaq*, 1989, pp. 9-16
29. A Glossary of Quranic Epistemology
30. Whither Muslim Philosophy
31. Philosophy and the Challenge of the 21st Century
32. Philosophy and Life
33. *Iqbal aur Talim ke Ulum-e-Thalatha* (*Thanwi Talim*, defunct Bureau of Education, Lahore)
34. The Roots of Western Culture (read in Quran College Seminar)
35. Problems of Education: Achievements and Failures (written in 1986 for National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, Islamabad)
36. *Jadid Ilm ki Islami Aqdar ki Roshni Men Ta'mir Nau*