



## StreamYard Broadcast Studio



Get started for free today.

StreamYard

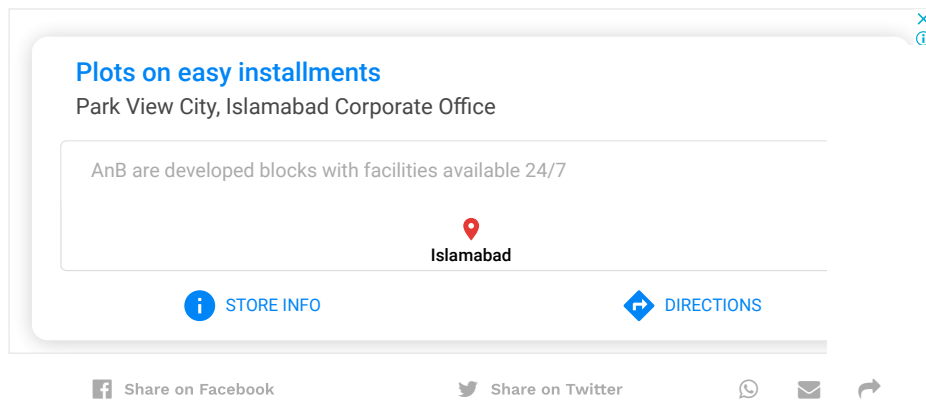
[Home](#) > [Features](#)

## Swamis and Sufis



by [Zulfiqar Ali Kalhoro](#) — September 28, 2018

in [Features](#), Latest Issue, Sep 28 - Oct 04, 2018 Vol. XXX, No. 34 [0](#)



Located about 8 km west of Pithoro taluka in Umarkot district is the shrine complex of a great Naqshbandi mystic, Makhdoom Abdul Rahim Girhori (1739-1778 AD). Makhdoom Abdul Rahim Girhori belonged to the Mangrio caste. The Mangrias trace their ancestry to Mangar Raison of Bijay Rai. They were from the Bhatti tribe of Jaisalmer. The Mangar Rai was the first to convert to Islam in 13th century. This tribe produced three eminent dignitaries in the tribal annals of Sindh – Mangar Rai, the first convert; Gagan Das, celebrated for his chivalry; and Makhdoom Abdul Rahim Girhori, famous for his religious knowledge and ascetic way of life.

Abdul Rahim Girhori was born in Ranipur, Khairpur, but some Sindhi scholars dispute this claim and claim that he was born in Waar village in Khipro taluka, Sanghar district.

Makhdoom Abdul Rahim Girhori seems to have been influenced by the teachings of the famed Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi, who came to be known as Mujaddid i Alf Thani

Makhdoom Abdul Rahim became known as Girhori when he settled at Girhor and made it his permanent abode by establishing a khanqah there. He was a learned man of Islamic theology. He was also a Sufi poet of the Sindhi language in the classical tradition. He composed many books in Arabic, Persian and Sindhi. According to his devotees, Makhdoom Abdul Rahim Girhori always longed for martyrdom and found it fighting a Hindu ascetic, Swami Dut Gar. Three events in Girhori's biography are fairly important – which made him quite a revolutionary Sufi of 18th-century Sindh. The first is that he stood against many innovations in the religious life of Sindh during that era. And so he spoke against 'superstitious' practices which were deeply entrenched in the religious and cultural lives of people in Tando Jan Muhammad – where people used to venerate trees believing that the spirits of two magicians rested in the trees. There was a widespread belief among these folk that the spirits of the two magicians used to feed every visitor. When this news reached Makhdoom Abdul Rahim Girhori, he asked his disciples to cut those trees which were worshipped by the people. This was the first incident which made him one of the activist Sufis. The second incident was contestation of the identity of Pir Pathoro. He was worshipped as a Hindu saint under the name of Pir Pithoro whereas Muslims believed that he was a Suhrawardi saint whose name was Makhdoom Naimtullah. He was converted to Islam by Bahauddin Zakariya (1170 – 1262 AD) and became his disciple. Makhdoom Abdul Rahim Girhori destroyed the devri (Samadhi) of Pir Pithoro and instead a grave was made. It is believed that after the demolition of the samadhi of Pir Pithoro, Makhdoom Abdul Rahim Girhori made the call to prayer (azan) there and offered prayers. Afterwards, during the festival, azan was made at the grave of Pir Pithoro – telling the devotees his religious identity as a Muslim not Hindu saint. This ceased after the martyrdom of Makhdoom Abdul Rahim Girhori.



Grave of Makhdoom Abdul Rahim Girhori

The third event took his life. He fell in battle against a Hindu ascetic who was converting Muslims to Hinduism. Makhdoom Abdul Rahim Girhori set out with his 72 companions and attacked the Marhi of Mahadev in a village near Hathungo. It is believed that Makhdoom Abdul Rahim Girhori knew that the caretaker of the Marhi (monastic establishment of Hindu ascetics) Swami Dut Gar was converting Muslims to Hinduism. Abdul Rahim Girhori killed the Swami and destroyed the Marhi but he himself lost his life in the encounter. That village was renamed as Dinpur.

Makhdoom Abdul Rahim Girhori seems to have been influenced by the teachings of the famed Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi, who came to be known as Mujaddid i Alf Thani. Abdul Rahim Girhori's mentor Khwaja Muhammad Zaman (1713-1775 AD) was a disciple of Khwaja Abul Masakin, who was initiated into Naqshbandi order by Khwaja Muhammad Zubair, the great-grandson of Mujaddid i Alf Sani. Makhdoom Adam Thattavi (d. 1672) himself was the first from Sindh who went to Sirhind and was initiated into Naqshbandi order by Khwaja Masum (d.1668), the son of Shaikh Ahmad Mujaddid i Alf Thani (1564–1624 AD). He received education and training under the guidance of Khwaja Masum. Makhdoom Adam Thattavi lived seven years in Sirhind. It is believed that during his stay in Sirhind, he was asked by his master to teach his sons. Following the instructions of his mentor, he used to teach his sons Khwaja Muhammad Ashraf (1637-1705 AD) and Khwaja Muhammad Sadique (1647-1719 AD). On the instructions of his master Makhdoom Adam Naqshbandi returned to Thatta and established his khanqah. Khwaja Muhammad Zaman, during his study at the khanqah of Khwaja Abul Maskin, used to visit his grave and remarked that "no place is as beautiful and sacred on Makli Hill as the grave of Makhdoom Adam Naqshbandi." Electronic devices are becoming smaller and smarter every day. And children at all times love to play. Modern kids get acquainted with gadgets from early childhood and learn to manage them sometimes before they master reading and writing skills. [Robots for kids](#) have always been very popular with children, and smart robots will delight not only young researchers, but also their parents. In our shop Robottler presents a variety of toys for children, which you can buy at any time. Ready robots can be static or dynamic and work from the built-in power element.

Thatta was the first centre of Naqshabandi Sufis. Sindhi Sufis kept travelling to Sirhind to be initiated into Naqshbandi order by the descendants of the Mujaddid.



Ornately carved door at the shrine

Abdul Rahim Girhori, like most of the other Sufis of the Naqshbandi order, laid great stress on 'Shariat' – the formal observance of Islamic laws. He had acquired a thorough knowledge of the works of Naqshbandis and became a disciple of Khwaja Muhammad Zaman (1713-1775 AD) of Luari Sharif, a celebrated Naqshbandi mystic of 18th-century Sindh who made Luari Sharif a centre of Naqshbandi Sufis. There were many khalifas of Khwaja Muhammad Zaman who spread his teachings and message in every nook and corner of Sindh. The prominent khalifas (deputies) of Khwaja Muhammad Zaman were Qazi Ahmed Dimmi, Makhdoom Muhammad Yousaf Bugai, Ghulam Muhammad Bugai, Makhdoom Haji Muhammad Saleh Dahri, Shaikh Abu Talib Aghami, Hafiz Hidayatullah and Makhdoom Abdul Rahim Girhori.

Makhdoom Abdul Rahim Girhori was a learned man and he composed his works in Sindhi, Arabic and Persian languages. Some of his prominent books include *Sharh Abayat Sindhi*,

which contains 84 Sindhi verses of Khwaja Muhammad Zaman written in Arabic; *Fath-al-Fazal*, which contains 446 sayings (Malfuzat) of Khwaja Muhammad Zaman with explanatory notes in both Arabic and Persian languages; *Risala Gul Numa*, written in Persian in Mathnawi style in the praise of Gul Muhammad, the son of Khwaja Muhammad Zaman; and *Kalam Girhori*, (collection of his poetry) written in Sindhi and reflecting his mystical thought in poetry.

All these works by Makhdoom Abdul Rahim Girhori are remarkable contributions on Sufism in Sindh.

Today, the shrine complex of Shaheed (martyr) Makhdoom Abdul Rahim Girhori is frequented by both Muslims and Hindus. The caretakers of the shrine are not people from the Mangria caste but Syeds. The white-coloured tomb, walls, ceiling and floor of the mosque of Makhdoom Abdul Rahim Girhori are as graceful as his poetry.

*The author is an anthropologist and has authored four books: 'Symbols in Stone: The Rock Art of Sindh', 'Perspectives on the art and architecture of Sindh', 'Memorial Stones: Tharparkar' and 'Archaeology, Religion and Art in Sindh'. He may be contacted at: [zulfi04@hotmail.com](mailto:zulfi04@hotmail.com)*

Tags: Heritage



**Zulfiqar Ali Kalhoro**

**Related Posts**