

*Obituary*

**A. K. BROHI  
IN MEMORIAM**

In September of 1987 Allahbakhsh Brohi departed from this world of change and corruption for the domain of permanence. He breathed his last in London at the age of seventy two, dying in peace and serenity. His body was transported to Pakistan where it was buried with the greatest honor worthy of one of the most famous and respected sons of Pakistan. A.K. Brohi was not only an eminent jurist, writer and political figure. He was not only a former higher commissioner to India, a minister of justice and ambassador. He was also a true *mu'min*, a person of great faith moderation and wisdom. And it was particularly the last qualities which placed his love in the heart of not only the educated but also the common people of his country. When he walked in the streets of Lahore or Karachi, ordinary people paid special respect to him for they saw in him a devout person with a strong sense of justice and concern for their spiritual welfare.

A.K. Brohi lived a most active life in both the political and intellectual arenas of Pakistan. He was at the forefront of the struggle to create a constitution for the state which was created in the name of Islam. He was deeply concerned with Muslim-Hindu relations and the whole problem of the rapport between Pakistan and India. He fought for juridical justice and was considered to be such an impartial lawyer that it was not a Bengali but the Sindhi A.K. Brohi whom Mujeebur Rahman chose to defend him during the critical events which led to the partition of Pakistan.

Above and beyond such known activities, however, there was another side to A.K. Brohi which was concerned with the inner life. From the first time we met in Lahore in 1959, our discussion turned to the spiritual dimension of Islam, to Sufism. We visited the tomb of Dadaji Ganjbakhsh, the patron saint of Lahore together, spending many hours in prayer and recollection in that remarkable sanctuary. From that time on, the life of the Spirit united us and we remained close friends whether we met in Pakistan, Iran, England or America, or simply corresponded from far away.

Brohi began to take the spiritual life ever more seriously starting from that period in his life. Brought up like many Indo-Pakistanis of his generation upon a strange mixture of turn of the century British philosophy, German idealism and certain tenets of Islam, he began to read to an ever greater degree traditional works such as those of Frithjof Schuon, Titus Burckhardt and Martin Lings which contain the antidote to the follies of modernism. Although the mental patterns created by his early education

did not completely change as a result of this re-education, his heart became completely transformed by the grace issuing from the recollection of the One. Among his last writings are the essays on the Quran and prayer in *Islamic Spirituality* (ed. S.H. Nasr, London, Kegan Paul, 1987) where the result of this transformation is reflected to some extent.

His love for God and His Prophet began to dominate to an ever greater degree not only his inner life but also his external activities. He devoted the last few years of his life to the creation of the Islamic university in Pakistan and the National Hijra Celebration Committee whose major project to produce the hundred great books of Islamic civilization was directed by him. He also served the cause of Islam even beyond the borders of Pakistan in numerous ways and was one of the first eminent Muslim figures to see behind the mask of so many movements today which use the name of Islam, the face of the real forces which are involved. He was deeply saddened by many of the events of the past decade in the Islamic world and always spoke for traditional orthodox Islam and the moderation which is inseparable from the peace (*salām*) which Islam seeks to bring to mankind.

With his death not only Pakistan but the whole of the Islamic world has lost one of its most pious, gentle, generous and knowledgeable leaders, a man who devoted his life to the cause of Islam, a rare being in this day and age who not only spoke about Islam and acted outwardly in accordance with its tenets, but whose heart palpitated in the recollection and commemoration of Allah. He followed in his life this central teaching of Sufism according to which man's external actions must emanate from a center, that center being the heart which is the "Throne of the Compassionate".

A.K. Brohi is no longer with us in body but his presence remains in his writings, in his actions and in the impressions left upon the minds and souls of those who knew him and who felt the warmth and generosity which emanated from his being. Meanwhile, his soul has returned to that Presence which it had come to know during the last part of his life through the celebration and remembrance of Allah in his heart. May the Mercy of Allah be showered upon him and may the love he had for the path which leads to Him serve as an example to many near and far during this most difficult period of Islamic history when the very foundations of the faith of Muslims are challenged and the will of every Muslim to cling to the "firm rope" (*ḥabl al-matin*) which saves put to the test. *Rahmat Allah 'alayhi.*

**Seyyed Hossein Nasr**