A Review of Shiite Religious Institutions in Bahraini

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ABSTRACT

Bahrain's Shiites, like other countries Shiites, held mourning ceremonies and festivals with special events, the most important event, is Muharram mourning that is held every year magnificently. Apart from Muharam, Shiites held ceremonies. Maatem is among the most important religious ceremonies held by Bahrain's Shiite.

INTRODUCTION

Mosques and various religious ceremonies are very important in the Shia culture, since in addition to local and religious ceremonies, birth celebrations and mourning are held by Shiites. Bahraini Shiites as other countries Shiites seriously look into the issue of Ashura, and this is their common point (Daghagh, 7). Bahraini clerics emphasize on the martyr of Imam Hossein (AS) regarding the deaths the birth of Prophet Muhammad in regard to births. Elite’s birthday celebrations are usually held in a quiet environment, where people are welcomed. In religious meetings, religious texts are read and discussed. In Bahrain, the days of mourning are called "Altaharim" and religious meetings are known as "Adeh" or "Gheraat". Before the administrative reform, clerical and Shiites who monitored on the tombs and religious sites allocated some of donations to themselves. But after the administrative reform donations and endowment gifts are handed to the Shiite office. Other income sources of mullahs and preachers are called "Sharfieh" that is received for religious speeches. The amount of income depends on the clergy reputation, Maatem and where speeches are on [7].

Maatem (Mourning):

Maatem are centers where more Shiites political, social and religious activities are organized. Holding and publishing the teachings and traditions of Shiite like Ashura ceremonies, celebrations, mourning, Taziyeh reading and meetings for funerals for the unity of thought and action are among responsibilities held by Maatem with a great role in strengthening political and religious consciousness of the people [3]. Maatem are built in small and large sizes, some with a cupola and the pulpit with the reception items.

There are Maatem in villages and cities and their founders are among different social classes including scholars, owners, merchants and craftsmen and other people. Maatem influence goes up and down according to its founders’ social status. Maatem have been founded in the seventies and eighties [7]. There are about 500 Maatem in Bahrain that is the higher number of Maatem among other countries; many of Maatem have been established by Ayatollah teacher.
Maatem management:
If the founder is not able to do his duties, its management is delegated to another person. Maatem management was held by people but was transferred to the Shiite Endowment Office. Maatem management depends on social influence and power of authorities in setting up mourning delegations. Maatem, after being built, dedicated to Imam Hussein (AS) and no have has the right to sell them. When two families are in conflict on a Maatem issues, they separate and establish their new Maatem [10].

Maatem Economy:
Maatem Founding needs funding; Maatem costs and administration are the responsibility of the founders and Maatem monitored by religious and charitable groups compared with those managed by individuals are of better economic situation and influence [12].

The founders of mourning faced with funding shortages ask people to contribute. Wealthy Maatem invite clergymen in the first ten days of Muharram mourning to the ceremony and on the tenth day go into mourning on the streets of Manama.

Bahrain Popular Maatem:

Salemabad Maatem: the first Maatem in Salemabad was Founded by a small businessman belonged to Al-Kazem. Salemabad Maatem unlike other Maatem has not been involved in the family conflicts.

Sharia judges Khan: These are people who understand religion and sharia well and knew it [7].

Sanabes Maatem: there was only Maatem Bu-Khamis in Sanabes until 1964. Bu-Khamis was of the largest rural families with a great reputation in Bahrain. Members of Bu-Khamis Maatem were traditional Shiite, so, the associations and Maatem which used the TV and women were also accused of blasphemy and heresy by them. Traditional and elite Shiite each have their own Maatem in Sanabes [8].

Deraz village Maatem: Two Shiite famous families, Al Shahab and Al-Asfour, who first is famed for the economy and other for the religious sciences in Bahrain, founded and run this Maatem. There were seven Maatem in this village until 1954, when four of them were served by Al Shahab and the others by Al Mazrogh and Al Abu Rovays.

Iranians residing in Bahrain have also their own Maatem; the most famous Iranians Maatem is Ajam Maatem that had been established by someone named Haji Abdul Nabi Kazerouni. He was big and wealthy businessman who was Ali bin Isa parliament long time member of the Iranian [7].

Conclusion:
Bahrain has traditionally been popular for its Shiite seminaries. Because of the boom and the high level of science and education in Bahrain seminaries, a large number of Shia religious scholars and professionals are rising from Bahrain. Having a reputation suffix “Bahrani” for many of the great scholars means the large number of Bahrain's Shiite scholars. Today, despite opposition and cries of multiple discriminations, there are 9 active Seminary in Bahrain engaged in the training of scholars of religion. In addition, it should be noted that Maatem, despite the high rigidity are of particular importance in the field of religious and social affairs.

REFERENCES