

ALLAH'S ATTRIBUTES IN THE INTERPRETATION OF KHOJA MUHAMMAD PARSA

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Abstract .This article examines the doctrine of the Divine Attributes in the thought of Khoja Muhammad Parsa (1349–1420), one of the most prominent representatives of the Khwajagan Naqshbandiyya tradition and a leading theoretician of Sufism in Central Asia. Drawing primarily upon his work *Tahqiqat*, the study analyzes Parsa's understanding of divine knowledge (*marifah*), the relationship between theological and experiential cognition of God, and his interpretation of the Ninety Nine Beautiful Names of Allah. Particular attention is devoted to his exposition of the Divine Names *al Wakil* and *al Matin*, through which he elucidates the concepts of divine agency, absolute power, human dependence upon God, and spiritual self realization. The article further highlights the significance of Parsa's scholarly legacy within the intellectual history of Islamic theology and Sufism and demonstrates the importance of his writings as primary sources for the study of the Naqshbandi tradition in Central Asia.

Keywords: *Khoja Muhammad Parsa, Tahqiqat, Naqshbandiyya, Khwajagan, Sufism, Islamic theology, Divine Attributes, Asma al Husna, al Wakil, al Matin, marifah, wahdat al wujud, Central Asian Islam.*

One of the prominent theoreticians of Sufism who lived during the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries was Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Mahmud al Hafizi al Bukhari (1349–1420), widely known as Khoja Muhammad Parsa and recognized as a leading representative of the Khwajagan Naqshbandiyya tradition. Born in Bukhara, he pursued his studies in madrasas and acquired profound knowledge of various Islamic sciences, including Quranic studies, Hadith, and kalam. Through his scholarly achievements, he became one of the most distinguished scholars of his era and, following Baha al Din Naqshband, gained prominence as the foremost representative and propagator of the Naqshbandi order in Central Asia.

Information concerning the life of Khoja Muhammad Parsa is preserved in several historical sources, including *Nafahat al Uns* by Abdurahman Jami, *Rashahat* by Ali Safi, and other biographical works¹.

Khoja Muhammad Parsa was a versatile scholar who excelled in the fields of tafsir, Hadith, Sufism, kalam, geography, literature, history, and fiqh. Of the numerous works attributed to him, approximately forty have survived to the present day.

The extant works of Khoja Muhammad Parsa may be broadly classified into several categories, including Quranic sciences, tafsir studies, Hadith studies, kalam, *usul al fiqh*, fiqh, Sufi literature, literary studies, biography, history, and geography.

Among these disciplines, Sufism occupies a central position. Khoja Muhammad Parsa's voluminous work *Tahqiqat* is devoted to the scholarly exposition of the theoretical dimensions of kalam and Sufism.

¹ Safi, Fakhr al Din Ali. *Rashahat Ayn al Hayat*. Tashkent, 2003, p. 85.

From the opening section of praise and glorification, Khoja Muhammad Parsa alludes to his understanding of the doctrine of wahdat al wujud (the Unity of Being).

In the subsequent folios of Tahqiqat, Khoja Muhammad Parsa briefly introduces the principal subject of the work, namely the existence and oneness of Allah. Upon concluding this discussion, he presents the following concise statement (folio 3b):

لما عرفنا الله سبحانه بالاجمال انه موصوف بصفات الكمال فقد عرفنا الله سبحانه حق معرفته

“Once we have recognized in a general manner that Allah, Glorified and Exalted, is characterized by the attributes of perfection, then we have indeed attained a true knowledge of Allah, Glorified and Exalted!”

In composing Tahqiqat, Khoja Muhammad Parsa also drew upon numerous earlier sources and incorporated citations from them. One such example appears in folio 4a:

در کتاب کشف المحجوب آورده است که معرفت حق سبحانه عز و جل بر دو گونه است یکی علمی دوم حالی و معرفت علمی قاعده همه خیرات دنیا و اخرتست و مهمترین خیرها مر بنده را اندر همه اوقات و احوال شناخت خدای است سبحانه

“It is stated in the book Kashf al Mahjub that knowledge of the Truth, Glorified and Exalted, is of two kinds: the first is intellectual knowledge and the second is experiential knowledge. Intellectual knowledge constitutes the foundation of all blessings in this world and the hereafter. Among all blessings, the most important for the servant at all times and under all circumstances is the knowledge of God, Glorified and Exalted”.

Building upon these reflections, Khoja Muhammad Parsa proceeds in Tahqiqat to explain the ninety nine names and attributes of Allah. Several examples of these explanations are presented below.

Al Wakil

Allah Most High is characterized by the attribute al Wakil (the Trustee, the Disposer of Affairs). A person should maintain self discipline and entrust all of his affairs completely to Allah Most High, refraining from independent claims of control and management. He should appoint Allah Most High as his representative in all matters. Whatever occurs within the unseen realm should be regarded as free from defect, for whatever Allah Most High decrees is perfect and faultless. This Divine Name exerts a complete influence in the execution of affairs and in the judgment of matters (folio 51a).

It is reported that whoever has lost something should recite the Name al Wakil seventy times during the period when people are asleep. Thereafter, he should mention the names of the Four Rightly Guided Caliphs of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, and seek assistance through their blessed spirits. It is said that he will soon recover what has been lost or attain what he seeks.

Al Matin

The attribute al Matin signifies the negation of any limit or end with respect to Divine Power. In other words, Allah's power is boundless and infinite. Whatever one contemplates in relation to this attribute falls within the scope of the power of al Matin. Through this attribute, Allah Most High possesses power over all things.

If one regards any human being as powerful, that person's strength is in reality derived from the attribute of al Matin. Indeed, al Matin has no partner. He establishes and governs all affairs without assistance or association from any other being.

The actions of Allah Most High are characterized by absolute strength and firmness. No defect can enter His acts, nor is any of His actions devoid of wisdom. There is no imperfection, weakness, incapacity, or deficiency in either His Essence or His Attributes. It should be understood that all created beings are weak before Him.

When one contemplates the attribute of al Matin, one comes to recognize one's own weakness and humility (folio 51b). One also realizes that whatever strength and power one possesses are granted by Allah Most High.

These two Divine Names, al Qawiyy and al Matin, belong to the essential attributes of Allah, comparable to attributes such as Life and Knowledge. Seeking strength through these Names is believed to possess a complete spiritual efficacy.

It is reported that whoever desires victory or finds himself lacking sufficient determination and strength to accomplish a task should frequently invoke this Divine Name. However, he should first take the necessary practical means and establish the appropriate causes; thereafter, his objective may be attained.

Among the representatives of Sufism who left behind a substantial scholarly legacy, the works of Khoja Muhammad Parsa occupy a particularly important position. Their significance stems not only from their scholarly value but also from the fact that they constitute some of the principal primary sources for understanding the Naqshbandi tradition. For this reason, source scholars such as O Buriyev and M Hasani have emphasized the necessity of giving special attention to his intellectual heritage².

Khoja Muhammad Parsa acquired profound knowledge of various Islamic sciences, including Quranic studies, Hadith, and kalam. Through his scholarly achievements, he became one of the most distinguished intellectual figures of his age and, after Baha al Din Naqshband, emerged as the foremost representative and propagator of the Naqshbandi tradition in Central Asia.

His exemplary life, together with his views on religion and worldly existence, the universe and humanity, knowledge and spiritual gnosis, love and devotion, as well as his scholarly and literary works devoted to a wide range of disciplines and subjects, served as a practical guide and intellectual model for subsequent generations of Sufi scholars and practitioners.

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