



About Some Aspects of "Nasayim Al-Muhabbat"

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47134/jpn.v2i1.945>

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Received: 08-07-2024

Accepted: 11-08-2024

Published: 28-09-2024



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Abstract: This work explores the profound connections between Alisher Navoi's literary contributions and Sufism, emphasizing the spiritual and ethical dimensions present in his poetry. Through "Nasoyimul Muhabbat," Navoi examines the virtues of saints, the significance of devotion, and the relationship between human beings and the divine. The text serves as a vital source for understanding the Sufi tradition, illustrating how Navoi integrates religious themes within his broader literary framework. It also highlights the importance of ethical conduct and the transformative power of Sufism in the lives of individuals.

Keywords: Navoi, Sufism, Religious Themes, Ethical Conduct, Saints, Spiritual Literature, Uzbek Literature, Islamic Philosophy.

Introduction

When studying Uzbek classical literature, particularly the works of Navoi, we witness its inherent connection to religion and Sufism. This, in turn, necessitates an awareness of Sufism for a deeper understanding of Navoi's work. Russian orientalist scholar E. E. Bertels noted in his research on Sufi literature that "without knowledge of Sufi literature, one cannot form a complete picture of the cultural life of medieval Muslim East, and without being aware of this literature, it is difficult to understand the East itself." Through works such as "Munojot," "Arba'in," "Nazmul Jawahir," "Waqfiya," "Sirojul Muslimin," and especially "Nasoyimul Muhabbat," which discusses Sufi matters and saints, we can view Navoi as a deep connoisseur and theorist of Sharia and Sufi science. The presence of praises to God, eulogies of the Prophet, and supplications in nearly all of Navoi's works, especially in the introductions of the "Khamsa" epics, further supports this idea. In brief, we can say that a significant portion of Navoi's work deals with religious themes.

Methodology

Now, speaking about "Nasoyimul Muhabbat," this work is a vivid artistic example of Sufi literature. It illustrates how renowned Sufi scholars, thinkers, and writers of the time lived honorable lives through various professions, emphasizing the human virtues and ethical rules. Navoi fulfills these essential tasks in his work.

In the section titled "This group serves as a prelude," Navoi elaborates on the reasons and wisdom behind human creation, how devout servants achieve friendship with God through pure faith and piety, the concept that scholars are the inheritors of prophets, and that all saints steadfastly adhere to the path of God, guiding people to the right path. He interprets the Quranic verse that proclaims humanity as the most noble creation: "Indeed, God has not created a creation more noble and superior than the children of Adam." To be worthy of this honor, it requires purifying oneself from all vile and despicable traits and cultivating virtuous deeds, which embodies the essence of Sufism.

The part of the introduction titled "To mention some of the deeds, actions, and practices of this group" is dedicated to the actions of saints – their deeds, attitudes, and interactions (with the community) and the hardships they endure on the path of Truth. It first mentions repentance, followed by earning a lawful livelihood, being steadfast in Sharia, internalizing the words of faith, performing the five daily prayers, giving alms, fasting, performing pilgrimage, possessing good manners, being patient, truthful, and practicing austerity – all illustrated with exemplary stories. It is known that the lifestyle of Sufis must conform to Sharia and Sunnah. In this regard, Navoi emphasizes, "This group's adherence to Sharia and compliance with Sunnah surpasses all other matters."

Typically, works and literature on Sufism provide detailed information about the terms of the orders and the stages of spiritual advancement. However, "Nasoyimul Muhabbat" differs in that its introduction is shorter, focusing on the main content regarding saints and their virtues.

According to Sufi teachings, human beings consist of two opposing fundamentals: matter and spirit. Therefore, the characteristics of these two foundations are gathered within. If materialism prevails, humanity descends into animalistic behavior; if the spirit prevails, divinity flourishes. The spirit should not become a captive of the physical body; instead, the body should serve as a vehicle for the spirit. Individuals whose spirits have evolved stand out with their intellect, creativity, and divine insights. As the spirit develops, it can no longer be confined to the body, establishing a connection with the cosmos, unveiling its secrets, and manifesting miracles. The human being, composed of spirit and body, is considered a boundary between the divine and the material worlds, akin to dawn, which is the boundary between night and day. After dawn, darkness retreats, and the sun shines forth, just as the human spirit should gradually leave behind the darkness of the body, aspiring towards the luminous realm of purity. Navoi illustrates these qualities in all the saints mentioned in "Nasoyimul Muhabbat."

Among the principal sources, "Nafahotul Uns" mentions 586 men and 32 women, totaling 618 saints; "Tazkiratul Auliya" mentions 94 men and 1 woman, totaling 95 saints. In "Nasoyimul Muhabbat," the number of sheikhs is 735 men and 35 women, totaling 770, which reflects its completeness. Additionally, the existence of information on over 100 Turkic and 36 Indian saints indicates the significant features that distinguish "Nasoyimul Muhabbat" from other tazkiras. The work includes 61 references to Quranic verses and 14 hadith examples. It also mentions the titles of 132 works related to Sufism. Each saint's information includes verses in Arabic and Persian, along with wise sayings.

Result and Discussion

Before Navoi, the tazkiras that provided information about Sufi sheikhs were primarily written in Arabic and Persian, making them less accessible to all Turkic peoples. Navoi, recognizing this, wrote his tazkira in the Turkic language. Thus, we can say that "Nasoyimul Muhabbat" is the first tazkira of Sufism written in Turkic.

In the tazkira, Abulhasan Sufi Fushanjiy states about Sufism: "In our time, Sufism has become a name, not a truth. Previously, it was not a name but a truth." This definition seems relevant even today. We can discuss concepts like Sufism, tariqah, and Sufi in various theoretical contexts, but in practical terms, as noted above, the truth often remains less visible.

In the work, Navoi speaks of prominent Eastern artists such as Mawlano Sharafiddin Yazdiy, Shaykh Avhaduddin, Khamil Kirmoniy, Qasim Tabriziy, Shaykh Farididdin Attar Nishapuri, Saadi Shirazi, Shaykh Nizami, Khosrow Dehlaviy, Hasan Dehlaviy, Shaykh Kamol Khujandiy, Hafiz Shirazi, Mawlano Lutfiy, and Sayyid Nasimi, as well as his mentor and close friend Abdurahmon Jomiy. They are presented as knowledgeable individuals who mastered the Sufi path and were distinguished talents. The poet gives high praise to the creativity of these thinkers. It can also be noted that in the 15th century, the most significant landowner in Transoxiana and the leader of the Naqshbandi order was Khoja Akhror Valiy, while in Khorasan, a similar figure was Alisher Navoi.

Conclusion

To conclude on the importance of "Nasoyimul Muhabbat," it serves as a significant source regarding the history, currents, and chains of Sufism, its representatives; the main concepts and terminologies of Sufism, philosophical and ethical principles; the Sufi processes of the 15th century and contemporaneous Sufis, as well as Sufi literary figures; and works and treatises that influenced, inspired, and motivated Navoi. By studying this work, we gain insights into Navoi's relationship with religion and his beliefs, as well as his status as a profound scholar of Islamic sciences. Overall, this work, dedicated to the biographies of saints, showcases the poet's remarkable contributions as a Sufi scholar and holds particular significance in the study of Sufi history. The information about the saints presented is also scientifically grounded. This comprehensive work serves as a unique resource for uplifting the spiritual culture of our people.

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