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**ALI HUIJWIRI'S KASHF AL-MAḤJŪB AND ITS
PUNJABI TRANSLATION:**

**A STUDY OF SUFI TERMINOLOGY,
SPIRITUAL THOUGHT, AND CULTURAL
TRANSMISSION**

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ABSTRACT: This study examines the life, intellectual contributions, spiritual legacy, and literary works of Hazrat Ali Hujwiri (Data Ganj Bakhsh), one of the most influential Sufi scholars and saints of the Islamic world. Particular attention is devoted to his celebrated work *Kashf al-Mahjub*, widely recognized as the earliest extant Persian treatise on Sufism and a foundational text in the study of Islamic mysticism. The research explores Ali Hujwiri's biography, extensive travels, spiritual lineage, scholarly formation, and role in the dissemination of Islamic teachings and Sufi thought in South Asia. The study further analyzes the intellectual structure, major themes, mystical terminology, and spiritual doctrines presented in *Kashf al-Mahjub*, including concepts such as *Faqr*, *Marifat*, *Tawhid*, *Sama*, and the various stages of spiritual realization. Special emphasis is placed on Hujwiri's efforts to reconcile Sufi spirituality with the

principles of orthodox Islamic law and theology. In addition, the article critically examines the Punjabi translation of *Kashf al-Mahjub* by Muhammad Sharif Sabir. Through a translation-studies perspective, it evaluates the translator's methodology, treatment of Sufi terminology, linguistic strategies, and contribution to the transmission of classical Islamic knowledge into Punjabi. The study argues that Sharif Sabir's translation successfully preserves the spiritual, intellectual, and cultural essence of the original Persian text while making it accessible to a wider Punjabi-speaking audience. The findings demonstrate that *Kashf al-Mahjub* continues to serve as an authoritative source for understanding Sufi doctrine, ethics, and spirituality. Furthermore, its Punjabi translation represents a significant contribution to Punjabi literature, Islamic scholarship, and intercultural knowledge transmission. The study concludes that both Ali Hujwiri's original work and its Punjabi translation play a vital role in preserving and disseminating the rich intellectual and spiritual heritage of Islamic mysticism across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

KEYWORDS: Ali Hujwiri, Data Ganj Bakhsh, *Kashf al-Mahjub*, *Kashf ul-Mahjoob*, Sufism, Tasawuf, Islamic Mysticism, Punjabi Translation, Sharif Sabir, Translation Studies, Spirituality, Persian Literature, South Asian Islam, Sufi Terminology, Cultural Transmission.

TRANSLATION, KNOWLEDGE TRANSMISSION, AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

Translation has played a pivotal role in the dissemination of knowledge, education, and culture throughout human history. It has served as a vital medium for the transmission of ideas across linguistic and geographical boundaries, enabling societies to access intellectual, religious, scientific, and literary traditions beyond their native languages.

In the Islamic tradition, the significance of translation emerged from the earliest period of Islam. As the message of Islam spread beyond the Arabian Peninsula, the need arose to communicate its teachings to non-Arab communities. Translation thus became an essential instrument for conveying the principles and values of Islam to diverse linguistic groups. The letters sent by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to various rulers and communities may be regarded as early examples of cross-cultural communication, whereby the message of Islam was presented in forms comprehensible to different audiences. This practice facilitated a clearer understanding of Islamic teachings among people unfamiliar with the Arabic language.

The importance of translation continued throughout the Islamic era. During the Abbasid period, particularly under the Caliph Harun al-Rashid, institutions dedicated to translation and scholarship were established. These centers played a crucial role in translating scientific, philosophical, and literary works from various languages into Arabic, thereby contributing significantly to the intellectual advancement of the Muslim world. The tradition of translation remains vibrant today and is reflected in the translation and publication departments of universities and research institutions across Pakistan and many other countries.

Translation is one of the oldest intellectual and cultural activities known to humanity. Both theoretical and practical dimensions of translation developed simultaneously and contributed substantially to the advancement of science, philosophy, linguistics, and literature. Throughout the medieval period, translation served as a bridge between civilizations, opening new avenues for intellectual exchange and scholarly inquiry.

In contemporary academia, translation studies has emerged as an independent discipline encompassing diverse areas such as translation theory, translation practice, translation history, translator training, and the translation of religious, literary, technical, legal, and scientific texts. Universities and research institutions increasingly recognize translation as a specialized field that requires both linguistic competence and cultural awareness.

The relationship between translation and culture is particularly significant. Translation is not merely a linguistic exercise; rather, it involves the transfer of cultural meanings, values, and conceptual frameworks from one language community to another. Consequently, translators must possess a deep understanding of both source and target cultures in order to communicate meanings accurately and effectively. Cultural sensitivity is especially important in the translation of religious texts, literary works, and historically significant manuscripts, where linguistic expressions often carry profound cultural and contextual implications.

Furthermore, the translator's social position, ethical responsibility, professional competence, and familiarity with contemporary technological resources influence the quality of translation. Administrative considerations, ethical standards, terminological consistency, and methodological rigor are also essential components of successful translation practice.

Particular care is required when translating sacred texts and classical religious manuscripts. The translation of the Holy Qur'an and other foundational Islamic texts has historically been governed by strict scholarly principles to ensure accuracy and fidelity to the original message. Similar caution is necessary when rendering classical manuscripts into indigenous languages, where the translator must preserve both the semantic content and the cultural spirit of the original work while making it accessible to contemporary readers.

ALI HUJWIRI

Abu 'l-Hasan 'Ali b. 'Uthman b. 'Ali al-Ghaznawi al-Jullabi al-Hujwiri (c. 1009–1072/77), commonly known as 'Ali al-Hujwiri (Nizami, 1996, p. 81), and alternatively spelled as Hajweri, Hajveri, or Hajvery, occupies a distinguished position in the intellectual and spiritual history of Islam. Reverentially known throughout the Indian subcontinent as Shaykh Syed 'Ali al-Hujwiri and Data Ganj Bakhsh, he was an eminent eleventh-century Persian Sunni Muslim mystic, theologian, scholar, and preacher from Ghazna (Hosain & Masse, n.d.). His enduring fame rests primarily on his authorship of *Kashf al-mahjub* (*Unveiling of the Hidden*), which is widely regarded as the earliest formal Persian treatise on Sufism (Strothmann, n.d.).

Ali Hujwiri made a profound contribution to the dissemination of Islamic teachings and Sufi thought throughout South Asia. Through his preaching, scholarship, and spiritual guidance, he played a significant role in the spread of Islam in the region (Werbner, 2003, p. 4). Historians have consequently described him as “one of the most important figures to have spread Islam in the Indian subcontinent” (Strothmann, n.d.).

The influence of Ali Hujwiri extends far beyond his literary and scholarly achievements. In contemporary

Pakistan, he is revered as the patron saint of Lahore by traditional Sunni Muslims (Hermansen, 2004, p. 381). Furthermore, he is among the most widely venerated Sufi saints across the Indian subcontinent (Hosain & Masse, n.d.). His shrine in Lahore, popularly known as Data Darbar, remains one of the most visited spiritual centers in South Asia (Hosain & Masse, n.d.). In terms of both annual visitors and the physical size of its complex, it is presently recognized as the largest shrine in Pakistan (Strothmann, n.d.). Since its nationalization in 1960, the shrine has been administered by the Punjab Awqaf and Religious Affairs Department (Strothmann, n.d.).

The spiritual legacy of Ali Hujwiri continues to exert a profound influence on the religious consciousness of the region. His name remains deeply embedded in the popular religious culture of both Pakistan and India, where he is widely regarded as a symbol of spiritual devotion and Islamic scholarship (Wach, 1948, pp. 263–280). In recognition of his enduring significance, the Government of Pakistan declared 21 November a public holiday in 2016 to commemorate the commencement of his annual three-day 'urs (death anniversary) celebrations (Daryaabadi, 1977, p. 11).

With regard to his spiritual training, Ali Hujwiri was a disciple of Hazrat Syeikh abu al fazal bin hassan khatli, as recorded in *Tasawuf-e-Islam* (Daryaabadi, 1977, p. 11). Through this spiritual lineage, he inherited and further developed the intellectual and mystical traditions that later found their most celebrated expression in *Kashf al-mahjub*, a work that continues to serve as a foundational text in the study of Islamic mysticism and Sufism.

LIFE, TRAVELS, AND SPIRITUAL LINEAGE OF ALI HUJWIRI

Ali Hujwiri was born in Ghazni, present-day Afghanistan, around 1009 CE to Uthman ibn Ali, also

known as Bu Ali. As is often the case in the biographical traditions of prominent Sufi saints, he is believed to have been a direct descendant of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) through his father's lineage, which traces its ancestry to Al-Imam Hasan ibn Ali. According to traditional genealogical accounts, his lineage extends through eight generations to Ali ibn Abi Talib (Al-Hujwiri, 1911).

The autobiographical details contained in *Kashf al-mahjūb* indicate that Ali Hujwiri undertook extensive journeys in pursuit of religious knowledge and spiritual enlightenment. His travels encompassed vast regions of the Ghaznavid Empire and beyond, including prolonged stays in major centers of Islamic learning such as Baghdad, Nishapur, and Damascus. During these journeys, he had the opportunity to meet and learn from many of the leading Sufis of his era (Al-Hujwiri, 1911; Strothmann, n.d.).

In the field of Islamic jurisprudence, Ali Hujwiri received formal instruction in the Hanafi school of orthodox Sunni law under several distinguished scholars (Al-Hujwiri, 1911; Strothmann, n.d.). Alongside his legal education, he also underwent rigorous spiritual training within the Sufi tradition. Through his teacher al-Khuttali, he became spiritually connected to a renowned chain of Sufi masters that included al-Husri, Abu Bakr Shibli (d. 946), and Junayd of Baghdad (d. 910), all of whom occupy a central position in the formative history of Islamic mysticism (Knysh, 2000, p. 133).

Historical accounts suggest that Ali Hujwiri spent a period of his life in Iraq (Hosain & Masse, n.d.), where he initially enjoyed financial prosperity but subsequently experienced economic hardship and indebtedness (Hosain & Masse, n.d.). His brief marriage during this period is also reported to have been unsuccessful and marked by personal difficulties (Hosain & Masse, n.d.).

Despite these challenges, his commitment to scholarship and spiritual discipline remained unwavering.

After years of travel and intellectual engagement, Ali Hujwiri eventually settled in Lahore, where he devoted himself to teaching, preaching, and spiritual guidance. It was in Lahore that he attained widespread recognition as a distinguished scholar, preacher, and Sufi master, and where he ultimately passed away (Hosain & Masse, n.d.). Nevertheless, the final years of his life were not without hardship. He himself refers to the difficulties caused by the loss of books that he had left behind in Ghazni, a circumstance that appears to have caused him considerable distress (Daryaabadi, 1977, p. 13).

Following his death, Ali Hujwiri was universally acknowledged by the Muslim community as a saint of exceptional spiritual stature. His reputation continued to grow over subsequent centuries, and he came to be revered as one of the most influential figures in the history of Sufism in South Asia (Hosain & Masse, n.d.).

THE SPIRITUAL LINEAGE OF ALI HUJWIRI

The spiritual lineage (*silsilah*) of Ali Hujwiri, as traditionally recorded in Sufi sources, is as follows:

1. Muhammad
2. Ali ibn Abi Talib
3. Husayn ibn Ali
4. Zain-ul-Abideen
5. Muhammad al-Baqir
6. Ja'far al-Sadiq
7. Musa al-Kadhim
8. Ali ar-Ridha
9. Maruf Karkhi
10. Sirri Saqti

11. Junayd al-Baghdadi
12. Abu Bakr Shibli
13. Sheikh Husri
14. Sheikh Abul Fazal bin Hasan
15. Khwaja Dataa Ganj Baksh Ali Hujwiri

This spiritual chain occupies a significant position in the history of Islamic mysticism, linking Ali Hujwiri to some of the most eminent figures of the early Sufi tradition. Through this lineage, he inherited and transmitted a rich legacy of spiritual knowledge, ethical discipline, and mystical insight that profoundly influenced the development of Sufism in the Indian subcontinent.

WORKS OF ALI HUJWIRI

KASHF AL-MAHJUB

Among the literary and intellectual contributions of Ali Hujwiri, *Kashf al-mahjub* (*Unveiling of the Hidden*) occupies a preeminent position. The work is widely recognized as “the earliest formal treatise on Sufism in Persian” (Strothmann, n.d.), and remains one of the most influential texts in the history of Islamic mysticism (Strothmann, n.d.). Written in a systematic and expository style, the book serves as a comprehensive introduction to the principles, doctrines, and practices of orthodox Sufism. In addition to elucidating fundamental aspects of Sufi thought, it also contains valuable biographical accounts of some of the most distinguished saints and spiritual masters of the Islamic tradition (Strothmann, n.d.).

The enduring significance of *Kashf al-mahjub* is further underscored by the fact that it is the only extant work of Ali Hujwiri that has survived to the present day (Hosain & Masse, n.d.). Consequently, it remains the principal source for understanding his spiritual

philosophy, intellectual outlook, and contribution to the development of Sufi thought.

OTHER WORKS

Although *Kashf al-mahjub* is the only surviving work attributed to Ali Hujwiri, historical records indicate that he authored several other writings that are now lost. Reynold Alleyne Nicholson compiled a brief list of these works, which provides important insights into the breadth of Hujwiri's scholarly interests and literary activity. Among these works are:

1. **Diwan (Songs of Hujwiri)**, a collection of the saint's poetry (Hujwiri, 2007, p. vii).
2. **Minhaj al-Din (The Way of the Religion)**, a substantial work comprising: (i) a detailed account of those Companions of Prophet Muhammad who, in Hujwiri's view, represented the earliest spiritual precursors of the Sufi tradition; and (ii) a comprehensive biography of the renowned tenth-century mystic and martyr Mansur al-Hallaj (d. 922) (Hujwiri, 2007, p. vii).
3. **Asrar al-khiraq wa 'l-ma'unat'**, a treatise devoted to the symbolic and spiritual significance of the woolen patched garments traditionally worn by the Sufis of his era (Hujwiri, 2007, p. viii).
4. **An untitled work on Mansur al-Hallaj**, explaining the meanings and mystical implications of his celebrated spiritual utterances (Hujwiri, 2007, p. viii).
5. **Kitab al-bayan li-ahl al-'iyan**, a theological and mystical treatise addressing the orthodox interpretation of the Sufi concept of union with God (Hujwiri, 2007, p. viii).

Another work associated with the Hujwiri tradition is *Kashf al-Asrar*, a concise Persian treatise that outlines the essential principles for adopting and practicing the path of *Tasawwuf*. The text was later translated and provided with extensive commentary by El-Sheikh Syed Mubarik Ali Shah El-Gillani (Hujwiri, 2005).

SIGNIFICANCE OF KASHF-UL-MAHJOOB

Revelation of the Veiled (Persian: كشفُ المحجوب), commonly known as *Kashf-ul-Mahjoob* or *Kashf-ul-Mahjub*, is among the oldest and most revered Persian treatises on Sufism. The work presents a comprehensive exposition of Sufi doctrines, practices, ethical principles, and spiritual disciplines. It offers a coherent and systematic account of Islamic mysticism while addressing many of the theological and practical issues that were debated among Sufi circles during the author's time.

Adopting an explanatory and analytical approach, Ali Hujwiri discusses a wide range of mystical concepts and controversies, frequently illustrating them through his own observations and spiritual experiences. His treatment of these issues not only clarifies contemporary debates but also provides valuable insight into the intellectual and spiritual climate of the classical Sufi tradition.

The text is distinguished by its rich Persian literary style and its engagement with philosophical reflection. As a result, *Kashf-ul-Mahjoob* is not merely a manual of Sufism but also a significant cultural and intellectual document. The work embodies the spiritual vision, scholarly depth, and distinctive identity of Ali Hujwiri, who is reverentially remembered throughout the Muslim world as Data Ganj Baksh (Werbner, 2003, p. 4)

INTELLECTUAL BACKGROUND, THEMES, AND INFLUENCE OF *KASHF-UL-MAHJOOB*

The composition of *Kashf-ul-Mahjoob* was undertaken under challenging circumstances. Ali Hujwiri himself records that he had been deprived of many of the books he had left behind in Ghazna, Afghanistan, a loss that undoubtedly complicated the process of writing and required considerable effort and time to overcome (Daryaabadi, 1977, p. 13). Despite these difficulties, he succeeded in producing a work that would become one of the most authoritative and enduring texts of the Sufi tradition.

Ali Hujwiri's intellectual and spiritual outlook was shaped by extensive travel undertaken over a period of approximately forty years. In pursuit of knowledge and spiritual refinement, he journeyed through numerous regions of the Islamic world, including Syria, Iraq, Persia, Kohistan, Azerbaijan, Tabaristan, Kerman, Greater Khorasan, Transoxiana, and Baghdad. Among the notable visits mentioned in *Kashf-ul-Mahjoob* are his journeys to the shrine of Bilal in Damascus, Syria, and to the shrine of Abu Saeed Abul Khayr in Mihne village, Greater Khorasan. Throughout these travels, he met a large number of distinguished Sufis and scholars, enriching both his intellectual and spiritual formation (Werbner, 2003, p. 12).

Although he encountered representatives of diverse mystical traditions, Ali Hujwiri remained firmly associated with the Junaidia order founded by Junayd al-Baghdadi. In accordance with this tradition, he emphasized the principle of spiritual "sobriety" over "intoxication," maintaining that genuine mystical experience must remain within the framework of Islamic law. For this reason, he consistently argued that authentic Sufism is fully compatible with the fundamental principles of Islam (Werbner, 2003, p. 12).

Reflecting upon his encounters with saints and spiritual masters, Ali Hujwiri writes:

"I have met over three hundred saints in Khorasan alone residing separately and who had such mystical endowments that a single one of them would have been enough for the whole world. They are the luminaries of love and prosperity on the spiritual sky of Khorasan." (Nicholson, 2000)

These journeys to saints, spiritual centers, and shrines illustrate his lifelong search for a *Murshid Kamil Akmal* (Perfect Spiritual Guide). Having attained considerable intellectual knowledge, he sought a deeper realization of spiritual truth and divine wisdom. The narrative of *Kashf-ul-Mahjoob* reflects his profound commitment to religious spirituality and his persistent quest for spiritual perfection (Rashid, 1967).

A central concern of the work is the definition and purpose of Sufism. Ali Hujwiri criticizes the excessive attachment to worldly pleasures that, in his view, characterized many people of his time and diverted them from seeking the pleasure of God (Ernst, 1997). In this context, he draws an important distinction between *Ilm* (knowledge) and *Marifat* (gnosis), stating:

"Theologians have made no distinction between *Ilm* (knowledge) and *Marifat* (gnosis)...One, then, who knows the meaning and reality of a thing they call 'arif' and one who knows merely the verbal expression and keeps it in his memory without keeping the spiritual reality, they call him 'alim' For this reason, when the Sufis wish to criticize a rival, they call him *danishmand* (possessing knowledge). This seems objectionable but the Sufis do not blame the man for having acquired knowledge, rather they blame him for neglecting the practice of religion because the 'alim' depends on himself but the 'arif' depends on his Lord." (Renard, 2004)

Among the numerous Sufi masters whom he encountered, Ali Hujwiri expresses particular admiration for two eminent figures: Shaikh Abul Abbas Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Al-Ashqani and Shaikh Abul Qasim Ali Gurgani (Hosain, 2011).

MAJOR THEMES AND STRUCTURE OF *KASHF-UL-MAHJOOB*

The work encompasses a broad range of theological, spiritual, and ethical subjects. Among its principal chapters are:

- On the Affirmation of Knowledge (Karamustafa, 2007, p. 103)
- On Faqr (Poverty)
- On Sufism
- On Wearing of Patched Frocks
- On Opinions Concerning Faqr (Poverty) and Purity
- On Malamat (Blame)
- Concerning Imams who belonged to Sahabah (Companions)
- Concerning Imams who belonged to the House of the Muhammad
- Concerning Ahl-i-Suffa (People of the Veranda)
- Concerning Imams who belonged to the Tabieen (Followers)
- Concerning Imams Taba al-Tabi'in (who followed the Followers)
- Concerning the principal Sufis of recent times
- Brief account of modern Sufis in different countries

- Concerning the doctrines held by different orders of Sufis

The latter portion of the work is organized around a series of spiritual unveilings, including:

- Uncovering of First Veil: Marifat of Allah (Gnosis of God)
- Uncovering of Second Veil: Tawhid (Unity of God)
- Uncovering of Third Veil: Iman (Faith)
- Uncovering of Fourth Veil: Taharat (Purification from Foulness)
- Uncovering of Fifth Veil: Salat (Prayer)
- Uncovering of Sixth Veil: Zakat (Alms)
- Uncovering of Seventh Veil: Sawm (Fasting)
- Uncovering of Eighth Veil: Hajj (Pilgrimage)
- Uncovering of Ninth Veil: Companionship with rules and principles
- Uncovering of Tenth Veil: Definition of phrases of the Sufis and their ideas
- Uncovering of Eleventh Veil: Sema (Spiritual Auditions)

These chapters collectively provide a comprehensive exposition of Sufi doctrine and practice, combining theological discussion, ethical instruction, and spiritual guidance.

SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE AND LEGACY

Throughout the centuries, *Kashf-ul-Mahjoob* has served as a *vaseela*—a means of spiritual elevation and guidance—for countless seekers on the Sufi path. Its influence extends across numerous Sufi orders and spiritual traditions. This enduring significance is reflected in the statement attributed to Moinuddin Chishti Ajmeri,

one of the foremost saints of the Chishti order, who advised that an aspiring *murid* (disciple) lacking a *murshid* (spiritual master) should study *Kashf-ul-Mahjoob*, as the work itself could serve as a temporary source of spiritual guidance (Nicholson, 2000, Preface).

Originally composed in Persian, *Kashf-ul-Mahjoob* has been translated into numerous languages and continues to enjoy widespread readership throughout the world. Manuscripts of the text are preserved in several European libraries, while printed editions have appeared in various regions, including Lahore in the Indian subcontinent. One of the most influential translations of the work is the English rendering by Reynold A. Nicholson, the distinguished scholar of Persian and Arabic at the University of Cambridge.

Describing the scholarly and spiritual pursuits of Ali Hujwiri, Nicholson observed:

"He undertook journeys to distant Islamic countries, from Syria to Turkistan in search of knowledge. He travelled extensively and searching almost every tract of land from Sindh to Caspian Sea" (Hujwiri, n.d.).

This observation aptly summarizes the intellectual curiosity, spiritual dedication, and scholarly commitment that characterized Ali Hujwiri's life and ultimately found expression in *Kashf-ul-Mahjoob*, a work that remains one of the foundational texts of Islamic mysticism.

KASHF UL-MAHJOOB PUNJABI TRANSLATION BY SHARIF SABIR

The present study examines the Punjabi translation of *Kashf ul-Mahjoob*, the celebrated Persian treatise on *Tasawuf* authored by Syed Ali Hajveri and translated into Punjabi by Muhammad Sharif Sabir. The translation was published by Qazi Publications, Lahore,

in 1996 (Sabir, 1996, p. 1). Originally composed in Persian by Hazrat Ali Hajveri approximately one thousand years ago, this seminal work on *Tasawuf* has been translated into numerous languages of the world, including Punjabi (Sabir, 1996, p. 1).

Given the vast number of Punjabi speakers worldwide, the translation of *Kashf ul-Mahjoob* into Punjabi was both culturally and intellectually significant. Since Hazrat Ali Hajveri spent the latter part of his life in Lahore and exerted a profound influence on the religious and spiritual culture of Punjab, it was essential that his most celebrated work become accessible to Punjabi-speaking readers in their mother tongue.

While undertaking this translation, Muhammad Sharif Sabir consulted a wide range of available editions and translations of *Kashf ul-Mahjoob*, including the version prepared by the Russian scholar Valnatian Zokofiski. However, he regarded the Tehran edition published by the Center of Persian Research, Iran and Pakistan, as the most authoritative text. This edition was the outcome of a collaborative scholarly effort involving both Iranian and Pakistani researchers and therefore served as the principal source for his Punjabi translation.

The translation process presented numerous challenges. Since *Kashf ul-Mahjoob* was composed nearly a millennium ago, many of its linguistic expressions and technical terminologies belong to a different historical and cultural context. The evolution of language and cultural transformation over centuries often alters the meanings and connotations of specialized terms. Recognizing these challenges, Sharif Sabir adopted a cautious and scholarly approach. Rather than modernizing or altering established Sufi terminology, he preserved the traditional vocabulary associated with *Tasawuf*. Likewise, where variations in pronunciation or usage occurred, he generally refrained from unnecessary

intervention, seeking instead to maintain the authenticity of the original text.

This approach reflects an important principle of translation studies: the preservation of culturally embedded terminology when such terminology carries specific intellectual and spiritual meanings. Since readers interested in *Tasawuf* are generally familiar with its established vocabulary, the translator considered it preferable to retain these terms rather than replace them with contemporary equivalents that might diminish their conceptual richness.

One of the notable achievements of Sharif Sabir's translation is its ability to recreate the atmosphere of the original text. The Punjabi rendering enables readers to experience the work as if they were participating in a spiritual gathering under the guidance of Hazrat Ali Hajveri himself. The numerous quotations, narratives, and teachings contained in the original Persian text have been conveyed in a manner that preserves both their spiritual depth and rhetorical force. Consequently, the distinctive style of Ali Hajveri's preaching remains intact, allowing Punjabi readers to grasp the full significance of the original message.

CULTURAL AND INTELLECTUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TRANSLATION

Kashf ul-Mahjoob occupies a unique position within the literature of Islamic mysticism. It is widely regarded as one of the most authentic and comprehensive works on *Tasawuf* and Sufism. Drawing extensively upon the sayings of earlier Sufis and supported by references to the Holy Qur'an and Hadith, the work presents Sufi doctrines through rigorous argumentation and theological reasoning.

The spiritual authority of the text is reflected in the views of prominent Muslim scholars and saints.

According to Hazrat Nizam Uddin Auliya in his work *Durr e Nizami*, a seeker who lacks a *Murshid* may find spiritual guidance through the study of *Kashf ul-Mahjoob*. Similarly, Dara Shikoh, in *Safina tulAuliya*, describes the book as functioning in the capacity of a *Murshid Kamil* for sincere seekers. Such assessments underscore the enduring spiritual influence of the text and its importance within the Sufi tradition.

The work encompasses a broad range of Islamic disciplines, including verses of the Holy Qur'an, Hadith, *Ilam ul Kalam*, *Ilam ul Balaghat*, *Ilam ul Tasawuf*, and *Tafseer*. As a result, it provides readers with a comprehensive understanding of Islamic spirituality and addresses many of the intellectual and theological questions that arise within the study of Islam.

Prior to its Punjabi translation, the text was already available in Persian, Urdu, and English. However, translation is never merely a linguistic exercise; it is also a cultural act. The effectiveness of translation depends upon the translator's ability to negotiate linguistic structures, cultural values, and intellectual traditions. Consequently, successful translation requires sensitivity to specialized literary and critical terminologies such as absurd, aestheticism, alienation, allegory, aphorism, archetype, baroque, binary opposition, dialectics, proper diction, ecology, existentialism, expressionism, fable, folklore, globalization, hermeneutic, historicism, humanism, imagery, image, imagism, impressionism, intention, intertextuality, irony, magic realism, modernism, myth, narrator, naturalism, new criticism, orientalism, ode, phenomenological criticism, realism, renaissance, romanticism, satire, semiotics, stream of consciousness, structuralism, symbolism, the great change of being, tradition, and tragedy, among many others (Khan & Rehman, 2005, pp. 5–8).

A successful translator must therefore possess a profound understanding of linguistics and the nature of language itself. In this regard, Maulana Muhammad Hussain Azad offers a memorable description of language:

وہ اظہار کا وسیلہ ہے کہ متواتر آوازوں کے سلسلے میں ظاہر ہوتا ہے۔ جنہیں تقریر یا سلسلہ، الفاظ یا بیان یا عبارت کہتے ہیں۔ اس مضمون کو ایک شاعرانہ لطیفے میں ادا کرتا ہوں کہ زبان (خواہ بیان) ہوئی سواریاں ہیں جن میں ہمارے خیالات سوار ہو کر دل سے نکلتے ہیں اور کانوں کے رستے اوروں کے دماغوں میں پہنچتے ہیں۔ اس سے رنگین تر مضمون یہ ہے کہ جس طرح تصور اور تحریر قلم کی دستکاری ہے جو آنکھوں سے نظر آتی ہے اس طرح تقریر ہمارے خیالات کی زبانی تصویر ہے جو آواز سے قلم نے ہوا پر پھینکی ہے۔ وہ صورت ماجرہ کام مقام اور ساری حالت کانوں سے دکھاتی ہے۔ (Azad, n.d., p. 15)

This observation emphasizes the communicative and imaginative power of language as a medium through which human thought is transmitted and shared.

The centrality of language in human civilization is further highlighted by Khalil Siddiqui, who remarks:

طویل تاریخ میں جو اکتسابات کیے ہیں ان میں انتہائی بیش بہا زبان ہے۔
(Siddiqui, 2009, p. 9)

This statement underscores the invaluable role of language in the intellectual, cultural, and historical development of humanity.

Viewed within this broader linguistic and cultural framework, Sharif Sabir's Punjabi translation of *Kashf ul-Mahjoob* represents a significant scholarly achievement. By successfully mediating between Persian and Punjabi linguistic traditions while preserving the spiritual and intellectual essence of the original work, he made one of the foundational texts of Islamic mysticism

accessible to a vast new readership and enriched the literary and religious heritage of the Punjabi language.

THEMATIC SCOPE OF KASHF UL-MAHJOOB AND CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF SHARIF SABIR'S PUNJABI TRANSLATION

In *Kashf ul-Mahjoob*, Hazrat Ali Hajveri presents a comprehensive exposition of mysticism, Sufism, *Tasawuf*, *Kashf*, and numerous other aspects of spiritual life within the framework of the Islamic code of conduct. The work is organized into twenty-five chapters, each of which is further divided into several subsections addressing a variety of theological, spiritual, and ethical issues. According to Syed Ali Hajveri, the comprehensiveness of the book is such that a reader who studies it carefully would have little need to consult other works on the same subject.

The treatise begins with discussions of both the outward and inward dimensions of religion and proceeds to elaborate upon the concept of *Faqar*. Hazrat Ali Hajveri distinguishes between two forms of *Faqar*: one associated with material poverty and the other identified as *Faqar-e-Haqiqi* (فقر حقیقی), which signifies a state of spiritual detachment and complete dependence upon God. In this higher form of *Faqar* (فقر), the seeker voluntarily renounces worldly attachments and maintains a constant spiritual relationship with the Almighty. This concept finds a profound expression in the poetry of Allama Iqbal:

یہ ایک سجدہ جسے تو گراں سمجھتا ہے
ہزار سجدے سے دیتا ہے آدمی کو نجات

The verse emphasizes the transformative power of sincere submission to God, a theme that resonates deeply

with the Sufi understanding of spiritual poverty and devotion.

SCHOLARLY RECEPTION OF THE PUNJABI TRANSLATION

The Punjabi translation of *Kashf ul-Mahjoob* by Muhammad Sharif Sabir has received considerable appreciation from literary scholars and critics. Commenting on the linguistic quality of the translation, Muhammad Asif Khan observes:

کتاب وچ ورتی گئی بولی بارے گل نہ کرنی، ترجمہ کارنال ودھیکی ہوسی۔ اپنی سچی، چجویں تے ڈھکویں بولی ورتی گئی اے کہ انج جا پدا اے کہ داتا ہوراں اپنی کتاب آپوں پنجابی وچ لکھی سی۔ نالے ایہہ احساس وی اگھڑ داہا کہ اسیں اینویں پر جوہی بولیاں اگے مانگت بن کے ہتھ اڈدے رہندے ہاں جد کہ ساڈی اپنی بولی بہوں امیر تے بھرے بھنڈاراں والی ہے۔ (Khan, n.d., p. 256)

He further remarks:

میں تاں داتا صاحب دی بولی وچ ایہو آکھسوں:
ایں کار از تو آید و مرداں چنیں کنند (Khan, n.d., p. 256)

This assessment highlights the authenticity, fluency, and naturalness of Sharif Sabir's language. According to the critic, the translation is so skillfully executed that it creates the impression that Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh himself had originally written the work in Punjabi. Such praise underscores the translator's ability to preserve the spirit and stylistic elegance of the Persian original while rendering it accessible to Punjabi readers.

A renowned Punjabi writer similarly emphasizes the cultural significance of the translation, stating:

"خدا داکر اے انج پنجابی وی دنیا دیاں وڈیاں علمی زباناں وچ شامل ہو گئی اے۔ کیوں جو ہن "کشف المحجوب" دا پنجابی وچ ترجمہ ہو گیا اے۔ ساڈھے نو سو سال مگروں پنجاب دے

اک اُگھے لکھاری تے کھوجکار نے ایہہ الاہمہ وہ لاه دِتا پئی جس عظیم صوفی بزرگ نے پنجاب وچ دین اسلام دی جاگ لائی اوہدے واعظ، اوہد ادرس خود پنجاب دے واسی ہن تیکر اپنی بولی وچ نہیں پڑھ سکے۔ ایہہ آہری تے اوکڑاں جالن والا لکھاری شریف صابر اے اتے کشف المحجوب دے ترجمے واسطے محمد شریف صابر نے روسی مستشرق والنتین ژوکوفسکی دے نسخے سنے سارے مشہور نسخے دیکھے نیں، پر مترجم نے مرکز تحقیقات فارسی ایران وپاکستان اسلام آباد دے مرتب کیتے "نسخہ تہران" نوں ودھیرا معتبر بنیا اے۔ (Sabir, 1996, pp. 1-2)

This statement recognizes the translation as a landmark achievement in Punjabi intellectual and literary history. It further acknowledges the rigorous scholarly effort undertaken by Sharif Sabir, who consulted numerous editions of the text before selecting the Tehran edition as the most reliable source for his translation.

SHARIF SABIR'S ACCOUNT OF THE TRANSLATION PROJECT

Sharif Sabir himself provides an illuminating account of the circumstances that led to the translation of *Kashf ul-Mahjoob*. Recalling the event, he writes:

"اک واری صوفی صاحب (افضل فقیر) نے میرے آون تے ہیر وارث دی تھاں تے کشف المحجوب لے آندی تے فارسی متن اُچی اُچی پڑھنا شروع کر دتا۔ ایس ویلے ایہناں دے دو درویش بابا رحمت تے بابا شفیع مرحوم وی کو لے ای بیٹھے ڈھپ سیک رہے سن۔ صوفی صاحب کولوں جھٹ کو فارسی متن سُنن مگروں بابا شفیع آکھن لگے سرکار ایہہ کیہ گٹ مٹ مار رہے او؟ کجھ ساڈے وی پڑ پلے پاؤ۔ صوفی صاحب نے میرے ولوں دیکھیا تے کتاب وچوں کسے واقعے دا پنجابی ترجمہ سناون دا حکم دے دتا۔ میرے بھاگاں نوں غار اندر ڈکے بندیاں دی کہانی سامنے آ گئی تے اوہد اترجمہ خالص پینڈ و پنجابی وچ کر کے سنا دتا۔ بابے شفیع مرحوم نے آکھیا سرکار انج ای ساری کتاب دا پنجابی ترجمہ نہیں ہو سکدا؟ آپ نے فرمایا کیوں نہیں ہو سکدا۔ ایس لئی ایس وارثی

درویش داترا پاؤ۔ بس اوتھے ای صوفی صاحب مرحوم نے حکم دتا کہ سارے کم چھڈ کے ایس
 کتاب دا پنجابی ترجمہ شروع کر دیو۔ (Sabir, 1996, pp. 26–27)

This personal narrative reveals that the translation project originated from a practical need to make the teachings of *Kashf ul-Mahjoob* comprehensible to ordinary Punjabi-speaking devotees who could not understand the original Persian text. Encouraged by his spiritual mentor, Sufi Afzal Faqir, Sharif Sabir undertook the translation as a scholarly as well as spiritual service. The account further demonstrates how the translation emerged from a living tradition of Sufi instruction, where accessibility and effective communication of spiritual knowledge were considered essential.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TRANSLATION

The Punjabi translation of *Kashf ul-Mahjoob* represents far more than a linguistic transfer of a classical Persian text. It serves as a bridge between Persian Sufi scholarship and Punjabi cultural consciousness, enabling a wider audience to engage directly with one of the foundational works of Islamic mysticism. By preserving the conceptual vocabulary of *Tasawuf* while employing an authentic and accessible Punjabi idiom, Sharif Sabir succeeded in producing a translation that remains faithful to the original text while simultaneously enriching Punjabi religious and literary discourse.

Consequently, the translation occupies an important place in the intellectual history of Punjab and stands as a notable example of how translation can facilitate the transmission of spiritual knowledge across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

TERMINOLOGY OF TASAWUF IN KASHF UL-MAHJOOB

One of the most significant contributions of *Kashf ul-Mahjoob* lies in its systematic exposition of the terminology, doctrines, and practical dimensions of *Tasawuf*. Hazrat Ali Hajveri discusses various forms and stages of spiritual development within the broader framework of Islamic teachings and presents Sufism as an integrated path leading to spiritual purification and proximity to God.

In his discussion of *Tasawuf*, Ali Hajveri distinguishes between different manifestations of spiritual discipline. One form involves the voluntary renunciation of worldly *Lazaat* (لذات) and material comforts by the seeker. Through this detachment, the individual attains higher spiritual benefits and inner contentment. The second and more profound form is identified as *Faqar e Haqiqi* (فقر حقیقی), a state in which all worldly dependencies are removed by Divine will, leading the seeker toward complete reliance upon God. In this perspective, human effort represents the traditional path of spiritual striving, whereas Divine action constitutes the ultimate reality that guides the seeker toward spiritual fulfillment.

A substantial portion of the work is devoted to the exemplary lives of those spiritual personalities whom Ali Hajveri regards as the true leaders and models of the Sufi tradition. In particular, he highlights the Four Rightly Guided Caliphs and presents their sayings, conduct, and piety as foundational examples of Islamic spirituality. The work also contains detailed discussions of *Ashab e Suffa* (اصحاب صفه) and their ascetic devotion, as well as biographical accounts of seventy-three distinguished personalities from among the *Tabaeen* (تابعین), whom he

regards as exemplary representatives of Islamic piety and spiritual excellence.

Similarly, Ali Hajveri records the lives of celebrated *Auliya* who attained elevated spiritual ranks through *Zohid and Taqwa* (زهد و تقویٰ), together with their dedication to *Ibadat* (عبادت) and *Riazat* (ریاضت). Through these biographical narratives, *Kashf ul-Mahjoob* presents practical models of spiritual discipline and moral refinement for later generations.

The Spiritual Veils (Kashf)

A central feature of *Kashf ul-Mahjoob* is its discussion of a series of spiritual unveilings or *Kashf*, through which the seeker progresses toward higher levels of spiritual understanding. These unveilings include:

- The First Kashf: *Marfat e Ilahi* (معرفت الہی)
- The Second Kashf: *Touheed* (توحید)
- The Third Kashf: *Iman* (ایمان)
- The Fourth Kashf: *Tarikat* (طریقت)
- The Fifth Kashf: *Namaz* (نماز)
- The Sixth Kashf: *Zakat* (زکوٰۃ)
- The Seventh Kashf: *Fasting* (روزہ)
- The Eighth Kashf: *Hajj* (حج)
- The Ninth Kashf: *Suhbat* (صحبت) and (*adab e majlis*) (آداب مجلس)

Collectively, these discussions present a comprehensive vision of Islam as a complete code of conduct for both individual and social life. Ali Hajveri integrates doctrinal beliefs, spiritual practices, and ethical principles into a coherent framework that seeks to guide Muslims toward both outward conformity and inward purification.

MYSTICAL TERMINOLOGY AND THE CONCEPT OF SAMA

Kashf ul-Mahjoob also provides extensive discussions of key mystical concepts and epistemological distinctions within Sufism. Among these are the important categories of *Haq ul Yaqin* (حق اليقين), *Ain ul Yaqin* (عين اليقين), and *Ilam ul Yaqin* (علم اليقين), which represent successive stages of certainty and spiritual realization.

Particular attention is devoted to the subject of *Sama* (سمع). Drawing upon the Qur'an, Hadith, and the sayings of *Auliya Allah* (اوليا الله), Ali Hajveri evaluates the spiritual effects of *Sama* and establishes criteria for its legitimacy. According to his interpretation, if *Sama* produces positive spiritual effects and strengthens a person's relationship with God, it is considered *Halal*. Conversely, if it generates negative tendencies or distracts the seeker from spiritual objectives, it is regarded as *Haram*. This balanced approach reflects Ali Hajveri's broader effort to harmonize mystical experience with the principles of Islamic law.

In illustrating the spiritual stature attributed to eminent saints, Abdul Majid Daryaabadi narrates the following incident:

" لاہور میں جو مسجد آپ نے تعمیر کرائی تھی۔ اس کی محراب میں بہ مقابلہ دوسری مسجدوں کے سمت جنوب میں ذرا کجی تھی۔ علمائے وقت نے اعتراض کیا کہ سمت قبلہ قائم نہیں رہی۔ آپ نے ایک روز سب کو جمع کر کے خود نماز پڑھائی۔ اس کے بعد حاضرین سے کہا کہ دیکھ لو کعبہ کدھر ہے۔ حجابات اٹھ گئے۔ سب نے دیکھ لیا کہ بیت اللہ مسجد کے ٹھیک مقابل ہے۔ "

(Daryaabadi, 1977, p. 14)

This account is frequently cited within Sufi literature to illustrate the extraordinary spiritual perception attributed to great saints and their intimate connection with Divine reality.

SHARIF SABIR'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE PUNJABI TRANSLATION

The Punjabi translation of *Kashf ul-Mahjoob* by Muhammad Sharif Sabir represents a significant achievement in the transmission of Sufi knowledge to Punjabi-speaking audiences. By rendering a highly sophisticated Persian text into accessible Punjabi, he made its teachings available to millions of readers in their mother tongue.

Prior to Sharif Sabir's translation, an edition of *Kashf ul-Mahjoob* had been translated into Gurmukhi script by Patiala University in India. However, that version remained largely confined to a limited readership and did not achieve widespread accessibility among the broader Punjabi-speaking public. Moreover, the linguistic style and treatment of Sufi terminology in that translation were not always suitable for conveying the deeper spiritual dimensions of the original text.

Sharif Sabir approached the task with a more nuanced understanding of both Persian and Punjabi linguistic traditions. Recognizing that translation involves far more than the mechanical substitution of words from one language into another, he sought to preserve the conceptual and spiritual integrity of the

original work. His success lay in his ability to maintain the authenticity of Sufi terminology while simultaneously employing an idiom that was natural, intelligible, and culturally meaningful for Punjabi readers.

CONCLUSION

Translation is inseparable from culture. A nation is identified through its art, culture, language, beliefs, religion, customs, traditions, social practices, legal systems, and collective way of life. These elements find expression not only in architecture, music, poetry, and literature but also in translation, which serves as a vehicle for transmitting cultural values across linguistic boundaries.

Consequently, successful translation requires more than linguistic competence; it demands a deep understanding of the cultural environments associated with both the source and target languages. The translator must be capable of negotiating differences in worldview, terminology, symbolism, and intellectual traditions while preserving the essence of the original text.

In this regard, Muhammad Sharif Sabir's Punjabi translation of *Kashf ul-Mahjoob* may be regarded as a noteworthy accomplishment. His command of both Persian and Punjabi cultural traditions enabled him to convey the spiritual, intellectual, and linguistic richness of the original text with remarkable effectiveness. As a result, his translation stands as an important contribution to Punjabi literature, Sufi studies, and the broader field of translation studies, demonstrating how cultural competence can facilitate the successful transmission of classical religious knowledge across languages and generations.

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