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## **Hujwiri's Kashf al-Mahjub**

Proof of His Impressionability from Different Leaders and Sources

### **Abstract**

The present paper will acquaint the reader with the life of the well-known character of Sufism, namely, Ali Ibn Usman Hujwiri. The author, having taken a new approach, endeavors to analyze the impression of different teachers and leaders on Hujwiri during his adventurous migration. To illustrate, Abul-Abbas Shaghani, Abu-Ahmad Mozaffar Hamdan, Abul-Ghasem Korrakani, Imam Abul-Ghasem Ghushairi and Sheikh Abul-Fazl Mohammad Ibn Hasan Khottali have effective roles in Hujwiri's later approaches to life and religion, whose influence will be described subsequently. Furthermore, he surveys the extent to which different sources or references had influenced Hujwiri's outlook. The reflection of these impacts will be clearly traced in Hujwiri's masterpiece, Kashf al-Mahjub (Revelation of the Veiled). Resale-ye Ghushairie by Imam Abul-Ghasem Ghushairi, Sharh al-Ta'arof by Mostamli Bokhari, Al-Loma' by Abu-Nasr al-Sarraj and Tabaqat al-Sufiyya by Abu-Abd al-Rahman Sulami are some of the mentioned sources which formulated Hujwiri's thought and vision in one way or another.

**Keywords:**Hujwiri,teachers,references,Kashf-ol-Mahjub,AlLoma', impressionability.

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### **Introduction**

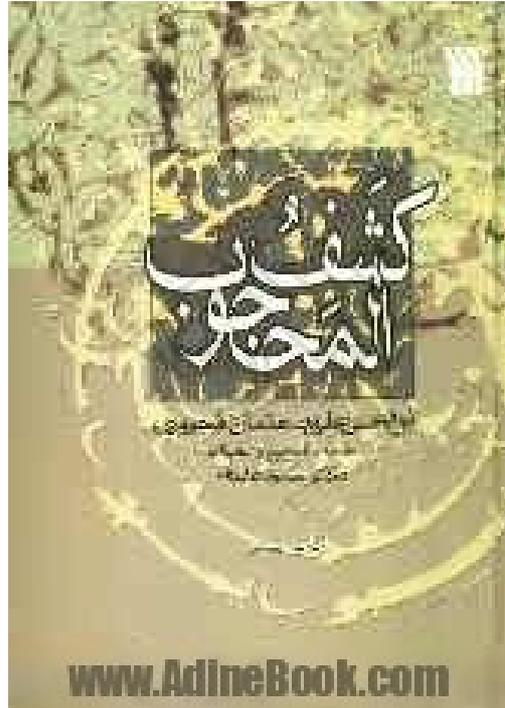
Abul-Hasan Ali Ibn Usman Ibn Abiali al-Jullabi al-Hujwiri al-Ghaznawi titled as Daata Ganjbakhsh was born in the late 4th century, in the period of Soltan Mahmud Ghaznawi. He spent his childhood and youth in Jullab and Hujwir of Ghazni. His father Sheikh Usman Ibn Abiali was renowned in the current sciences of that time. His mother was also from a virtual family and his maternal uncle was called Taj al-O'lia. He took many trips and visited many areas within the Islamic territory. This long journey includes visiting many cities, namely, Ozkand in present Kyrgyzstan, Sarakhs, Marv, Tus, Neyshabur, Bastam, Ghomes, Damascus, Baqdad, and Lahore. He could thus visit many parts of the Islamic territory and moreover benefited from many great mullahs. The considerate advice he took and he, being addressed as "O, Boy", suggest that he was much younger than many sheikhs such as Abul-Fazl Khottali (453 A.H.), Mozaffar Hamdan (contemporary to Abu-Saeed) and Abul-Ghasem Korrakani (469 A.H.)(Maki, 2005: 147). His many contacts with celebrated men were different from one another, sometimes restricted only to a visit, sometimes led to association and friendship, and sometimes he served some of them and took lessons from them (Ibid., 2005: 150). We will now introduce some of the names who influenced Hujwiri.

#### **1. Abul-Fazl Khottali**

Among many sheikhs he came across, Abul-Fzl Khottali is the one that Hujwiri accepts as his leader and teacher, and it seems that soon after his acquaintance with Khottali, he joined him and stayed at his service until he was alive. Abul-Fazl Mohammad Ibn Hasan Khottali, famously called Khottal (a village near Balkh), was also named, Abul-Fazl Shami, as he spent a long time in Sham. Based on what we read in Kashf al-Mahjub. Khottali was an expert in exegeses and was

a man of God as he is addressed as “zein al-o’Tad and Sheikh al-Ibada’ (زين اوتاد و شيخ عباده) (Hujwiri, 1990: 450).

Finally, he died in Beit Aljen, a village near Damascus. In his last moments of life, as he was embraced by Hujwiri, he emphatically recommended him to forgive the one, the one with whom he was in the sulks (Maki, 2005: 167).



## 2- Abul-Ghasem Korrakani

Abul-Ghasem Abdollah Ibn Ali Ibn Abdollah Korrakani Tusi taught in Tus and spent life by farming. He was peerless in his time and was known as “Sheikh al-Mashayekh” ((شيخ المشايخ)) and “Ghotb al-Madar alayh” ((قطب المدار عليه)) which is well parallel to what Ghazali describes about him: a man of God and brave against world lovers (Maki, 2005: 223). Abu-Saeed calls him “Padshah” ((پادشاه)), and they both revered Hallaj. The time Hujwiri was at his service, he was still consumed with youth pride; however, old Korrakani considerably

heard his speech and gave him lessons. Hujwiri warmly took his advice so that Korrakani, many times, praised him and prayed for him. Korrakani died in 469 and was replaced by Abu-Ali Farmadi, his son-in-law and follower, and the teacher of Mohammad Ghazali.

### 3. Abul-Abbas Shaghani

Hujwiri was taught by him in some fields. There was a warm amiable relationship between the two, and it seems that this intimate relation was much due to his talent and genius. Hujwiri could fathom his delicate complex speech well. Sheikh emphatically obeyed religious customs, and Hujwiri totally followed him in this route. Despite his fame, Shaghani lived a very simple life. He was busy in Neyshabur School training many students. He was praised by Abu-Saeed Abul-Kheir.

### 4. Mozaffar Hamdan

Hujwiri met Abu-Ahmad Mozaffar Ibn Hamdan Noghani when he was still young. Hujwiri respected him as much as Korrakani and Ghushairi. Abu-Saeed praises him as: "They took us as slaves while Sheikh Mozaffar was taken by the route of God."

"ما را به درگاه بندگی بردند و شیخ مظفر را از راه خداوندی"

Hujwiri has also lauded him as: "The Almighty, with His power, opened the door of this story to him and placed the crown of munificence on his head."

"اندر بالش ریاست خداوند-عزوجل-در این قصه بر وی بگشاد و تاج کرامت بر سر وی بنهاد"

And all these demonstrate his great social status (Ibid., 2005: 264).

### 5-. Abul-Ghasem Ghushairi

Meeting Ghushairi was undoubtedly a great achievement for

Hujwiri, though their relationship was not so deep and close. Ghushairi was a pioneer in many fields in his period so that he was titled "Ustad Imam" ((استاد امام)), or "Zein al-Islam" ((زين الاسلام)); few writers have praised him like Hujwiri. About him, he says: "And the Almighty has kept his attitude and tongue from nonsense." (Hujwiri, 1990: 699)

"و خداوند تعالی حال و زبان وی را از حشو محفوظ گردانیده است"

In his youth Ghushairi was trained in horse riding and fighting, and to learn mathematics he travelled to Neyshabur and coincidentally came to the presence of Abu- Ali Daghagh and lost his heart with him. Furthermore, he took lessons from many other scholars in Khorasan. Among his illustrious works we may refer to "Lataef ol-Isharat" ((نف الاشارات)) and "Al-Resaleh" ((الرساله)). Ghushairi, contrary to Hujwiri, inserts no mention of his contemporaries such as Abu-Ali Daghagh and Abu-Saeed Abul-Kheir (Maki, 2005: 179). He mentions nothing about Hallaj.

## 6. Impressive Sources and References on Hujwiri

Both Kashf al-Mahjub and Al-Loma' start with praising science and scientists and proving the fact that Sufi is in pursuit of knowledge. The only difference is that in Kashf al-Mahjub, the Sufism chapter is prefaced by describing the poor and poverty.

The writer of Al-Loma' believes that Sufi is the source of the whole sciences and virtues, and the reason for naming Sufi is not merely due to their clothes and appearance. He calls Sufis "Aadat al-Anbia" ((عادات الانبياء)) and says (Tusi, 2001: 756):

لان لبسه الصوف داب الانبياء عليهم السلام شعار الاولياء و الاصفياء و نسبوا الى ظاهر اللباس ولم ينسبوا الى نوع من انواع العلوم و الاحوال التي هم بها مترسمون لان لبس الصوف كان داب الانبياء عليهم السلام و الصديقين و شعار المساكين المتسكين.

In introducing the chapter of Poverty (فقر), Hujwiri is under the influence of Al-Loma'. He interprets "the high position" ((مقام شریف)) splendidly in Kashf al-Mahjub and just like Al-Loma' refers to 273rd verse of sura Baqara (Hujwiri, 1980: 79):

للفقراء الذين احصروا في سبيل الله لا يستطيعون ضربا في الارض...

It must be considered that though the informative and narrative form in Al-Loma' may never parallel Kashf al-Mahjub, Kashf al-Mahjub is superior to the previous works in reason.

In Kashf al-Mahjub, Shibli (the celebrated sufi) is praised. In the chapter regarding the poor he is revered by "Rahmat Ollah Alayh" ((رحمت الله عليه)) whenever we come to his quotations. However, there are no quotations of him in Al-Loma' or Al-Tasawwof. Instead, in Al-Loma', the writer has such a look towards Junaid whenever he is quoted.

In the chapter Al-Tasawwof, Hujwiri names some reasons for which the word Sufi is used. He believes Sufi is not derived from any root, that is, it is not a compound (Hujwiri, 1982: 968):

بر مقتضای لغت، اشتقاق این لغت درست نگردد از هیچ معنی از آنکه این معنی معظم تر از آن است که این را جنسی بود تا از آنجا مشتق بود که اشتقاق شیء از شیء مجانست خواهد. لان الصوفی ممنوع عن العبارة و الاشارة.

Therefore, he calls those reaching to perfection" Sufi" (صوفی), and the pursuers "Motesawwef" (متصوف). The writer of Al-Loma', though in the chapter

Of (فی ذکر آدابهم اللباس) refers to (لبد) and (صوف- مرقعه- لبد) he says nothing about

the reason for which the word Sufi is selected. It seems that Hujwiri has referred to Al-Ta'arof le Mazhab-e Ahl-e Tasawwof, as we read it in Al-Ta'arof (Kalabazi, 1989: 21):

اما من نسبهم الى الصفه و الصوف فانه عبر عن ظاهر احوالهم و ذالك انهم قوم قد تركوا الدنيا.

Despite the opinion that, some believe there is no mention of “suf” (صوف) in Al-Loma’, but instead, “moragha” (مرقعه) has been used, the writer introduces ‘safa’ (صفا) and “soffeh” (صفه) as the stems of the word Sufi (Tusi, 2001: 779).

The writer of Al-Loma’ believes that wearing Moragha and Suf is not restricted to Sufis only, and that they can be covered in any sort of clothing (Ibid.: 781). The writer of Kashf al-Mahjub, on the other hand, believes that wearing Moragha is the sign of Sufism and the tradition of the holy Prophet and says (Hujwiri, 1980:61):

لبس مرقعه شعار متصوفه و سنت رسول الله (ص) است.

It must be considered, however, that Hujwiri does not put emphasis on wearing a special sort of clothing for himself and says (Ibid., 1990: 71):

اگر خداوندشان عبايي داده است پوشيده اند و اگر برهنه داشته است هم بوده اند... و من كه على بن عثمان الجلابي ام وفقنى الله اين طريق را پسنديده ام و اندر اسفار خود همين کرده ام.

One of the other similarities between Al-Loma’ and Kashf al-Mahjub is concerning the disciples of Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him). In both works caliphs are praised, particularly Abubakr to whom many parts are allocated. Without imitation or accessibility, in both works he is known as the leader of Sufis (Maki, 2005: 800). Regarding this, we read in Kashf al-Mahjub (Hujwiri, 1980: 98):

امام اهل طريقت وى است خاص

Similarly, we read about Abubakr in Al-Loma’ (Tusi, 2001: 599):

اول لسان الصوفيه ظهرت فى هذه الامه على لسان ابى بكر.

Hujwiri describes Abubakr as the master of worshipers and says (Hujwiri, 1982: 98):

مشایخ وی را مقدم ارباب مشاهدت دانسته اند و عمر را مقدم ارباب مجاهدت... و مقام مجاهدت اندر جنب مقام مشاهدت چون قطره ای بود اندر بحری... واقتدای این طایفه به تجرید و تمکین و حرص بر فقر و تمنا به ترک ریاست به اوست.

He also describes Omar, the second caliph, as the leader of believers and the first who has worn Moragha and says (Ibid.:100):

او سرهنگ اهل ایمان و صعلوک جمع اهل احسان و اندر بحر محبت غریق بود... مخصوص بود به صلابت و فراست... پس اقتدای این طایفه به لبس مرقع بدوست.

And we read in Al-Loma' (Tusi, 2005:121):

و روی عن ابی عثمان الهندی انه قال رایت علی عمر(رض) قمیصا فیها اثنا عشره رقعہ... من اختیاره لبس المرقعه و الخشونه و ....

And about Usman, the third caliph, in Kashf al-Mahjub (Hujwiri, 1982:101):

اقتدای این طایفه به بذل مال و حیا و تسلیم امور و اخلاص در عبادت به وی است.

In Al-Loma' he is described this way (Tusi, 2005: 122):

اما عثمان بن عفان فقد خص بالتمکین والتمکین من اعلى مراتب المتحققین و مما يتعلق به اهل الحقایق من اهل التصوف.

Furthermore, we notice that the praise of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) by Hujwiri in Kashf al-Mahjub is accompanied by more striking reverence in comparison with the other caliphs (Hujwiri, 1990: 102):

غریق بحر بلا و حریق نار، ولا و مقتدای اولیاء و اصفیاء علی بن علی ابی طالب کرم الله وجهه ... او را اندر این طریق شانی عظیم و درجتی رفیع است و اندر علم و معاملت امام این طریق است پس اهل این طریقت اقتدا بدو کنند در حقایق عبادات و دقائق اشارات.

And in Al-Loma' we read (Tusi, 2005: 125,126):

و لامير المومنين على (رض) خصوصيه من بين جميع اصحاب رسول الله (ص) بمعاني جليله  
و اشارات لطيفه...فهو اول من تكلم فى الاحوال و المقامات...و لعلى (رض) كثير من الاحوال و  
الاخلاق و الافعال التى يتعلق بها ارباب القلوب و اهل الاشارات و اهل المواجد من الصوفيه

It seems that Hujwiri in parting Kashf al-Mahjub into chapters has obviously referred to Al-Loma' but in each chapter he has attempted to insert different contents.

With respect to Sufi leaders, those among Ahl-e Bait (family) of the holy prophet, he describes Imam Hassan Ibn Ali, Imam Hussein Ibn Ali, Imam Ali Ibn Hussein, Imam Abu-ja'far Mohammad ibn Ali and Imam Abu-Mohammad Ja'far Ibn Mohammad (peace be upon them) with such titles as (Hujwiri, 1980: 108-116):

(شمع آل محمد- زين العباد- شمع الاوتاد- حجت اهل معاملت- قبله ى اهل بلا- وارث  
نبوت- برهان اهل مشاهدت- سيف سنت و جمال طريقت).

Hujwiri regards all Ahl-e Bait as Sufis but in Al-Ta'arof le Mazhab-e Ahl-e Tasawwof, these characters are just named without any description and in Al-Loma' there is no mention of them as Sufi leaders.

It seems that Hujwiri, though a Hanifi, believes in "Manzelat al-Bein al-Manzelayn" (منزله بين منزلين), which is a Shiite thought. Translating Imam Hassan's letter, he narrates (Ibid.: 107):

انكار تقدير مذهب قدر بود و حوالى معاصى به خدای مذهب جبر پس بنده مختار است  
اندر كسب خود به مقدار استطاعتش از خدای عز و جل و دين میان جبر و قدر است.

In describing "Ahl-e Soffeh" (اهل صفه), Hujwiri pays strong attention to Abu-Abdol Rahman Mohammad Ibn al-Hussein al-Sulami, the

writer of *Tabaqat al-Sufiyya* and says (Hujwiri, 1990: 122):

او نقال طریقت و کلام مشایخ بوده است تاریخی کرده است مرا اهل صفة را مفرد..

In this regard you may also refer to *Tabaqat al-Sufiyya* in the chapter of *Tasawwof* (Sulami, 1998: 47).

In *Al-Loma'* the names of *Ahl-e Soffeh* (اهل صفة) are mentioned as well. In *Al-Ta'arof*, though there is no mention of *Ahl-e Soffeh*, the names of three figures of *Tabeien* are mentioned which also exist in *Kashf al-Mahjub*.

In *Al-Loma'* there is no mention of Sufic stages after *Tabeien*. In *Kashf al-Mahjub*, Hujwiri introduces seventy eight Sufis in an alliterative background describing their mystical powers and gives a short narrative about their life. Such a style was then imitated in *Tazkirat al-O'lia* by Attar, with more extended descriptions though.

One of the features of *Kashf al-Mahjub* is mentioning the names of the late Sufi leaders of the time and even the contemporaries with expanding on their lives which was peerless until that time.

To prove the mystical powers of men of god, in both *Kashf al-Mahjub* and *Al-Loma'*, it is referred to the palm tree by which holy Mary was fed and also the story of Jorayh who was acquitted of adultery by the baby witnessing his guiltlessness, and also the story of the cave, narrated by the holy prophet, in which three people imprisoned in a cave, could release due to their deeds, and the story of Abdullah Omar who was accosted by an angry lion on his way. He addresses it as: " O' dog. If this is the God's will, attack me,

but if not, let me pass." The lion stood, bowed to him and let him pass (Hujwiri, 1980: 342-347) (Tusi, 2005: 277).

Both in *Kashf al-Mahjub* and in *Al-Loma'*, the two schools of *Jundieh* and *Noorieh* are mentioned immediately one after the other, without any similarity in content though.

In all these works, *Kashf al-Mahjub*, *Al-Ta'arof* and *Al-Loma'*, writers elaborate on mystical powers and miracles. It is worth saying that with respect to this part, *Kashf al-Mahjub* and *Al-Loma'* present a common tale which is about the beasts coming to the house of Sahl Ibn Abdullah Tostari to be fed.

Different branches of Sufism and their beliefs appeared in *Kashf al-Mahjub* for the first time and then were imitated in *Tazkirat al-O'lia* by Attar and *Nafahat al-Uns* by Jami. In *Al-Ta'arof* there is no mention of Sufi branches except for Noorieh. What is intended by Noorieh is not the followers of Abul-Hassan Noori, but it means Ashab-e Soffeh.

In *Al-Loma'* Abulh-Hassan Noori is introduced, without any mention of his religious branch. In fact, Hujwiri is the first writer who mentions the twelve branches of Sufism in *Kashf al-Mahjub*.

The writer of *Kashf al-Mahjub* prefers poverty to wealth; therefore, he refers to the outlooks of Yahya Ibn Maaz, Ahmad Ibn Abi al-Havari and Hareth al-Mohasebi who reject wealth.

The writer of *Al-Loma'* knows Abubakar Shibli as his leader, and the writer of *Kashf al-Mahjub*, too, reveres him more than the others. In both works Junaid and Shibli are recalled with splendor.

In the fifth chapter of *Kashf al-Mahjub* (كشف الحجاب الخامس فى الصلاة) and also in *Al-Loma'* there are two common narratives; one with regard to Junaid and the other about Sahl Ibn Abdullah.

In the chapter "Al-Mohabba" (لمحبته), in both of these works\_ *Kashf al-Mahjub* and *Al-Loma'*\_ it is referred to 54th verse of Sura Maeda and the 165th verse of Sura Baqara.

In the seventh chapter "Al-Som" (الصوم) two sayings are narrated from prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him), similarly in both works (Tusi, 2005: 151) (Hujwiri, 1990: 469).

Hujwiri recalls *Al-Loma'* and its writer Abu-Nasr al-Sarraj Tusi

with praise, twice in Kahf al-Mahjub and says (Hujwiri, 1980: 473,503):

و فرقی نیکو کرده است شیخ ابونصر سراج رحمت الله علیه صاحب اللمع اندر کتاب خود  
میان آداب...

There are at least fifty similar headlines in Kashf al-Mahjub and Al-Loma', and it signifies that Hujwiri has referred to Al-Loma' as a model.

### Conclusions

Hujwiri, among his masters, reveres Abul-Fazl Khottali as his leader and serves him for long. It seems that his outlook towards religious jurisprudence and his sense of forgiveness originate from his master's outlook. Korrakani, has, on the other hand, impressed Hujwiri in connection to his familiarity with Hallaj. Abul-Abbas Shaghani played an important role in formulating Hujwiri's perception of the world and is considered a big force in guiding Hujwiri through the paths of Sharia and encouraging him to simplicity. In addition, Mozaffar Hamdan, establishes his position among Hujwiri's masters efficiently, particularly due to his spiritual influence on him. Hujwiri, follows Ghushairi's outlook which is different from Hallaj's and opposite of Abu-Saeed's. Among many different books, Al-Loma' serves as a model for Hujwiri in his composition of the chapter of Faghr (Poverty). Kashf al-Mahjub is, however, clearly superior based on its Sufi reasoning and its form of narration. Kashf al-Mahjub, as regards expounding on the word of Sufi and its true definition, resembles Al-Ta'arraf the most. In both Kashf al-Mahjub and Al-Loma' Imam Ali is admired outstandingly and he holds a strong position among the other caliphs. Kashf al-Mahjub and Al-Loma', among the other books written on Sufism, are reckoned to be more representative. Interestingly, Kashf al-Mahjub resembles Al-Loma' regarding its

chapters. Hujwiri takes a positive stand towards the Shiite Imams, and Shiite thoughts are lucidly reflected in his composition. Kashf al-Mahjub's content impressionability from Al-Loma' and Al-Ta'arof is undeniable as well.

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