

THE CONCEPT OF KASHF IN NAVOI'S WORKS

Sayfiddin Rafiddinov,

Senior Researcher of the Uzbek Language,
Literature, and Folklore Institute of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan
Candidate of Philological Sciences

Annotation: This article discusses the essence and mystical meaning of the concept of KASHF. Navoiy not only informs about certain Sufi figures who were possessors of KASHF but also elaborates on how KASHF is used in certain couplets and its unique interpretations. Without understanding mystical terms like KASHF, it is impossible to deeply grasp the works of this great poet.

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KASHF is an Arabic word meaning "to open" or "to discover." KASHF etmak means "to open" or "to find"; KASHFi roz refers to "revealing a secret." In mysticism, it refers to perceiving truths that cannot be understood through reason or senses, but through the eye of the heart; seeing hidden spiritual characteristics and real things behind the veil, feeling them, and becoming aware of their secrets. It is divine inspiration, knowledge received directly from God without any intermediaries. This knowledge may be gained either through hearing divine messages or seeing the hidden world; mukoshafa, the lifting of the veil of the body and senses, and the viewing of the world of the soul. Saints are considered possessors of KASHF. When discussing KASHF, religious scholars emphasize that KASHF is a gift bestowed only upon God's chosen servants. Therefore, without God's grace, a person cannot attain it by their own will.

In Sufi sources, various types of KASHF are mentioned, such as KASHFi nazariy, KASHFi nuriy, KASHFi ilohiy, KASHFi ruhoni, KASHFi ma'naviy, KASHFi mujarrad, KASHFi muxayyal, KASHFi xavotir, KASHFi zamoyir, KASHFi ahvoli qubur, and KASHFi ahvoli qulub. For example, KASHFi ahvoli qubur refers to a saint's awareness of the condition of a deceased person in the grave, while KASHFi ahvoli qulub refers to a saint's ability to know the thoughts of a person, whether near or far. KASHFi mujarrad refers to something seen through KASHF that actually takes place, without being influenced by imagination or other thoughts.

According to some Sufis, the influence of this material world tarnishes and stains the heart, creating a hijab (veil or barrier) over it. Through discipline and purification, when this veil is lifted from the heart, the unseen world becomes clearly visible. The lifting of this veil, or the opening of the heart's eye, is called KASHF.

Those who worship God for His sake alone, and who continuously strive toward Him, are known as ahl-i shuhud (the people of witnessing), ahl-i mushohada (the people of observation), or ahl-i KASHF (the people of unveiling). According to their belief, KASHF is granted to a person who spends their entire life in the company of the wise and saints, always turning toward them and loving them. Such a person reaches the stage of KASHF and becomes capable of understanding the truth of things.

In the terminology of those who experience spiritual ecstasy, KASHF refers to a light that flashes from God and then fades away, marking the beginning of the KASHF state. Inner meanings are determined through KASHF and spiritual ecstasy. Thus, sometimes the terms ahl-i botin (the people of the inner realm), ahl-i KASHF, and ahl-i karamat (the people of miracles) are used interchangeably.

However, true saints, possessors of **KASHF**, often conceal their **KASHF** and miracles from the public and do not reveal divine secrets to everyone. Revealing such secrets could negatively impact the saint's spiritual rank. Nevertheless, some instances of **KASHF** disclosed due to necessity are exceptions to this rule.

In his work "Nasoyim ul-Muhabbat," Navoiy cites the words of the famous saint Bayazid Bistami: "Often, the truth (**KASHF** of secrets) lingers in my heart for forty days. I only allow it to settle in my heart based on the confirmation of two witnesses: the Quran and Hadith." Similarly, Abduxoliq Gijduvani concealed his miracles. "... After Xoja Yusuf, he (Abduxoliq Gijduvani) engaged in spiritual exercises and kept his states hidden, and his sainthood reached such a degree that he would visit the Kaaba during every prayer."

One of the prominent scholars of our time, Shaykh Muhammad Sodiq Muhammad Yusuf (1952-2015), expressed the following views on this topic: "In Sufism, the appearance of angels to someone, or the hearing of voices that others do not hear, or the knowledge of things unknown to the majority is referred to as **KASHF**. Examples of this are also found in the Quran and the Sunnah." He advised not to delve too deeply into the subject of **KASHF** and not to excessively glorify those who possess **KASHF**, concluding that: "**KASHF** is a possibility. It is a favor or a test and trial from God. **KASHF** does not establish any new theological rulings. **KASHF** does not establish new religious decrees."

KASHF does not establish acts of worship either. If **KASHF** aligns with the teachings of the Quran and the Sunnah, it can be affirmed.

Navoiy, in "Nasoyim ul-Muhabbat," recounts that the Basran Shaykh Khalaf bin Ali, qaddasallohu taolo, once said: "One day, I was in the company of Yahyo Mu'oz, and someone experienced a state of ecstasy. Someone asked the Shaykh, 'What happened to this person?' The Shaykh replied, 'He heard the word of God, **KASHF** of unity occurred in his heart, and his human qualities dissolved.'"

Sometimes, saints who were also poets would write down what was revealed to them through **KASHF**. According to Navoiy, Shaykh Fakhruddin Iraqi, following the instruction of Shaykh Zakariyo Multoni, went to serve Bobo Kamol Jandi, "...and every **fath** (spiritual opening) and **KASHF** that he encountered, he expressed it in the form of poetry or prose, and presented it to Bobo for approval." Sometimes, **KASHF** appeared in disciples through the glance or grace of their spiritual master. Navoiy provides an example of this in his tazkira (collection).

After becoming a disciple of Shaykh Abdulqadir Gilani in Baghdad, Shaykh Abu Amr Sarifiniy received the following prophecy from him: "In the future, God will grant you a disciple named Abdulghani bin Noqta, whose rank will be higher than many saints, and God will take pride in him in front of the angels." Then Shaykh Abdulqadir Gilani placed a turban on Abu Amr Sarifiniy's head. Sarifiniy's state changed, and he said: "...the coolness and sweetness of it reached my senses, and from my senses, it entered my heart. The spiritual realm (**malakut**) was unveiled to me. I heard that everything in the universe was glorifying God in various tongues and forms of sanctification. My intellect was about to be lost when the Shaykh struck me with a small whip, and my mind returned to its normal state."

Another example from Navoiy's tazkira refers to Shaykh Aburrabi' Kafif Molaqiy, may God have mercy on him, who said: "It is reported in a hadith that if one recites 'La ilaha illallah' seventy thousand times for their own or someone else's salvation, it will surely have an effect." Shaykh Aburrabi' mentioned that he had recited this zikr but had not dedicated its reward to anyone. He found himself sitting at a meal with a group, including a young boy who was a possessor of **KASHF**. The boy began to cry as he brought the food to his mouth. When asked the reason for his tears, he said, "Hellfire is visible to me, and I see my mother being punished there."

Shaykh Aburrabi' silently said in his heart, "O Lord, You know that I have recited seventy thousand times 'La ilaha illallah'; I now dedicate it for the salvation of this boy's mother from Hellfire." As soon as the Shaykh had this intention, the boy began to laugh and rejoice. When asked the reason for his laughter, he replied that his mother had been saved from Hellfire, and he resumed eating. Shaykh Aburrabi' concluded: "The authenticity of the hadith became clear to me through the **KASHF** of that boy, and the validity of his **KASHF** was confirmed by the Prophetic hadith."

In his tazkira, Navoiy recounts the following story: Imam Yafi'i told a story he had heard. One of the kings (sultans) prepared a meal of both lawful and unlawful meat to test the dervishes, and invited a **KASHF**-possessing dervish to the feast. "When the dervish was about to serve the food, he said, 'Today, I will serve the meal.' He separated all the lawful meat for the dervishes and removed all the unlawful meat, saying it was suitable for the king's soldiers. He then recited the verse: '...the pure is for the pure, and the impure for the impure'" (Surah Nur, verse 26). This example illustrates a unique aspect of **KASHF**. Sufi authors often compare **KASHF** to a flash of lightning, as it allows the Sufi to enter the realm of divine secrets. According to Imam Ghazali, **KASHF** is like the light that God places in the hearts of His chosen servants.

In one of Navoiy's couplets, he addresses the cupbearer (a metaphor for the spiritual guide), expressing that many things in this world are unclear, and therefore he asks for the magical and legendary "jomi jahonbin" (the world-seeing cup) to reveal many hidden things. "Jomi jahonbin" can be understood both literally and metaphorically as the heart filled with knowledge:

Soqiyo, jomi jahonbin tutki, andin kashf etay,

Kim ko'p ish bu korgah vaz'ida mubhamdur manga?!

(O cupbearer, give me the world-seeing cup, so that I may unveil, for many things in this world are unclear to me!)

To gain benefit from the lesson of self-annihilation and uncover the secrets through **KASHF**, a person must be pure and sincere. Jalaluddin Muhammad ibn Abdurahman Qazvinii (d. 1339 AD) stated that there is no benefit in reading his book on eloquence, "Talxis." (This book is a commentary on the third part of Abu Yaqub Yusuf Sakkokiy's "Miftoh al-Ulum.") The following couplet suggests that one cannot attain both external and internal knowledge:

Qil fano darsi aro o'zni mulaxxaski, emas

Sud kashfida bu ma'ning o'qumoq "talxis."

(Though one may study eloquence, they will not attain the essence of **KASHF** if they do not lose themselves in the lesson of self-annihilation.)

In another couplet, Navoiy advises that one who suffers from the pain of separation from the Beloved (God) should remain intoxicated day and night, burning with the fire of love for the Beloved. The poet's lyrical character admits that, having uncovered this truth through **KASHF**, he has not "awoken" from his longing for the Beloved, nor has he recovered or become sober:

Hajridin bor ersa ranjing, tunu kun bo'l mastkim,

To manga bu nukta kashf o'ldi, yana oyilmadim.

(If separation from the Beloved brings you pain, stay intoxicated day and night. For this truth was revealed to me, yet I still have not awoken.)

In another couplet, Navoiy hints at the condition for **KASHF**. He notes that even if a person understands the symbols and hidden secrets of Zamakhshari's "Kashshof" commentary, they cannot attain **KASHF** unless they renounce their ego:

Ulki qilgay o'zi "Kashshof" rumuzin makshuf

Kashfi yo'q aylamayin o'zluqi harfin mahzuf.

(He who reveals the secrets of “Kashshof” cannot attain **KASHF** until he erases the letter of selfhood.)

The next couplet discusses the divine grace that brings about **KASHF**. If a pious person spends their life in hypocrisy, showing off in their worship, they will not be blessed with the “elixir of grace,” wasting their life and missing out on rewards:

**Bahra yetkurjadi zuhd ahliga fayz iksiri,
Naqdi umrin chu riyo kasbida qildi masruf.**

(The elixir of grace did not reach the pious one, as he spent his life in hypocrisy and wasted his time.)

When we read Navoiy’s “Nasoyim ul-Muhabbat,” we learn that poets and saints like Nizami Ganjavi, Khusraw Dehlavi, Abdurahman Jami, Sa’di Shirazi, Hafiz Shirazi, Fakhruddin Ibrahim Iraqi, Amir Husayni, Mahmud Chabush Tari, Avhaduddin Kirmani, and others were unique individuals and possessors of **KASHF**. Navoiy frequently highlights their faith, Islam, purity, good manners, and sincerity, suggesting that it was through these qualities that they were also blessed with **KASHF**. Our great poet openly acknowledges the **KASHF** of some, including his mentor Jami:

**Ulki bukun qutbi tariqatdur ul,
Koshifi asrori haqiqatdur ul...**

(He who is today the pole of the spiritual path,
He is the revealer of the secrets of truth...)

As we have seen, studying the information on **KASHF** in Navoiy’s works allows us to better understand the lives and worldviews of the saints and poets he mentions.

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