



## **LIFE AND SCIENTIFIC HERITAGE OF ASHRAF ALI TAHANAVI**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*A main purpose of the article is aimed to describe the life and scientific heritage of a scientist and mutasavvif who grew up in India Ashraf Alee Atahanavi 1280/1863, and to describe his works about different subjects. Furthermore, looking through his lived time period it gives information about the cultural and political process that ruled in the country. Moreover, includes positive opinions of scientists all over the world about Ashraf Ali Tahanawi.*

**KEY WORDS:** *muhaddis, fakikh, hadith, work, musnad, khafiz, hanafiy.*

### **MAIN PART**

Ashraf Ali Tahanawi was born in rabi al-avval of 1280/1863 in the town Tahana Muzaffarnaghor in India<sup>1</sup>. His father was Abdulkhaq Umri and was famous with the name of "hakim al umma"<sup>2</sup>.

If we look to the period that he lived, we may see India was colonized from England. Colonizing of Indian peninsula caused subordination of muslims then. eventually, process got affect to cultural and religion life of muslims<sup>3</sup>.

In 1857 liberation movements stood up in India. Perhaps it ended with the loosing of independent wrestler. In 1858 the english queen Viktoria announced imperator of India. After that, increased threats toward muslims and began abolishing politics their lifes<sup>4</sup>.

Christians which took the Indian peninsula began make muslims and hindus enemies. so, they added some modifications to islam law legacy for transfer them to their own religion. They said that everyone is able to choose own religion and legislated their law even they are apostate. Especially, apostates were observed in the places where was strong cultural addictions and where were not religious performances. Muslims removed from their own due to the accepting eastern lifestyle and by following eastern educational system. With disappearing the unity the muslims remained between old and new supporters<sup>5</sup>.

The collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the abolition of the Caliphate as a result of the First World War further shook the Indian Muslims. As these disturbances increased rapidly, Muslim scholars began to act in order to correct the religious life and protect the Islamic identity. Through education, the ideas of reforming the Muslim community and various forms and schools of these ideas were formed. In particular, madrasahs were among the most supportive of da'wah and tabligh.

Ashraf Ali Tahanawi also worked for the reform of the ummah, correct understanding of religion, and raising a generation of good preachers. He was one of the leaders in the fields of classification, education, research and teaching. Due to his knowledge of news, he was accepted as "soni' at-tag'yir" - "master of news" in Indian geography. He was also awarded the title of "Hakimu al-umma wa mujaddid al-milla vitor al-Hindiyya"<sup>6</sup>.

It can be observed that Ashraf Ali Tahanawi and his contemporary scientists fought for negativity of english to muslims.

Ashraf Ali Tahanawi got first education in his birthplace, in Sabah he learned Qur'anic science. the rest of his study he continued in "Madrasat al -a'liyya" in Diyoband<sup>7</sup>.

He studied in some scientists which can be counted :

- Muhammad Yaqub an-annutiviyy – hadith and tafsir
- Makhmud Khasan ad-Diyubandi – logics, philosophy, fikh and usul al-fikh

<sup>1</sup> Muhammad Taqi Osmani. Maqolatun va buhusun. – Damascus: Dor al-kalam, 2021. – V. 2. – P. 227.

<sup>2</sup> Khalid Zaferullah Davudi, Ahmet Yıldırım. Eşref Ali Tânevi Hadislerle Tasavvuf. – İstanbul, 1995. – V. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Khalid Zaferullah Davudi, Ahmet Yıldırım. Eşref Ali Tânevi Hadislerle Tasavvuf. – İstanbul, 1995. – V. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Hakkı Dursun Yıldız. Doğuştan Günümüze Büyük İslam Tarihi. – İstanbul, 1988. – V. 9. – P. 520.

<sup>5</sup> Baraniy, Dr. Abdurrahman. Ulamau Devband va xodamatuhum fi ilm al-hadis. -Devband: Dor al-Ulum, 2011. – V. 95.

<sup>6</sup> Şâh Muinuddîn el-Hâşimî, Cüneyd Ahmed el-Hâşimî. Eşref Alî (Tehânevî) Tânevî'nin Reformist Düşüncesinde Tasavvuf (trc. Yakup Yüksel ve Muhammet Ali Tekin) / Namık Kemal Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi, 2017. – V. 3. – P. 334.

<sup>7</sup> Muhammad Taqi Osmani, Maqolatun va buhusun. – Damascus: Dor al-kalam, 2021. – V. 2. – P. 228.



- c) Sayyid Akhmad ad –Dekhlavi – riyaziyya and faraid
- d) Mavalano Mkhmud so many fikh and usul al-fikh books and some hadith books
- e) Fath Muhammad at-Tanavi he read persian and book “Muhtasarot”<sup>8</sup>.

He worked as a teacher during 14 years in madrasah Fayzi Omon in Kanivar after ending his education<sup>9</sup>. He went to Makkah for hajj and there met with Imodulloh Tahanawi and joined to tariqa Cheshtiya. Then he joined to other sophistic tariqas too. They are Naqshbandiya, Chishtiya, Qadiriya and Suhrawardiyya<sup>10</sup>.

After some time, he returned to his country and worked as a teacher at Jame' al-Ulum madrasa in Kanpur<sup>11</sup>. As Ashraf Ali Tahanawi's Sufi sentiments became difficult, he left his teaching job and traveled to different regions of India. Tahanawi lived in a time when strong politics prevailed and scientific activities were on the agenda. The wide scope of the field of science of that time was reflected in Tahanawi's education and writings<sup>12</sup>.

There is information that the number of works attributed to Ashraf Ali Tahanawi, together with pamphlets, is about eight hundred. Counting the works published after his death, their number is about a thousand. Most of his works on jurisprudence, tafsir, mysticism, kalam, recitation and ethics are in Urdu, and some are in Arabic<sup>13</sup>.

One of his works on Tafsir and Qur'anic science is "Bayan al-Qur'an". It is an Urdu translation and commentary of the Qur'an, published in twelve. In addition, he is the author of "Tajvid al-Qur'an", "Adab al-Qur'an", "Mutashabihat al-Qur'an", "Tanshit at-tab fi ijra al-qiraat as-sab".

His work on hadith is Jame' al-asor. This is a work that classified the hadiths used by Hanafis after the disappearance of Ihya al-Sunan. Tobe' al-asor is attached to the work. The work includes prayer issues. It was published in Diyoband.

“Hifh arbain” this is the book of 40 hadises were chosen from Sahih Muslim.

“Al misk az-Zaki” is gathered Ashraf Ali Tahonaviy's pupils and consists of lesson repitances of Sunan Termizi<sup>14</sup>.

“ikhya as sunan” is the work that keeps hadiths which were used as the hanafi fikh proofs. It is said that loosen.

"As-Sab' as-Sayyora" is a treatise that collects the Sanads of Tahanawi up to Kutub al-Sitta and Imam Malik's Muwatta.

His works on fiqh are Al-Bawadir wan-nawadir, a collection of works on various topics (Delhi 1947).

The work "Huquqi Faraiz" (published in Molton in 1960) and the work "Zakat al-farz fi nabat al-arz" are distinguished from other works by their specific aspects.

The book "Behishti Zivar" is a ten-volume scientific work intended for female students, which has been published many times in India and Pakistan. The work was translated into English by Rahim Ali under the title "Reguisites of Islam"<sup>15</sup>.

One of his works on Aqeed is "Muakhharat az-znun an muqaddimati Ibn Khaldun", in which Ibn Khaldun's introduction contains answers to the words of some people who denied the coming of the Mahdi.

The work "Jaza al-a'mal" was translated into Turkish by Hayri Demirchi under the title "Reward of deeds of the world and the hereafter"<sup>16</sup>.

His works on Sufism are "At-Tasharruf bi marifati ahadis al-Tasawuf", which includes hadiths from books of Suf

"Haqiqat at-Tariqa min as-Sunnati al-Aniqa" in the fifth volume of "At-Takashshuf an Muhimmati-t-Tasawwuf" work, "Ashraf Ali Tahanawi: Sufism through Hadiths" by Khalid Zafarullah Davoudi and Ahmad Yildirim translated into Turkish under the title<sup>17</sup>.

"Al-Qawl al-fasil bayn al-haqqi wal-batil", "At-Tajal al-azim fi ahsani al-qalani", "At-Takashshuf an muhimmat al-tasawuf", "Anwar al-wujud fi atwar ash-shuhud", "Tahzir al-ikhwan an tazvir ash-shaitan", "Tarbiyat as-salik wa tanjiyat al-khalik", "Furu' al-iman", "Hifz al-iman", "Tazyilu Sharhi Aqeed", "Masail al-Aqliyya", "Teaching ad-din", "Hayat al-muslimin", "Masail al-suluk min malik al-muluk" these are his works include different themes<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> A.S.Bazmee Ansari. Eşref Ali / Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi. – İstanbul, 1995. – V. 11. – P. 472; Halid Zaferullah Davudî, Ahmet Yıldırım. Eşref Ali Tânevi Hadislerle Tasavvuf. – P. 17.

<sup>9</sup> Muhammad Taqi Osmani. Maqolatun va buhusun. – Damascus: Dor al-kalam, 2021. – V. 2. – P. 231.

<sup>10</sup> Şâh Muînuddîn el-Hâşimî, Cüneyd Ahmed el-Hâşimî. Eşref Ali (Tehânevi) Tânevi'nin Reformist Düşüncesinde Tasavvuf. – S. 335.

<sup>11</sup> Muhammad Taqi Osmani. Maqolatun va buhusun. – Damascus: Dor al-kalam, 2021. – V. 2. – P. 231.

<sup>12</sup> Dr. Abdurrahman Baraniy. Ulamau Devband va xodamatuhum fi ilm al-hadis. – Devband: Dor al-Ulum, 2011. – P. 97.

<sup>13</sup> Dr. Abdurrahman Baraniy. Ulamau Devband va xodamatuhum fi ilm al-hadis. – Devband: Dor al-Ulum, 2011. – P. 97.

<sup>14</sup> Muhammad Taqi Osmani. Maqolatun va buhusun. – Damascus: Dor al-kalam, 2021. – V. 2. – P. 232.

<sup>15</sup> Muhammad Taqi Osmani. Maqolatun va buhusun. – Damascus: Dor al-kalam, 2021. – V. 2. – P. 236.

<sup>16</sup> Tahonavi. E'lo as-sunan. – Karachi, 1997. – V. 1. – P. 7-19; Khalid Zaferullah Davudî, Ahmet Yıldırım. Eşref Ali Tânevi Hadislerle Tasavvuf. -S. 18-20; A.S. Bazmee Ansar. Ashref Ali / DIA. – V. 11. – P. 473; Mehmet Özşenel. Pakistan'da Hadis Çalışmaları (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Marmara University Institute of Social Sciences, 1992). – P. 86-87.; Baraniy, Dr. Abdurrahman. Ulamau Devband va xodamatuhum fi ilm al-hadis. – Devband: Dor al-Ulum, 2011. – P. 96.

<sup>17</sup> Muhammad Taqi Osmani. Maqolatun va buhusun. – Damascus: Dor al-kalam, 2021. – V. 2. – P. 232.

<sup>18</sup> Muhammad Taqi Osmani. Maqolatun va buhusun. – Damascus: Dor al-kalam, 2021. – V. 2. – P. 236.; Tahonavi. E'lo as-sunan. – Karachi, 1997. – V. 1. – P. 7-19; Khalid Zaferullah Davudî, Ahmet Yıldırım. Eşref Ali Tânevi Hadislerle Tasavvuf. – P. 18-20; A.S. Bazmee Ansar. Ashref Ali / DIA. – V. 11. – P. 473; Mehmet Özşenel. Pakistan'da Hadis Çalışmaları (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Marmara University Institute of Social Sciences, 1992). – P. 86-87.; Dr. Abdurrahman Baraniy. Ulamau Devband va xodamatuhum fi ilm al-hadis. – Devband: Dor al-Ulum, 2011. – P. 96.



By Looking for his works it is known that he had some specific authoritis in religious sience. He wrote almost on all necessary themes.

Ashraf Ali Tahanawi was known as "Hakim al-umma" among Indian scientists due to his strong knowledge and high rank in this regard<sup>19</sup>. Descriptions of Ashraf Ali Tahanawi by contemporary and later scientists show how important a scientist he is.

Muhaddis Zahid Kawsari highly appreciated the efforts of Indian and Pakistani scientists and paid special attention to their responsibilities in Sunnah sciences. He praised Tahanawi as an incomparable scientist, the only expert, the sheikh of the sheikhs of the Indian country, the blessing of the Indian country<sup>20</sup>.

Zafar Akhmad Usmani says that Tahanawi mentuioned his own uncle and teacher in his book "Qavaid fi ulum al-hadith": "made true own dreams, lord of knowledge and deals of his period, mujaddid al-millata al-islami, ashrafu al-avliya al-kamili, leader of scientists, muhaddith, mufassir, fakih, hafiz, the appreciated person of all scientists"<sup>21</sup>.

Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi emphasizes that Ashraf Ali Tahanawi was active in various aspects of religious sciences. As a translator and commentator, he commented on the knowledge and wisdom of the Qur'an, and as a muhaddith on hadiths. As an orator and preacher, he collected sermons and published sermons. As a jurist, he answered thousands of jurisprudential issues, solved many modern problems and carefully related them to fatwas. As a Sufi, he discovered the secrets of Sufism and brought them out of darkness into light. He stopped the ancient disputes between Sharia and Tariqat<sup>22</sup>.

In addition, Tahanawi Imdodia organized knowledge gatherings every day after noon in the house of dervishes. It was attended by students, leaders and representatives of ordinary people. "Hakim al-umma" preached in these meetings without being limited to certain topics and gave answers to various questions. Some of those who participated in these scientific meetings recorded his useful speeches. In this way, his speeches were collected in sixty-two volumes "Malfuzot". Thirty-two volumes of them have been published. This work includes the most important issues in the fields of science, wisdom, anecdotes, stories, news, advice, examples, reforms, guidance, manners, ethics, criticism and refutation<sup>23</sup>.

Abdulfattah Abu Gudda said that Indian sheikh Ashraf Ali Tahanawi wrote more than a thousand works in his eighty-year-old life and that this was a blessing from God. So he added, that in that period of time were the most works written in the world, and specificy it caused writing the other works due to the previouses<sup>24</sup>.

Ashraf Ali Tahanawi also answered the questions asked to him by letter. He tried to prevent the negative influence of non-Muslims on the way of life of Muslims and achieved successful results in this regard. He says that science and religion do not contradict each other and calls on non-Muslims to use the achievements in science. In 1897 coming back from Makkah he spent the rest of his life in Tahana. On 6<sup>th</sup> of rajab in 1362 (1943 july 9) he died and buried in Tahana<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> Zafar Ahmad Tahanawi. *Qavo'id fi ulum al-hadis. Abdulfattah Abu Gudda is under investigation. – Beirut: Dor al-Bashair al-Islamiya, 2018. – P. 8.*

<sup>20</sup> Mohammad Zahid Kawsari. *Maqolatu al-Kavsariy. – Cairo: Dor al-salam, 2015. – P. 68.*

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<sup>22</sup> Şâh Muînuddîn el-Hâşimî, Cüneyd Ahmed el-Hâşimî. *Eşref Ali (Tehânevî) Tânevî'nin Reformist Düşüncesinde Tasavvuf. – P. 338.*

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<sup>24</sup> Şâh Muînuddîn el-Hâşimî, Cüneyd Ahmed el-Hâşimî. *Eşref Ali (Tehânevî) Tânevî'nin Reformist Düşüncesinde Tasavvuf. – P. 337.*

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