240396 - Biography of Shaykh Muhammad ibn Hamzah ar-Roomi, who was known as Ibn al-Fanari

the question

Can you give a biography of sheikh akshamsuddin the teacher of muhammad al fatih considered amongst the best scholars of his time

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

His full name was Shaykh Muhammad ibn Hamzah ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad ar-Roomi, Shams ad-Deen al-Hanafi, who was known as Ibn al-Fanari. He contributed to the Islamic sciences, and had good knowledge of the Arabic language and various recitations of the Qur'an. He wrote some books on tafseer and usool, and also had knowledge of medicine.

But he was a Sufi and was fond of Ibn 'Arabi at-Taa'i, the author of al-Fusoos and al-Futoohaat, which are filled with phrases of disbelief, incarnation and pantheism. We have discussed his biography previously in the answer to question no. 7691.

He used to teach al-Fusoos and explain it to people.

Al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

He was born in Safar 751, and studied in his home town under al-'Allaamah 'Ala' ad-Deen who was known as al-Aswad, the commentator on al-Mughni, and al-Kamaal Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ma'arri, and al-Jamaal Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Aqsaraa'i, and others, and he strove hard in his studies. He travelled to Egypt in 778 AH, when he was twenty years old (sic), where he studied under Shaykh Akmal ad-Deen and others. Then he went back to Anatolia and was appointed in charge of the judiciary in Bursa for a while. Then he was transferred to Konya, where he settled. When war broke out between Ibn Qarmaan and Ibn 'Uthmaan, and Ibn Qarmaan

was defeated, Ibn ‘Uthmaan took Shaykh Shams ad-Deen with him and appointed him in charge of the judiciary of his kingdom, and he held him in high esteem, such that he reached the highest level in his government and became like a vizier; he became very famous and his virtue became widely known.

He was a man of dignity and great generosity, but he may be criticised for his fondness for Ibn al-‘Arabi and his teaching and approval of his book al-Fusoos.

When he came to Cairo, he did not show any of that. He performed Hajj in 822 AH, and when he returned al-Mu’ayyid summoned him, so he entered Cairo and met with the prominent people there, and he did not show anything of what he was accused of that is mentioned above. Some of those who cared for him advised him not to speak of any of that, so the prominent figures of the age met with him and discussed and debated various issues with him, and they testified to his virtue. Then he went back to al-Quds and visited it, then he went back to his homeland.

He had knowledge of various recitations of the Qur’an, Arabic language, and meanings of the Qur’an, and he contributed in many fields of knowledge.

Then he went for Hajj in 833 AH, via Antioch, and he returned and died in his homeland in the month of Rajab. He had some swelling in his eye and was about to become blind; rather it was said that he did become blind, then Allah restored his vision to him, so he performed this pilgrimage in gratitude to Allah for that. End quote.

Inba’ al-Ghamr bi Abna’ al-‘Amr (3/464)

It was narrated that the Ottoman Sultan Muhammad Khan, the conqueror of Constantinople, used to respect and venerate him. The author of the book ash-Shaqaa’iq an-Nu‘maaniyyah fi ‘Ulama’ ad-Dawlah al-‘Uthmaaniyyah (p. 140) said:

The Sultan Muhamad Khan came to the shaykh’s tent when he was lying down, and he did not stand up for him. The Sultan Muhammad Khan kissed the shaykh’s hand and said: I have come to you because I need something from you. He said: What is it? He said: I want to go into seclusion

(khulwah) in your place for a few days. The Shaykh said: No. He repeated his request several times, and he kept saying: No.

The Sultan Muhammad Khan got angry and said: One of the Turks comes to you, and you admit him to seclusion at the first request!

The shaykh said: If you enter seclusion, you will find pleasure that will make power and authority lose value in your eyes, and thus the state of affairs will be in turmoil and Allah will become angry with us. The purpose of seclusion is to achieve justice, so you have to do such and such – and he gave advice as he saw fit. The Sultan Muhammad Khan stood up and bade farewell, whilst the Shaykh was still lying down.

When the Sultan Muhammad Khan came out, he said to Ibn Waliy ad-Deen: The Shaykh did not stand up for me, and he showed that he was upset about that. Ibn Waliy ad-Deen said: The Shaykh saw in you some arrogance, because of this conquest that could not be achieved by the greatest rulers. The Shaykh is an educator, and he wanted thereby to ward off this arrogance from you. End quote.

See: Bughyat ar-Ru‘aah (1/97); Shadharaat adh-Dhahab (9/304)

He died in 834 AH, as it says in al-A‘laam by az-Zarkali (6/110)

And Allah knows best.