



## JEYHUNĀBĀDI

**JEYHUNĀBĀDI**, ḤĀJJ NE‘MAT-ALLĀH MOKRI (pen name “Mojrem;” b. Kurdish village of Jeyhunābād, 1288/1871; d. Jeyhunābād, 7 Jomādā II 1338/27 February 1920), an influential mystic whose stated mission was to collect and record the previously oral traditions of the [Ahl-e Ḥaqq](#) order and to rectify perceived discrepancies and inconsistencies within the established tradition.

Following the migration of Šāh Ḥayās’s descendants, Ḥāj Ne‘mat’s forebears settled in Jeyhunābād, a village in the Dinavar district of Iran during the reign of Mo-ḥammad Shah Qājār (r. 1834-1848; Calmard). Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh lost his father, Mirzā Bayān (Bahrām), in 1880 and his mother, Bibik<sup>v</sup>ān, the following year, and was thereafter placed under the tutelage of his uncle, Mirzā Ġolām-‘Ali. After he completed his education, he married Mirzā Ġolām-‘Ali’s daughter, Sakina (1878-1953), with whom he had seven children, of which only three survived: Nur-‘Ali [Elāhi](#) (also known as Ostād Elāhi, 1895-1974), Malek Jān (also known as Jāni, 1906-93), and Maryam (1909-98). Two years into their marriage, Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh began working for the government as the agent (*mobāšer*) of Ḥājj Āqā Ḥasan (or Ḥājj ‘Abd-al-Raḥim) Wakil-al-Dawla (on *wakil al-dawlas* of Kermānšāh see Rā’in), the secretary (*monšī*) of the governor (*ḥākem*) of Kermānšāh, and as deputy-governor (*nāyeb-al-ḥokuma*), respectively, but resigned within a short period and returned to the full-time administration of his family estate (Elāhi, 2007, I, p. 535).

Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh describes how he experienced a sudden spiritual awakening (*tajalli*; see Corbin, III, p. 345) in 1900 (Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh, *Žiā’ al-qolub*, fol. 183; Elāhi, *Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh*, fol. 2) or 1902 according to his son Nur-‘Ali Elāhi



(1981-91, I, p. 554), following a near-fatal illness around the age of twenty-nine. The event drastically changed his attitude toward material preoccupations. He withdrew from all worldly affairs and led a life of ascetic austerity in seclusion in a small retreat (*riāzat-kāna*) in Jeyhunābād, twelve followers secretly gathered around him in just a year (Elāhi, *Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh*, fol. 4; idem, 1981-91, I, pp. 554, 556). During the second year of his retreat (1902), he decided to don the white habit of dervishes and no longer cut his hair and beard. Barefooted and in a state of fasting and asceticism, he undertook a voyage to the shrine of Solṭān Eshāq (Sohāk, the founder of the Ahl-e Ḥaqq order; see Minorsky, p. 546), a pilgrimage that, in the Ahl-e Ḥaqq tradition, is associated with the status of *ḥāji* “a person who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca” (Minorsky, 1920, p. 239), and he was henceforth called Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh. After a cycle of pilgrimages and travels, he stopped meeting with others and engaged in a complete retreat that lasted for two years.

He subsequently emerged from his retreat to live with his family (ca. 1904). The consequence of Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh’s public revelation was the establishment of his own “mystical path” (*rešta-ye faqr*) within the Ahl-e Ḥaqq order (see Elāhi, 1981-91, II p. 248), complete with its dervish followers and its own center (*kānaqāh*). Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh did not have a spiritual master during his lifetime, and proclaimed that his source of inspiration was the Lord of the Age (Ṣāḥeb[-e] Zamān). He therefore named his branch Kānadān-e Ṣāḥeb-zamāni, which became the twelfth dynasty (*kānadān*) within the consecrated Ahl-e Ḥaqq dynasties (Elāhi, 1981-91, II, p. 248; on Ahl-e Ḥaqq dynasties see Solṭāni, *passim*).

The reaction of the hereditary authorities (*sādāt*, i.e., *sayyeds*) of Ahl-e Ḥaqq to the creation of this new branch was mixed, as some feared the loss of their power and responded adversely, while others were receptive or indifferent. It should be noted that among those who became followers of Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh were a number of Ahl-e Ḥaqq hereditary authorities, who originated from and belonged to different Ahl-e Ḥaqq dynasties. Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh himself enjoyed good personal relations with all of the dynasties, notably with the Ātaš Begi and the descendants of Sayyed Barāka among the Gurān. He also maintained respectful relations with the Shah Ḥayāsi dynasty (Jayhunābādi, 1984, pp. 328-62; Elāhi, 1981-91, I, p. 553).

Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh primarily based his teachings on the principles revealed by Solṭān Eshāq and sought to preserve the authenticity of the Ahl-e Ḥaqq’s core beliefs (Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh, *Forqān al-akbār*, ms. A, fols. 130-31; Elāhi, 1975, pp.



22-25). He emphasized self-restraint, sincerity, and collective devotion (see Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh, *Forqān al-aḳbār*, fols. 34-35, 44-62, 87-88, 130-31, 304-5; see also *naṣāyehā* “counsel” in idem, *Šāh-nāma-ye ḥaqiqat*, passim).

Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh’s dervishes, who were called Darviš-e Šāḥeb-zamāni, modeled themselves after him and were known for their piety and ardent faith (Elāhi, *Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh*, p. 5; Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh, *Forqān al-aḳbār*, fols. 303-4), roughly 42 percent of his dervishes were women (Elāhi, 1981-91, I, pp. 557, 564, 567). There are also some descriptions of his physical appearance, his habits, and his many gifts (Elāhi, 1981-91, I, pp. 573, 582, 597, II, pp. 17, 87). A good number of extraordinary deeds have been attributed to him (Elāhi, 1981-91, I, p. 28, chap. 23 and passim, II, pp. 27, 114, 268, 390-91; idem, *Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh*, fols. 4-5). The most notable feature of his personality is reported to have been his forbearance toward friend and foe alike (Elāhi, 1981-91, II, p. 142).

For the next seven years, from Muḥarram 1325/February-March 1907 to Muḥarram 1332/December 1913 (Elāhi, *Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh*, fols. 7-8), Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh, his spouse, and their son Nur-‘Ali lived in constant seclusion and asceticism. From early 1914 until his passing, they alternated between six-month periods of contact with others and six-month periods of ascetic retreat.

In 1919, he recorded his will and set out on pilgrimage to Shah Ḥayās, a theophany according to Ahl-e Ḥaqq angelology and an eponym for the Shah Ḥayāsi dynasty, where he acquired the nickname “Ḥāji Wahhāb.” Shortly after his return, on 27 Rabi‘ I 1338/20 December 1919, he was bedridden for two months and ten days. He passed away on 7 Jomādā II 1338/27 February 1920 at the age of 49, and was buried in the same small retreat in which he engaged in ascetic practices in Jeyḥunābād, next to the tomb of Yār-‘Ali (d. 1914), his youngest child (Elāhi, *Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh*, fol. 9; idem, 1981-91, I, pp. 579-81).

Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh authored approximately twenty manuscripts, both in verse and prose, in Kurdish and Persian, which have not yet been fully studied. So far, only two of his works, *Šāh-nāma-ye ḥaqiqat* and *Forqān al-aḳbār*, have been analyzed and edited. He signed his writings with the pen name “Mojrem” (the guilty one) as an acknowledgment of his human fallibility.

As an experienced *kalāmḳvān* (scholar-reciter of the *kalām*; on the importance of the exegetic role of the *kalāmḳvān*, see Elāhi, 1975, pp. 428-29; van Bruinessen, p. 44 and passim) and the initiator of a new style of *kalām*, Ḥājj



Ne‘mat-Allāh was sensitive to the divergences that separated the Ahl-e Ḥaqq community.

Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh compiled and commented upon the existing material of the Ahl-e Ḥaqq tradition, stating his dismay at how far the Yāresān (i.e., Ahl-e Ḥaqq) had strayed from their core principles, and how those who at one time strove to realize the four pillars of purity, rectitude, self-effacement, and self-abnegation (*pāki, rāsti, nisti, redā*) were now entangled in misguided beliefs and erroneous conduct for the sake of material gains. Throughout almost all of his written works, he thus counseled the Ahl-e Ḥaqq to prefer the eternal (*bāqi*) to the ephemeral (*fāni*) and consistently emphasized devotion to the Truth (see, among others, Jayḥunābādi, 1984, p. 372-75). One of the reasons that Ḥājj Ne‘mat attributed to the regression of the Yāresān was their misplaced emphasis on superstitions rather than spiritual truths (see *Forqān al-akbār*, ms. A, fol. 76). He also recognized the undue influence exerted by the sayyeds, who had kept the Yāresān in the dark and had even forbidden them from seeking an education solely to preserve their own financial interests (*Forqān al-akbār*, ms. A, fols. 79, 82, 299-300; Elāhi 1981-91, I, p. 497). Ḥājj Ne‘mat fought for many years against this closed mindset, and despite all the difficulties and obstacles directed toward him by the sayyeds, he did not cease his efforts to rectify these digressions until the end of his life.

Within the context of his tradition, Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh’s stated mission was to familiarize people with the Ahl-e Ḥaqq order and record for the Ahl-e Ḥaqq community what no one until then had attempted to do regarding their practices, their goals, and their unity. According to Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh, this silence had resulted in confusion and misconceptions, especially with regard to their essential rites and rituals, such as the Marnavi fast (for details see Elāhi, 1975, pp. 141-61; see also the last section of *Forqān al-akbār*). From this perspective, his written works were the primary means through which he accomplished his mission of dispelling confusion among the Ahl-e Ḥaqq in order to “end the conflicts that were tearing them apart from within” and “restore the edifice of the religion of Truth” (see *Forqān al-akbār*, fols. 67, 83-84).

In his written works, he often used the Persian language, which he considered to be accessible to a wider audience (see, e.g., *Šāh-nāma-ye ḥaqiqat*, p. 324, v. 11291). In an environment where secrecy was of paramount concern, he authored candid and revealing works without fear of the ensuing consequences. His detachment vis-à-vis certain customary habits that were



deemed sacred to some Ahl-e Ḥaqq did not fail to scandalize the establishment that claimed guardianship of the “orthodoxy.”

Given the interest that Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh’s written works has garnered both from within the Ahl-e Ḥaqq community in Kurdistan, Iran, and Iraq and from those who have studied them (Minorsky, “Ahl-i Ḥaqq”; Kordestani, 1927; Mokri, Introd. to Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh, 1966, pp. 5-21), it can be said that his writings have substantially contributed to the democratization of the *kalām* and the beliefs and practices of the Ahl-e Ḥaqq order (Elāhi, 1981-91, I, p. 569, no. 1804, links this observation to the renewal of the faith that Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh is believed to have initiated; see also Mir-Ḥosseini).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Jean Calmard, “Qadjar (les),” in *Encyclopaedia Universalis*, CD-Rom, version 8.  
Henry Corbin, *En Islam iranien: aspects spirituels et philosophiques. Les fidèles d’amour, shi‘isme et soufisme*, 4 vols., Paris, 1971-72.

Jean During, *L’âme des sons: l’art unique d’Ostad Elahi (1895-1974)*, Paris, 2001.

Nur-‘Ali Elāhi, *Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh Mokri Jeyḥunābādi*, manuscript, Jeyḥunābād, dated 1930. Idem, *Borhān al-ḥaqq*, 3rd ed., Tehran, 1975.

Idem, *Āṭār al-ḥaqq*, 2nd ed., 2 vols., Tehran, 1981-91, 5th ed., Tehran, 2007.

Ḥājj Ne‘mat-Allāh Jeyḥunābādi, *Forqān al-akbār*, manuscript, Jeyḥunābād, dated 1909; ed. Mojan Membrado as “Forqān al-akhbār,” Ph.D. diss., École Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Paris, 2007.

Idem, *Žiā’ al-qolub*, manuscript, Jeyḥunābād, dated 1919.

Idem, *Šāh-nāma-ye ḥaqiqat* I, ed. Moḥammad Mokri, Bibliothèque iranienne 14. Tehran and Paris, 1966; full text, Tehran, 1984; ed. with commentary, Nur-‘Ali Elāhi, Tehran, 1995.

Saeed Khan Kordestani, “The Sect of Ahl-e Haqq (Ali ilahis),” *The Moslem*



*World* 17, 1927, pp. 31-42.

Vladimir Minorsky, “Solṭān Ishāq,” in *EI1* IV, p. 546. Idem, “Ahl-i Ḥaqqā,” in *EI2* I, pp. 260-63.

Idem, “Notes sur la secte des Ahl-e Haqq,” *Revue du Monde Musulman* 40-41, 1920, pp. 19-97.

Ziba Mir-Ḥosseini, “Inner Truth and Outer History,” *IJMES* 28/2, 1994, pp. 267-85.

Esmā‘il Rā‘in, *Ḥoquqbegirān-e Engelis dar Irān*, Tehran, 1983.

M. ‘A. Solṭāni, *Tāriḳ-e kāndānhā-ye ḥaqqat wa mašāhir-e mota’akker-e Ahl-e Ḥaqq dar Kermānšāh*, 2nd ed., Tehran, 2002.

Martin van Bruinessen, “Satan’s Psalmists: Some Heterodox Beliefs and Practices among the Ahl-e Ḥaqq of the Gurān District,” forthcoming.