

## **Dost Mohammad Khan Kamil Life and Literary Works An Analytical Study**

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### **Abstract:**

(Late Dost Muhammad Khan Kamil Momand (b.16th Sep, 1915-d 22nd Feb, 1981), a towering literary figure, prolific writer, multi-dimensional researcher and a well-read historiographer, richly contributed Pashto literature by carrying out his impressive research works with thorough professionalism and a moving passion. By his zeal and determination, he strived his level best to bring factual position to the fore in connection with Pashto literature. Surprisingly, Kamil proves himself a well-aware historiographer, a thought-provoking and farsighted researcher, a seasoned master of comparative literature, a keen observer even of the minute details, a down-to-earth intellectual, a well-equipped student of metaphysics, an erudite theologian and well-versed poet of Pashto, Urdu and Persian. The multi-lingual man of letters delivered very comprehensively in the desired disciplines and provided a sound footing to the students, researchers and readers of Pashto literature. The paper focuses to provide with the relevant information about his life, literary and scholarly works that enriched the Pashto literature).

Apart from the literary contributions of the Roshanites, pre and post Khushhal Khan Khattak's legacy and Classical literature, the last six decades of the past century were very pivotal and decisive for the promotion of Pashto literature. Many leading factors can be attributed to the progression of the period i.e. agony and sufferings of the great World Wars, arrival of the Progressive Movement, Partition of the United India, emergence of an independent Islamic state, liberty from the clutches of the colonial power, the non-violent movement and passive resistance of the Red Shirts against the British imperialism, and last but not the least establishment of educational institutions across the sub-continent that turned the tide in the positive and desired direction.

Consequently, the vibrant, enthusiastic and brilliant minds utilized their invaluable energies in reshaping the history and unearthing the truths shrouded in hypocrisy, and deprivation inseparably linked to the indigenous culture, literature, religion, politics, nay the entire life. All the aforementioned go hand in hand for achieving the desired goal. The period produced great sons of soil who expressed and demonstrated their unwavering commitment and wholehearted devotion. Olasi Adabi Jarga ;( a literary organization) assembled all

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the like-minded ideologues, veteran literary giants, mystics, and politicians , as we would discuss ahead in more detail . Undeniably, Dost Muhammad Khan Kamil Momand was one of the leading and pioneering figures among them. In the lines below, an attempt has been made to discuss about his life, literary works and to carry out an analytical study of them.

Dost Mohammad Khan Kamil Momand was one of the trendsetters of the literary figures of Pashto literature. He had received education from three historical institutions - Islamia College Peshawar, Edwards College Peshawar and Aligarh Muslim University . He was born to Faojun Khan, a Civil Sub-judge by profession, on 16 September, 1915 at Mohalla Khuda Daad, Peshawar. His caring father kept him moving from city to city across the province during his postings and being the only child he was greatly looked after regarding his education"(1).

In 1926 when his father got transferred to Haripur, he deputed Kamil to Maulana Ghulam Ghaus Hazarvi, a great religious scholar of high repute from whom he got Quranic knowledge. Kamil did his Matriculation from Government High School Mardan No-1 in 1932, did his intermediate from Islamia College, Peshawar in 1934, and completed his graduation from Edwards College, Peshawar in 1936. The iconic figure was sent for obtaining his Masters Degree in Philosophy and LLB from Aligarh Muslim University, India in 1938-39 respectively"(2).

Consequently, coming back, he started practicing law at Peshawar High Court in 1939 and the distinguished lawyer earned a good name due to his unwavering dedication to his profession .In 1949, 50 he was offered the post of Session Judge but he refused to accept it. Similarly, he refused another offer to be selected as a Judge at High Court in 1962-63. Besides, his consecutive professional engagements, he devoted most of his time to Pashto literature and research. According to Taqweem-Ul- Haq Kaka Khel ;a great research scholar and his contemporary , Kamil has impressive authority and interest in the historiography ,particularly, in the intriguing Mughal period in which lived the illustrious warrior-poet Khushhal Khan Khattak. He adds that,"Kamil's qualification of MA in Philosophy and LLB from Aligarh,India, have given birth to the passion of research and curiosity in Pashto literature...Mughal history related to this area was his favorite topic and even nearly all the most authentic reference books, relevant to the topic, were on his figure tips. While having sittings and sessions with him, one would feel that as he was depicting the real picture of the palaces of the then kings and knights. His books on Khushhal were matchless; his commentary on Tareekh Morass'a was encyclopedic. Besides having all luxuries and necessities in his last moments of life, he preferred living a life of a saint, if was lived more, God knows, would engender how many other saints and qalandars"(3).

His scientific research on Khushhal Khan Baba in fact was the result of his deep-rooted knowledge and mastery over the subject.

Though the prominent figure contributed to both Pashto prose and poetry enormously, yet we might not be unjustified in prioritizing his works as a researcher that he carried out with much more dedication, and with a moving passion. Being well-educated and well-equipped with both the Occidental and Oriental knowledge, Kamil Momand, was scientific and matchless in his approach towards both the gigantic and genius personalities Rahman Baba and Khushhal Khan Khattak and their literary works. His salient feature is the comparative studies of the research works carried out by the indigenous and foreign writers about Pashto poetry, culture, history and personalities. He coined no phrases rather he adopted a genuine and a style of his own.

The brilliant man compiled Rehman Baba's verses in a more refined and perfect manner after going through great hardships of selecting the accurate verses from a number of manuscripts in coordination with Sahibzada Habib-Ur-Rahman alias Qalandar Momand, his other legendary contemporary, published in 1984. The 603-paged work comprising of the verses and commentaries/corrections, titled "Da Rahman Baba Kollyat", is still considered one of the meticulous scholarly treatises ever carried out on the subject"(4).

The most salient feature that distinguishes him from his other contemporaries is his intellectual depth, farsightedness, impartiality and authenticity which speak volumes through all his works. His Commentary on Tareekh-e-Murassa, Khushhal Khan's biography, penned down by the latter's grandson Afzal Khan Khattak, is considered a great achievement for depicting the period and a luminous work for the students of both history and Pashto literature.

His explanatory notes, commentaries and references are scattered in more pages than the original text wherein the scholar touches upon all the relevant topics and demonstrates his command on all of them. The misconceptions raised by Indian and Persian historians about Pashtuns are critically analyzed and are made correct.

Besides burning his midnight oil, and while going through the painstaking process in producing his encyclopedic work on Khushhal Khan Khattak's life and literary works in Urdu, the young and enthusiastic researcher was severely attacked by Tuberculosis (T.B) in 1948. Resultantly, he was referred to Dadar Sanitarium, Mansehra in the same year. His doctors being disappointed and worried about his deteriorating health, advised him of stopping the back-breaking scholarly work, but he never called it a day and the book was published in 1951. Only a miracle it was, that as soon as he was giving final touches to the work, he regained health and sound physique as he had accomplished the enormous task.

In his other celebrated work "On a Foreign Approach to Khushhal" published in May, 1968 published at Jadeed Urdu Type Press Lahore and was issued at Maktaba Shaheen, Khyber Bazar, Peshawar, he criticized Orientalists'

claims and their perceptions, particularly of Sir Olaf Cairo, about the giant Pashto poet. The pioneering work is still considered as a reference book on the topic in English language that paved the way for opening up more horizons in the perspective.

Apart from other various contributions, his academic treatise on Khushhal's works and times in Urdu was a decisive step towards introducing Khushhal to Urdu readers. The most striking factor with the exception of a few, Pashtun writers never spoke their hearts out in Urdu or in English which ultimately deprived them of being introduced and exposed their literary treasures not only to the native Urdu-speaking masses but to the rest of world as well.

But Kamil's works indicate his familiarity and skillfulness in both the mediums. The literary giant left no stone unturned in making Pashto literature more valuable and accessible to a vast variety of readers. His exemplary devotion to the cause did not let him at ease even at his deathbed, and he had been carrying out the works.

"Olasi Adabi Jirga" a pioneering literary organization, established in February 1950-1957, was the brain child of troika- Dost Mohammed Kamil, Amir Hamza Khan Shinwari and Kakajee Sanobar Hussain Momand which was joined by other veteran political and literary figures like Mir Mehdi Shah Bacha, Wali Mohammed Toofan, Qalandar Momand, Afzal Bangash, Qamar Rahi, Akram Mashhood, Saifurrehman Salim, Fazal-e-Haq Shaida, Hamesh Khalil and many others. Kamil was one of those who played a pivotal and leading role in introducing the prevailing literary trends and approaches among young writers for plugging the existing gaps and thus successfully produced a bunch of talented people who played the desired role with visible and rich contribution. The organization played a pioneering role in providing a platform to the new emerging writers.

Paying homage and admitting his multifaceted contributions, Pride of Performance was conferred upon him but he refused to accept it for reasons. Kamil Momand was a distinguished poet, an encyclopedic researcher, an eminent historian, a brilliant lawyer, a witty humorist, and besides all a patriotic Pashtun and Pakhistani. There was a striking amalgamation in his approach as at the same time, though he strongly believed in Quaid's principles, remained President of Sarhad Muslim Students Federation and Incharge Press Section of Sarhad Muslim League High Command for some time when he offered his services to the local chapter after coming back from Aligarh, was sent behind bars"(5).

yet had never lost the passion to support all the oppressed and deprived masses and stood by them all the time.

Professor Doctor Zubair Hasrat has compiled his M.Phil thesis on him and nearly all the aspects of his works and life have been analyzed, discussed and exposed thoroughly. Similarly, Dr Hanif Khalil has also compiled and published Kamil's letters, titled 'Khotut-e-Kamil (Kamil's letters) in 2000.' Khumkhana-e-

Yathrab' and 'Da Fekroono Deeve', his anthologies of Urdu-Parsian and Pashto poetry were compiled and published by veteran researcher Hamesh Khalil in 1987 and 1993 respectively. To put it more honestly, Kamil had delivered great works sincerely but remained least celebrated as compared to his contemporaries.

The kindhearted towering figure breathed his last on 22nd Feb, 1981 at Lady Reading Hospital, Peshawar and was laid to rest on the next day at Pashtun Garhi, Nowshera. His death created an irreparable loss to Pashto literature.

After the above mentioned short introductory write-up, now we may have a glance of his scholarly and poetic works. It is strived to have it in the following manner.

### **1-Khushhal Khan Khattak,**

The 488-page book was initially published in 1951 and the second edition saw light of the day in 2006 with prefaces of Fazl-e-Haq Shaida and by the author, covers biography of Khushhal Khattak in a very comprehensive manner. Fazl-i-Haq Shaida opines in his preface that, "In my opinion for the first time the factual biographical sketch of Khushhal Khan Khattak has been drawn in Urdu...What the hidden aspects on the basis of historical evidences and analysis have been made about Khushhal by Kamil, would inevitably compel the historians of future to be obliged of him..,He further spells out."(6).

He focuses on Khushhal's early life, his forefathers, and tries to unearth the accurate information, his association with Mughal Court, tussle with Mughals, his subsequent forced exile, causes and factors of the misunderstanding and jail, his return, expeditions, review on his prose and poetry, last moments of life and death, books and characteristics/ topic of poetry. Kamil supports and derives his arguments of 18 reference books of Pashto, 13 of Persian, 18 of English and 07 of Urdu while carrying out this work.

It might be mentioned that though Dr Khadija Begam Feroz-Ud- Din"(7). also had carried out her D.Lit thesis work on Khushhal Khan Khattak's Life and Works, and a degree was awarded to her by the Punjab University on 13th December, 1940, and both works have similarities, yet analytically speaking, Kamil's work seems more comprehensive and encyclopedic, because as a native Pashtun he had accessibility to the original texts, areas, and persons that the former had lacked. Though Dr Khadija's work, too, covers nearly all the aspects with commendable authenticity and validity as the author had launched the project when very insufficient materials were available on the topic and working on the subject was a gigantic and daunting challenge, that very appreciably accomplished by the respectable lady. Kamil's book is thought as a cornerstone and still is considered a reference book on the topic. Astonishingly, here Kamil seems not just a narrator rather as a historiographer because he compares the events and brings the real picture to the fore where and when needed. As a poet explores the hidden

gems of Khushhal's poetry where they remained hard to find, as a researcher compares the arguments and concludes the genuine one.

Authentically, Kamil touches upon of Khushhal's poetry at various angles and objections can be raised as they have been produced time and again by modern researchers, but all of them have to trace back to Kamil for their reference and very rear something new came out so far. The diction utilized by the author, references from foreign languages and Khushhal's poetry translation from Pashto into Urdu, reflect his scholarly approach and command on comparative literature. The book has been translated into Pashto by Mohaqeq Abdul Latif Talibi and got published by Danish Khparandoya Tolanna, Takhneeki Sanga, Pekhawar, 2006" (8).

## **2- Kollyat Khushhal Khan Khattak**

The book is comprised of Khushhal Khan's ghazals, Qasaid, Robayaat and miscellaneous poetic works. Kamil has included his cerebral preface, footnotes, and commentaries in the anthology. The book was published by Idaara-e-Isha'at-e-Sarhad in 1952" (9).

Kamil's this work that enriches Pashto literature is that he had addressed the vocabulary utilized by Khushhal that were earlier confusing for many researchers and students of literature. It demonstrates Kamil's linguistically sound approach as he had carried it out for the first time. Later on this work proved as pioneering for many authors who have carried out their works on the topic. Earlier there were ghazals, poetic pieces attributed to Khushhal, and hence identifying the real one was an issue to be looked into, so Kamil did sort out the authentic one which still prevails and was followed by other compilers later on.

## **3- Deewan Sikandar Khan Khattak**

To the deewan/anthology of well-known Pashto poet Sikandar Khan Khattak, Kamil had added up his preface and footnotes which was published by Idaara Isha'at Sarhad in 1953" (10).

It was a difficult challenge that demanded authenticity and strenuous effort. Historically speaking, though just a ghazal of Sikandar Khan Khattak was earlier published in "Kaleed Afghani" that was republished by Allama Abd-UI-Hai Habibi in his "Pokhtana Sho'ara" as is mentioned in Kabul Mujallah, published by "Da Afghanistan da Oloomo Acaademi, da jhabo aw adabyato markaz, Pokhto Tolanna, 1363". But for the first time the entire Deewan/anthology was published by Kamil with his research on Sikandar's poetic characteristics, addressing his difficult vocabulary, and explaining his thoughts in a perfect and professional manner.

## **4 Rahman Baba**

Kamil's this unparalleled work was first published 1958 having the preface of the noted mystic and poet Ameer Hamza Khan Shinwari that have touched upon numerous aspects of Rahman Baba's poetry and have shared his difference of opinion with Kamil on some of the approaches. The book provides with the basic information about Rahman Baba's life, his mystic school of thought and features of his poetry"(11).

Rahman Baba was considered and thought as a mystic and devout Muslim, thus seldom was strived to bring the factual position to the fore about his life and works. Kamil here, too, took the lead and pain, and after great hardships he come up with this luminous work.

### **5- Tareekh Murass'a(Notes and Commentaries)**

To put it honestly, very insufficiently have been written by the indigenous writers about Pashtuns and the movements taken place in this part of world. Tareekh Murass'a, though has links and excerpts from and with other contemporary works on historiography, yet perhaps is the only authentic source that narrates the story of Khushhal, his family and the incidents that happened during his life time even with minute details.

Compilation, commentaries and explanatory notes to the book, stand Kamil's more sublime and encyclopedic work that keeps him apart of his contemporaries, both predecessors and successors. Afzal Khan Khattak's; Khushhal grandson- compiled- book about Khushhal, was published by University Book Agency. The book along with Kamil's explanatory notes was highly appreciated by all and sundry, locally and abroad and that set new trends for the literary history of the times coming ahead"(12).

The invaluable book has got importance as many facts shrouded in ambiguity and confusions were made clear by Kamil through his distinguished approach. There again Kamil exhibits his God-gifted mental abilities, patience, farsightedness and courage.

### **6. On a Foreign Approach to Khushhal**

It commonly known as, "On a Foreign Approach to Khushhal Critique of Caroe and Howell" was initially published in May, 1968 at Jadeed Urdu Type Press, Lahore and was issued by Maktabah-i- Shaheen, Khyber Bazar, Peshawar. The book, besides having a detailed preface, carries 07 chapters, notes and indexes. Perceptions, findings and conclusions of the Orientalists i.e. Sir Olaf Caroe and Sir Howell about Khushhal have been analyzed, various flaws and misconceptions about historical facts, Khushhal's life and incidents have been identified and resultantly corrections have been suggested. The 194 –page book is an authentic and genuine document ever-written in English on the topic"(13).

Because of its comprehensiveness, uniqueness and relevance on the subject, it was translated into Pashto by Sher Muhammad Kareemi and published by "Da

Afghanistan da Oloomo Academy, da Jhabo aw Adabyaato Markaz, Pokhto Tolanna Kabul, 1363, and again published by “Da Danish Khparandweye Tolanne Tekhneeki Sanga, Pakhawar in 2006.

While one goes through the book, one wonders that the poet, and literary Kamil goes invisible but the law- graduate, researcher and historian Kamil rules hearts and minds while analyzing the facts and arguments made and concluded by the then towering scholarly figures about Khushhal.

Sir Olaf Caroe (15 November, 1892-23 November, 1981), an administrator in British India and writer, and Sir Evelyn Howell (12 February 1877-23 October 1971) were criticized for their mistakes in their works “The Pathans.550 BC.-AD. 1957” and “The Poems of Khushhal Khan Khattak” respectively.

Kamil’s work comprises of 07 chapters, titled “Sources wrongly approached and misquoted”, ‘Introductory Portion further Considered’, ‘Of Khushhal Khan’s ancestors and Early life’, ‘Khushhal Khan and Aurangzeb Loyalty rewarded by Imprisonment,’ ‘Khushhal Khan and Aurangzeb the rebellion’, ‘The Judgment’, ‘The poems’ respectively. Consequently, in Chapter 2, Kamil criticizes Sir Olaf for not having proper accessibility that led him towards committing mistakes, there he identifies the “erroneous statements” wrongly ascribed to Khushhal. In Chapter 5 Kamil does compare various manuscripts of Tareekh Morass’a to defend his arguments. Similarly, in chapter 5 Kamil brings references from Khushhal poetry to unearth the factual position in connection with differences developed between Aurangzeb and Khushhal. In the last concluding chapter; ‘The Poems’, Kamil discusses about the status of the translators of Khushhal poetry, He identifies the mistakes/misinterpretations and suggests corrections by coming up with sound arguments. Afterwords, Kamil elaborate the personalities of the unsung heroes Darya Khan and Aimal Khan, Khushhal’s contemporaries.

Of Sir Olaf Caroe’s book ‘The Pathans’, Kamil have had his views about Chapter Fifteen and Chapter 5.

Of Howell’s book ‘The Poems of Khushhal Khan Khattak’, printed by Oxford University Press for the Pashto Academy, University of Peshawar, 1963, wherein 26 complete and incomplete selections from Khushhal’s poetry have been made, Kamil brings Howell’s translation under discussion and criticism. He points out various mistakes identified and corrections have been made.

At one place, Sir Olaf writes down that, ‘But in 1664 he was summoned to Peshawar by Sayyid Amir and at the age of fifty-one dispatched in chains and escort to Delhi, where he was sent forward to spend over two years as a prisoner in the Gwalior fortress”(14).

Kamil goes for correction in the following words;

“Sir Olaf mentioned the Gwalior fortress as the place where Khushhal Khan spent over two years as a prisoner. The mistake has been corrected in ‘The Setting of History’ by stating that the fortress of Ranthambhor



near Jaipur in Rajasthan to be the place where the poet was dispatched in chain to spend two years. The fort of Ranthabhor which is in Madhopur Division of Jaipur State cannot, however, be said to be near Jaipur if by that is meant the principal town and capital of the state which also bears the same name and it is closely situated to the south of Ambar, the old seat of the State Government"(15).

### **7-Da Rahman Baba Kullyat:**

The jointly compiled book in coordination with Qalandar Momand was published in Chapzai, Peshawar in 1984. After analyzing various available manuscripts and passing through great hardships, the final and authentic anthology was brought to the fore, having more than 600 pages, carries details and commentaries with minute details, as has been mentioned above. It is considered as an authentic manuscript"(16).

Credit goes to Kamil that he compiled the best manuscript and addressed other verses that were attributed to Rahman baba.

### **8-Shparhas Sawa Deersh(1630)**

Compilation and commentaries of Tareekh Morass's had shattered the presumptions of the earlier writers. Kamil's scientific and holistic approach has opened new doors with solid arguments, so observations were raised about the book. To answer to the questions, he further came forward and addressed the queries and observations expressed by other literary figures about the book. It speaks of Kamil's great intellectual depth and comprehensiveness"(17).

### **9-Khumkhan-e-Yathrab**

Kamil's Urdu, Persian poetry anthology that was published by Hamesh Khalil in 1987 from Alam Brothers Printers, Peshawar and was circulated by Area Study Center"(18).

### **10-Da Fekroono Deewe**

Another Pashto anthology of Kamil that was compiled with a scholarly preface by Hamesh Khalil in December 1993 from Edara Elm -o- Fann, Pakistan, Peshawar"(19).

Besides of the above quoted books, there were innumerable, research papers, prologues and prefaces that he wrote in Pashto, Urdu and English. Most of them were compiled by Dr Muhammad Zubair Hasrat in two volumes named "Adabi Moqaddemme"(The literary Prologues)"(20).

Summing it up, while going through his painstaking research, scholarly works and poetry, one arrives at the conclusion that undoubtedly he stands a man of letters in true spirits and that without those splendid works, the Pashto literature, literary history, cultural identity, his response to the misunderstandings raised and floated by biased and imbalanced minds about Pashtun ethnicity and ethnography, and Pashto classical literature, would be

remained incomplete and imperfect. In him, we lost a legacy of vibrant mind, deep-rooted intellectual, a patient and farsighted researcher, an endless lover to his people and soil, a shrewd lawyer, an untiring true professional and a matchless human being. The bottom line is that in Pashto literature, unfortunately, he has never been granted his due status but the time has come that inevitably modern-day Pashtun researchers would speak their hearts and minds out about his gigantic contribution to Pashto literature and his indelible and ceaseless imprints on Pashto literature.

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