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INTEREST IN AND STUDY OF KHOJA AHMAD YASSAWI'S LEGACY

PIRIMBEK SULEIMENOV
Candidate of Philosophical Sciences, Professor
Al Farabi Kazakh National University (Almaty, Kazakhstan)
Email: pirimbek.suleimenov@kaznu.edu.kz
Khamzaev Shavkat Abdirasulovich
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Philosophical Sciences
Associate Professor at Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages (Samarkand, Uzbekistan)
E-mail: shavkatxamzayev84@gmail.com

***Abstract*:** *The article analyzes the deepening of research in the socio-philosophical direction of the Sufi and spiritual heritage of our ancestors who lived in the Central Asian region. Special attention is given to the scientific-philosophical study of the religious-mystical, artistic-ethical, and axiological views found in Ahmad Yassawi's Sufi legacy. The paper also explores the practical application of this heritage in the education of the perfect human being.*

Keywords: *axiology, pedagogy, philosophical categories, socio-educational-moral.*

[1]*Candidate of Philosophical Sciences, Professor*
Al Farabi Kazakh National University (Almaty, Kazakhstan)
Email: pirimbek.suleimenov@kaznu.edu.kz
[2]*Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Philosophical Sciences*
Associate Professor at Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages (Samarkand, Uzbekistan)
E-mail: shavkatxamzayev84@gmail.com

Introduction

The Sufi and spiritual heritage formed in the Central Asian region represents a profound expression of the spiritual, ethical, and social experience accumulated by our people over centuries. In particular, Ahmad Yassawi's mystical teachings not only address issues of religious and moral education but also lay the philosophical foundations for the human pursuit of perfection.The axiological (value-related) views expressed in his works and ideas, the balance between the individual and society, the paths toward achieving spiritual purity, and the cultivation of the soul should be analyzed not only as religious but also as philosophical categories.

From this perspective, it becomes necessary to study Yassawi's teachings not merely within the Sufi-educational framework but in close connection with modern philosophy, axiology, and pedagogy. His mystical legacy serves as an invaluable source for clarifying human consciousness, promoting spiritual growth, and developing principles of social justice. Thus, a deep scientific and philosophical analysis of Yassawi's legacy, and the application of his artistic and moral ideas to contemporary spiritual life, holds not only scientific but also social significance. This, in turn, opens up practical opportunities for using Sufi ideas in the upbringing of the perfect human being. Globally, there has been great interest in the creative legacy of Khoja Ahmad Yassawi. Prominent foreign scholars such as A. Arberry, G. Vambery, K. Ghani, I. Goldziher, R. Dozy, A.F. Kremer, F. Köprülüzade, N. Lings, A. Metz, E. Palmeri, I. Tabari, and F. Toluk have conducted research on his works. Of particular note, scholar Devin DeWeese has conducted a comparative analysis of the genesis of relations between the Yassawiyya and Naqshbandiyya Sufi orders, while M.F. Köprülüzade emphasized the life, activities, and socio-educational-moral views of Ahmad Yassawi and noted the development of religious-educational life in Anatolia under the influence of his disciples as early as the 13th century.

Methodology

Among the scholars from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), researchers such as V.V. Barthold, A.M. Bogoutdinov, E.A. Bertels, B.A. Gordlevsky, S.N. Grigoryan, S.M. Demidov, K.K. Kazansky, A.E. Krymsky, A. Kurbanmamedov, Sanan Mekhti, A. Muhammadkhojayev, and M.T. Stepanyants have provided valuable information about the Sufi teachings, the life and activities of Khoja Ahmad Yassawi, and his political, social, and economic significance in Central Asia.

In particular, among Orientalists, scholars such as E.A. Bertels, A.E. Krymsky, and Yu.G. Petrash have explored the differences between various Sufi orders, attributing their divergence to socio-economic factors, and expressed critical views regarding the Yassawiyya order. Conversely, academician B.A. Gordlevsky, in his research, gave a positive assessment of Ahmad Yassawi's creative activities.Central Asian scholars have also conducted numerous studies. For example, from Kazakhstan, scholars such as A.P. Abuov, Yu.A. Yolgin, Z. Zhandarbekov, and D. Kenzhetay; and from Turkmenistan, scholars such as S. Agajanov, G. Geldiyev, and S. Demidov can be noted .

Among Uzbek scholars, significant contributions have been made by H. Aliqulov, M.B. Baratov, V.Y. Zohidov, N. Komilov, I.M. Muminov, M. Mamatov, G. Navruzova, J.O. Ne'matova, R. Nosirov, E. Rustamov, N.A. Usmonov, O. Usmonov, A. Fitrat, E. Yusupov, R. Shodiev, M.M. Khayrullaev, M. Khajieva, N. Hasanov, I. Haqqul, Z. Iskhakova, and J. Kholmuminov. Their research discusses various aspects of Sufi teachings, the directions of Sufi orders in Central Asia, and the life and spiritual heritage of Khoja Ahmad Yassawi. In particular, academician M. Khayrullaev and Professor R. Nosirov have pointed out that Sufi orders, including Ahmad Yassawi's Sufi views, have not yet been sufficiently studied by Uzbek researchers from a historical and philosophical perspective .

In her research, Professor M. Khajiyeva attempts to thoroughly study the educational significance of Khoja Ahmad Yassawi's spiritual and moral views. However, her investigations primarily examine the Yassawiyya order from a pedagogical perspective.

During the years of independence, numerous notable scholarly studies have been conducted on Khoja Ahmad Yassawi and his other caliphs . For instance, in their book "The Diwan of Hazrat Khoja Ahmad Yassawi," A. Bozorov and T. Qoraev provide information about Mansur Ata, one of Yassawi's prominent caliphs. They state:

"Mansur Ata, may God's mercy be upon him, was one of the early caliphs of Khoja Ahmad. This honorable figure was a descendant of Bob Arslan. He was a scholar in both outward and inward sciences. Initially, he received training and spiritual education from his esteemed father. Following the passing of his father, by his father's instruction, he joined the service of Hazrat Khoja Ahmad, may God's mercy be upon him. Through the grace and blessings of Khoja Ahmad, he rose to the highest ranks among the people of sainthood (ahl-i wilayat)." It is emphasized that, out of respect for Arslanbob, Khoja Ahmad took it upon himself to raise and mentor Mansur Ata, ultimately elevating him to the rank of a wise spiritual guide (murshid danishmand) within the Yassawiyya order. Among the prominent Sufis who adhered to the principles of the Yassawiyya order and promoted its teachings was Zangi Ata."He was a disciple of Hakim Ata and became not only renowned throughout the Tashkent region but was also widely recognized across all of Turkestan and the Islamic world. Uzun Hasan Ata, Said Ata, Sadir Ata, and Badir Ata were all among Zangi Ata's disciples."

Results and Discussion

Researcher O. Usmonov notes that in the Tashkent and Chimkent regions, many of Khoja Ahmad Yassawi's caliphs and disciples — such as Said Ata, Suzuk Ata, Zangi Ata, and Ibrahim Ata — lived and actively educated the people in the spirit of universal values such as righteousness, purity, honesty, diligence, patriotism, compassion, piety, and faith. Indeed, Khoja Ahmad Yassawi is regarded as the spiritual master and sheikh of many Sufi scholars throughout the Islamic world . This is evidenced by the large number of followers listed in the "Silsila (Lineage) of the Yassawiyya Order," where the names of fifty successors, who educated the people in the spirit of universal and ethnic values, are recorded in sequence. Researcher O. Usmonov also suggests that several smaller Sufi orders that emerged in Mawarannahr after the 14th–15th centuries — including the Bektashiyya — originated from the Yassawiyya tradition. However, this theory requires validation based on new sources, as there are notable differences in their historical origins, despite certain similarities. Therefore, his claim demands further scientific evidence.

When comparatively analyzing the Sufi orders of medieval Central Asia, it becomes clear that in the Yassawiyya tradition, remembrance (dhikr) was performed aloud (jahri dhikr), while in the Naqshbandiyya tradition, it was performed silently (khufi dhikr). Each order developed its distinct methods and etiquette: the Yassawiyya tradition is mainly reflected through poetic and prose works such as the Fakrnoma, whereas the Naqshbandiyya tradition is expressed in prose through works like Abduholiq Ghijduvani's Nasihatnama and Maqamat-i Shah Naqshband.

In reality, the emergence of the Naqshbandiyya order in the 14th century can be seen as a development rooted in the teachings of Khoja Ahmad Yassawi. Of the eleven sacred principles of the Naqshbandiyya order, eight are attributed to Abduholiq Ghijduvani. Moreover, in Risala-i Ilmiya by Makhdumi A'zam, it is noted that the phrase "Dil ba yor, dast ba kor" ("The heart with the Friend, the hand at work") was first uttered in Turkish by Khoja Ahmad Yassawi, which necessitates a completely new scientific and logical approach to the matter. As for the Bektashiyya order, its presence in Mawarannahr is explained by the strong influence of Shia thought, similar to that seen among the Sarbadars, Hurufis, and others in southern Turkestan. Some scholars from the Soviet period have also observed that interest in the Yassaviyya tradition gradually declined during the later medieval period.

It should be noted that although the Yassawiyya order developed during the reign of Amir Temur, it experienced a partial decline during the period of his descendants — the Timurids. However, beginning with the rule of Muhammad Shaybani Khan, it began to spread widely once again in the region of Mawarannahr. During the reign of Ubaydullah Khan, the fact that Makhdumi A'zam Dahbedi, despite being affiliated with the Naqshbandiyya order, accepted the practice of jahriya (vocal remembrance) indicates a revival of the Yassawiyya order in the social life of the region.From the 15th to 16th centuries onward, a new generation of Sufi masters and spiritual leaders emerged who further developed both the theoretical and practical aspects of the Yassawiyya teachings. Notably, figures such as Husayn Khwarazmi, Khoja Ahrar Wali, Makhdumi A'zam, Mawlana Lutfullah Chusti, Mashrab, and Bedil represented the Naqshbandiyya, Yassawiyya, Kubrawiyya, Qalandariyya, and other Sufi schools.Works

such as Maqamat-i Naqshbandiyya by Abu Hasan Muhammad Baqir, Nafahat al-Uns by Abdurahman Jami, and Nasayim al-Muhabbat by Alisher Navoi provide valuable insights into the philosophical and ideological essence of Sufi teachings, further supporting this perspective.

Conclusion

Prominent scholars from Uzbekistan, including Academician B. Valikhojaev, I. Haqqul, A. Zohidiy, G. Navruzova, R. Shodiev, and others, have written about the numerous Sufi thinkers who lived between the 15th and 17th centuries and who advanced the ideas of Ahmad Yassawi, giving them new philosophical depth and interpretation.In conclusion, during the Soviet ideological era, Khoja Ahmad Yassawi's Hikmats were often viewed through a narrow lens as "religious-mystical literature," and the Yassawiyya order was similarly reduced to a mystical doctrine. As a result, its deeper roots and unique pedagogical methods were not properly understood. In reality, the core content, essence, and ultimate aim of this teaching is the spiritual and moral education of the Perfect Human — one who embodies both divine and human truths.

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