



The Life and Legacy of Khoja Ahmad Yasavi, The Sultan of The Arifs

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Abstract: This article also presents examples of Ahmad Yasawi's life, the respect shown to him by the people, his writings and several examples of his poetic wisdom of a moral and universal nature. The article proves that the writer's ideas were still important in the 12th century and are cited as an example in protecting people from various vices in today's era of globalization. It is known that even in his time, Yassawi opposed various injustices of the kings and called on the people to be honest. It was analyzed that the works of this scholar are in accordance with the rules of Islam, and the ideas contained in them have not lost their significance even in modern science. For this reason, the Turkish Muslim people consider him a great teacher for them.

Keywords: Sultan, Yassavi, Turkistan, Thinker, Sheikh, Hadith, Amir Temur, Haq, Islam, Mystic, Turkish, Sufi, Lie, Paradise, Hell, God, Messenger, Truth, Kings, Bribe, Muslim, Justice.

Introduction

Khoja Ahmad Yasavi, a major Sufi figure of the 12th century, holds a distinguished place in the history of spiritual thought and Islamic cultural heritage, particularly in the Turkestan region. Alongside great thinkers such as Jalaluddin Rumi, Goethe, Leo Tolstoy, Nizami Ganjavi, Alisher Navoi, and Zakhridin Muhammad Babur, Yasavi is remembered for the extraordinary consistency between his words and actions. This alignment made him a moral and spiritual exemplar not only in his own time but also in today's modern era.

The profound harmony between Yasavi's teachings and his lifestyle greatly contributed to the swift acceptance of the Yassawiyya Sufi order he founded. The Yassawiyya emphasized simplicity, hard work, prayer, and the dissemination of knowledge. For instance, Yasavi structured his daily routine into three parts: teaching his disciples, engaging in prayer, and earning a livelihood through personal labor without relying on others. This model presents a powerful example of how spiritual values can be seamlessly integrated into everyday life.

Today, in the age of globalization, where values such as honesty, tolerance, and social justice are crucial for the development of a morally grounded and tolerant

generation, the relevance of Yasavi's teachings remains undiminished. Through his works, particularly *Divan-i Hikmat*, Yasavi instilled universal principles that transcend time and space, offering profound guidance for contemporary societies.

Methodology

This study adopts a historical-philosophical and hermeneutic approach to thoroughly analyze the life, teachings, and intellectual legacy of Khoja Ahmad Yasavi.

The methodology consists of the following steps:

a. Primary Source Analysis:

The research primarily draws on Ahmad Yasavi's own works, especially *Divan-i Hikmat*, as well as historical records that document his life and the early development of the Yassawiyya order.

b. Secondary Source Review:

Scholarly works and contemporary research concerning Yasavi's influence on Sufism and Islamic culture in Central Asia and Anatolia are utilized to support and contextualize the analysis.

c. Content Analysis:

Systematic interpretation of Yasavi's ethical views and poetic expressions was carried out to uncover the moral, social, and spiritual values embedded within his writings.

d. Comparative Method:

The study also examines how Yasavi's teachings have been transmitted and adapted across different Turkic Sufi traditions and their impact on contemporary Islamic thought.

e. Hermeneutic Interpretation:

A hermeneutic approach was applied to deeply interpret the hidden meanings and philosophical insights in Yasavi's poetry, extracting lessons that remain applicable to modern social and ethical challenges.

This methodological framework provides a comprehensive understanding of Yasavi's contributions and demonstrates how his spiritual values can enrich contemporary cross-cultural and social discourse.

Result and Discussion

If knowledge is without action, it becomes evidence against the knowledge holder. The rule of acquiring knowledge is to practice it and teach it to others. In the "*Faqrnama*", Yasawi Sufis are called upon to be aware of four things regarding knowledge. These are: acquiring knowledge, the second is acting upon it, the third is teaching it to others, and the fourth is being patient in the pursuit of knowledge.

Yassavi believed that perfection could be achieved through love. According to him, a lover is a perfect person. Qualities of a lover: giving up arrogance, caring for others, to be content, doing good to others, never lose hope, not wasting time on useless things, not to lie.

Yasaviy regrets that injustice and arrogance have replaced justice, honesty, and kindness, and he sympathizes with the defenseless people. In our opinion, his wise poems will never lose their relevance.

Ahmed Yasawi believes that the world is transient, that all good and bad deeds done will, of course, be remembered, and that they constitute the content of human life. On the Day of Judgment, a person will explain in his own words that he will receive a suitable answer for each of them. Khoja Ahmad Yassavi admits that in any country where spiritual values and justice are ignored, a wide path is opened for heedless and hypocritical servants to rise to high ranks and positions. In such a nation, "personal development" is also undermined, and obstacles are placed to raising a complete person. Perhaps no other Sufi has suffered from these negative vices as much as Khoja Ahmad Yassawi.

Discussion

Ahmad Yasawi was a wise scholar, poet, sufi, and the founder of the first turkic-language sufi order in Central Asia. Because Ahmad Yasawi dedicated his life to the people's suffering, the people honored him as "Muhammad in Medina, Ahmad in Turkestan." Yasavi's mother died shortly after his birth, and his father died when he was seven. After that, he received his primary education from Arslanbob, who was the "pride of the Turks" of his time. Later, he went to Bukhara and studied Sufi sciences under Yusuf Hamadani, who was known as the "Power of Islam", and achieved the honor of becoming its third caliph. His most famous work is "Divani hikmat", which is written in poetic form.

Two years after the Republic of Uzbekistan gained independence, 1993 was declared the "Year of Ahmad Yassavi" in Uzbekistan. 2016 was declared the "Year of Ahmad Yassavi" by UNESCO. Such great attention and respect paid to the great scholar, in turn, had a positive impact on a more accurate and complete study of Yassavi's life and work, and on the creation of scientific research.

The founder of the uzbek language, the sultan of poetry, Alisher Navoi wrote the following about Ahmad Yassavi: "Ahmad Yasawi was the sheikh of the Turkestan. His position was high and famous, and his miracles were unparalleled. He had many disciples and companions. Even kings and the poor were ready to serve in his presence."

Amir Temur, who knew sheikh Ahmad Yassawi very well and understood his spiritual level, visited his grave from time to time. In 1398, out of respect for the sheikh, he had a mausoleum built, demonstrating his deep attachment to Yassavi. The view that Amir Temur's invincibility was due to the respect he showed to the Sheikh still exists among the peoples of Turkestan. Indeed, the construction of this mausoleum by Amir Temur was a vivid example of the respect he showed for Sufi scholars, since Amir Temur himself, as an accomplished scholar, often held scientific discussions with them.

Ahmad Yasawi's works are well studied in all turkic-speaking countries, especially in the Republic of Turkey. Ahmad Yasawi, his followers, and the ideas of the dervishes played an important role in the introduction of Islam to Turkey.

The Turkish mystic O.Ersoy's research provides interesting information about this: "He sent his trained disciples to other Turkic lands. They spread his poems wherever they went. They used his teaching and upbringing methods and educated everyone." Ahmad Yasawi played a key role in the early spread of Islamic culture and Sufism in Anatolia and other Turkic lands. The spiritual conquerors of Anatolia, Haji Bayram Vali, Haji Bektashi Vali, Yunus Emro, and Jalaluddin Rumi, were all followers of Ahmad Yasawi's teachings. They continued the movement that Yasavi had started in Anatolia."

Indeed, the enlightenment that Yasavi imparted continued in Turkey. They drew inspiration from the wisdom of the scholars and created their own educational paths. In particular, in his teachings called "bayramiylik" (festiveness), Khoji Bayram Vali promoted ideas such as humility, easing the burden of the people, and engaging in useful work. The "Bektashi" sect of Haji Bektashi Vali has spread to many countries. Yunus Emro, whose love for the Truth (God) and the Messenger was deep, believed that it was possible to achieve the love of the Truth (God) through the idea of "I love, I am loved." This path leading to the love of the Truth was through loving the people whom the Truth created. Such constructive ideas were the reason why Sufism took its rightful place in the hearts of the people. The customs and rituals (remembrance and heaven) of the "mawlawi" teachings of Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi are very close to the Yassavi order. All four of these teachings emerged from the Yasawi teachings, and their ideas are aimed at acquiring noble human qualities.

On the facade of the Khoja Ahmed Yasavi Mosque, a hadith from the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is inscribed: "Seeking knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim man and woman." This means that Khoja Ahmad Yassawi was one of the greatest enlighteners, thinkers, and mystic sages of his time.

During the time of Ahmad Yasavi, the country was ruled by the Karakhanids. The country bordered the Kara-Khitin state (1140-1213). Unfortunately, relations between the two states were characterized by constant wars. The Kara-Khitays did not settle in the conquered lands, but collected tribute of one dinar from each household. But the working people were in a difficult situation. They were under severe oppression from both sides - from the local nobility and from foreign invaders. The working population was obliged to regularly pay taxes, other taxes, and fines, and to work for free on state and feudal construction projects. Seeing such a period, Yasawi felt sorry for the plight of the people and called on the kings to be merciful and just:

"There is no generosity among our people,
There is no justice in kings and ministers.
The prayers of the dervishes are not answered.
All sorts of troubles have fallen upon the people, friends."

Yassavi's wisdom about tolerance and compassion for people is relevant for all times:

It is Sunnah not to harm even a disbeliever.
God hates hard-hearted people.
By God, hell is prepared for such a person.
I said this after hearing from the wise.

One of the important features of Yassavi's teachings is the protection of everyone from injustice, regardless of a person's faith or social status. Unfortunately, it is worrying to see how some young people today discriminate against people for being members of a different religion. In Yassawi's wisdom, Islam is recognized as a religion of tolerance, promoting tolerance for all religions and firmly condemning bigotry.

Ahmad Yasawi's wisdom states that lying is a bad deed that harms faith:

Muhammad was the Messenger of Truth to us..

There is no paradise for a liar, by God,

Don't lie and walk away without faith, friends"

Today, lying is becoming a habit among many young and old, which at first glance does not seem so significant and dangerous. However, irreparable mistakes, regrets, and regrets arise precisely because of lies. That is why Yassawi says in his work "Faqrnama "I will tread the Sufi path with truth and speak the truth, for the heart informs the tongue."

In his wisdom, Yassawi warned people against bribery, which is considered a major social evil and the root of poverty. Because corruption hinders progress in society and increases poverty among the people. As a result, an artificial wall is created between the state and the people. In the following wisdom, Yasavi expressed his hatred for corrupt mullahs, muftis, and beys:

"Those who pretend to be mullahs and muftis, those who make false claims,

Those who turn white into black will go to hell

Judges who eat haram, those who take bribes.

They bite their own fingers and live in fear.

Ahmad Yasawi warned bribe takers that they would go to hell and called on them to be honest.

The inheritors of the prophets are scholars. That is why scholars are respected in Sufism. Because of them, the universe is in balance and life continues. They say that if scholars make mistakes, the universe will be destroyed. The wisdom of Yassavi also encourages us to follow the scholars:

Servant Khoja Ahmad, serve the scholars,

Listen to the words of the scholars and act upon them,

Act upon them and sacrifice your life for the cause of Truth,

Those who do not act on their knowledge will not see Allah, my friends.

Another important point in this wisdom should be noted. According to him, it is very important for a person to act on the knowledge he has acquired. For sufis, knowledge and action are inseparable. They are always together or both move away from the person at the same time.

Conclusion

All the rules of the Yasawi order are described in detail in Ahmad Yasawi's main work, "Divoni hikmat". This work, a wonderful example of 12th-century Turkish poetry, focuses on purity, truthfulness, kindness, one's own strength, sweat, and earning a living through honest labor, it expresses advanced universal human values, such as the comprehensive improvement of man on the path to achieving the will of Allah Almighty. As we study Yassavi's social views, he criticizes the social factors that shape inhuman qualities, namely ignorance, selfishness, and greed for material things. Only a person who has developed these qualities in himself can embark on the path to attaining Truth. But reaching the Truth is a difficult path, and it has its own stages and secrets, and a person can only reach this path through the pursuit of enlightenment and knowledge.

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